

# *Bridging evidence to practise* **Attention and Auditory Memory across the key stages**

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

Presented by Buckinghamshire Children  
and Young People's Speech and  
Language Therapy Team

Date 16.03.2023



# This webinar will build confidence to

1. What we mean by attention and auditory memory.
2. The impact on language development.
3. Implementing strategies and interventions through education and beyond.
4. Shaping the classroom environment.

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

KS1

KS2

KS3

KS4

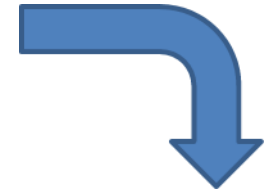
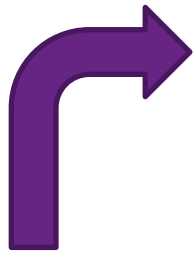


# Part 1

What do we mean by attention?

# The hidden process


## Processing



Input

Output

# Breaking it down



Attending  
and listening



Remembering



Understanding  
words



Understanding  
sentences



Understanding  
the meaning



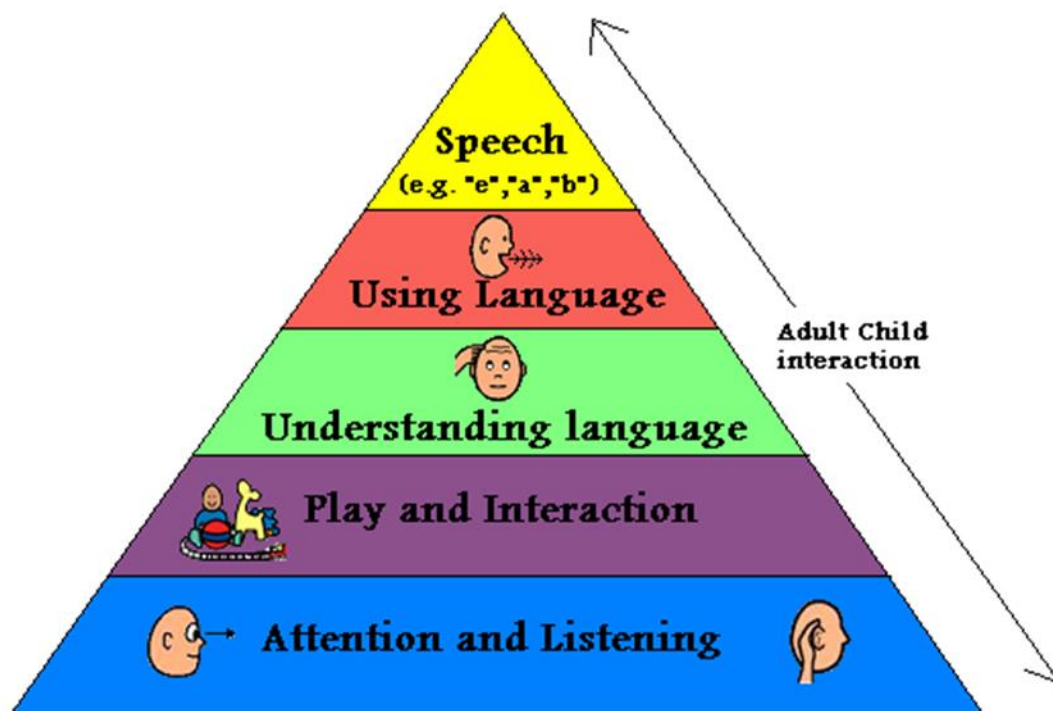
Idea

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

# Building blocks



OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

# Multi-disciplinary roles



OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK



- Fixing the mind on something, careful listening or watching
- **Listening** vs hearing
- Active
- Variable
- Motivation
- Variable stages to development



## Part 2

Universal and Targeted activities for  
attention and listening

# Knowing your child



KS1



KS2



KS3



KS4

Listening does not look the same for all children

Developing Joint attention

Occupational Therapy webinars :

Supporting children and young people with  
sensory processing difficulties part 1, 2 and .

# Universal strategies : Creating a safe listening environment

- Give children permission to question, admit uncertainty and challenge
- Respond positively to requests for clarification or repetition
- Invite children to ask when they are stuck
- Reduce background noise where possible
- Identify where poor listening or behaviour is linked to underlying language difficulties

KS1

KS2

KS3

KS4

# Universal Strategies

- Physical environment
  - Gain child's attention by using name and ensuring child is looking at you
  - Sit the child at front of class
- Organisation of information in the environment
  - Teach the child to work out what is important in a message
  - Use short tasks and change activity to frequently maintain success
  - Give instructions one at a time and check for understanding
  - Use lots of repetition and encourage the child to ask for repetition
  - Use visual prompts where possible.

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK



KS2

KS3

KS4

**NHS**

**Buckinghamshire Healthcare**  
NHS Trust

# Active Listening

Someone who realises that messages cannot always be understood and takes responsibility for seeking clarification when confused, stuck or unsure.

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

KS2

KS3

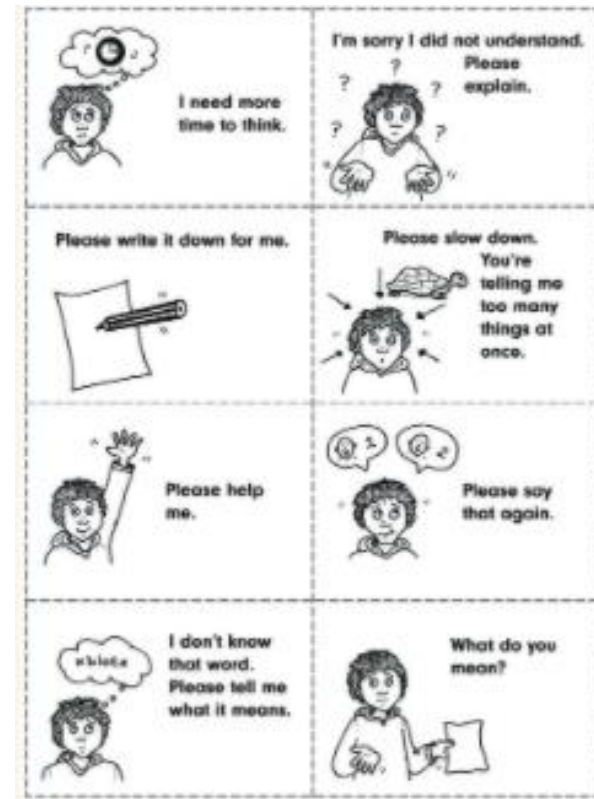
KS4



Buckinghamshire Healthcare  
NHS Trust

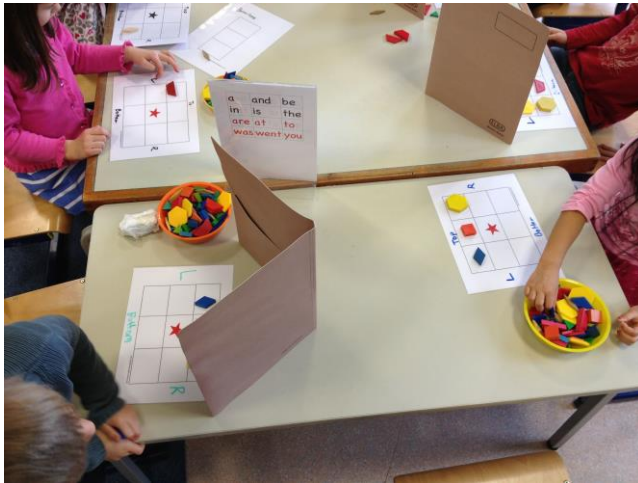
# Targeted activities : Being active in listening

Setting up opportunities for the need to repair



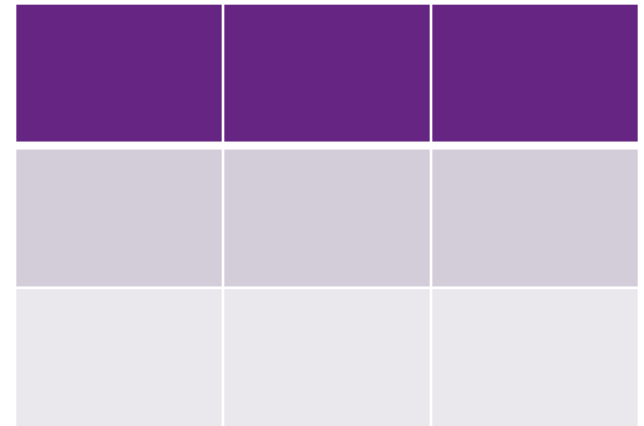
# Targeted activities: Being active in listening

Putting active listening to practice in barrier games



## Targeted activities : Being active in listening : Barrier games used in secondary

- Lego
- Following instructions for a science experiment, cooking
- Relating to curriculum specific words, e.g. word cards – find 3 words related to black death and put them on the top row.





## Part 3:

What do we mean by auditory memory?

# How good is your memory?



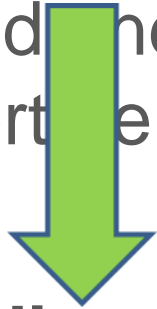
OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

# Memory

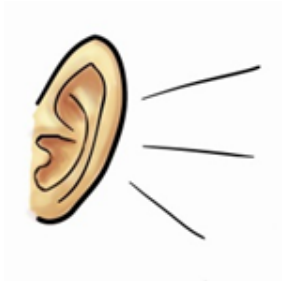
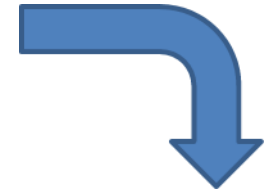
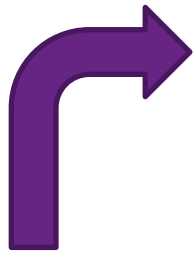
**Working memory** is the ability we have to hold in mind and mentally manipulate information over short periods of time.



**Auditory (verbal) memory** is the ability to hold in mind and mentally manipulate spoken information over short periods of time.

# The hidden process

## Processing



Input

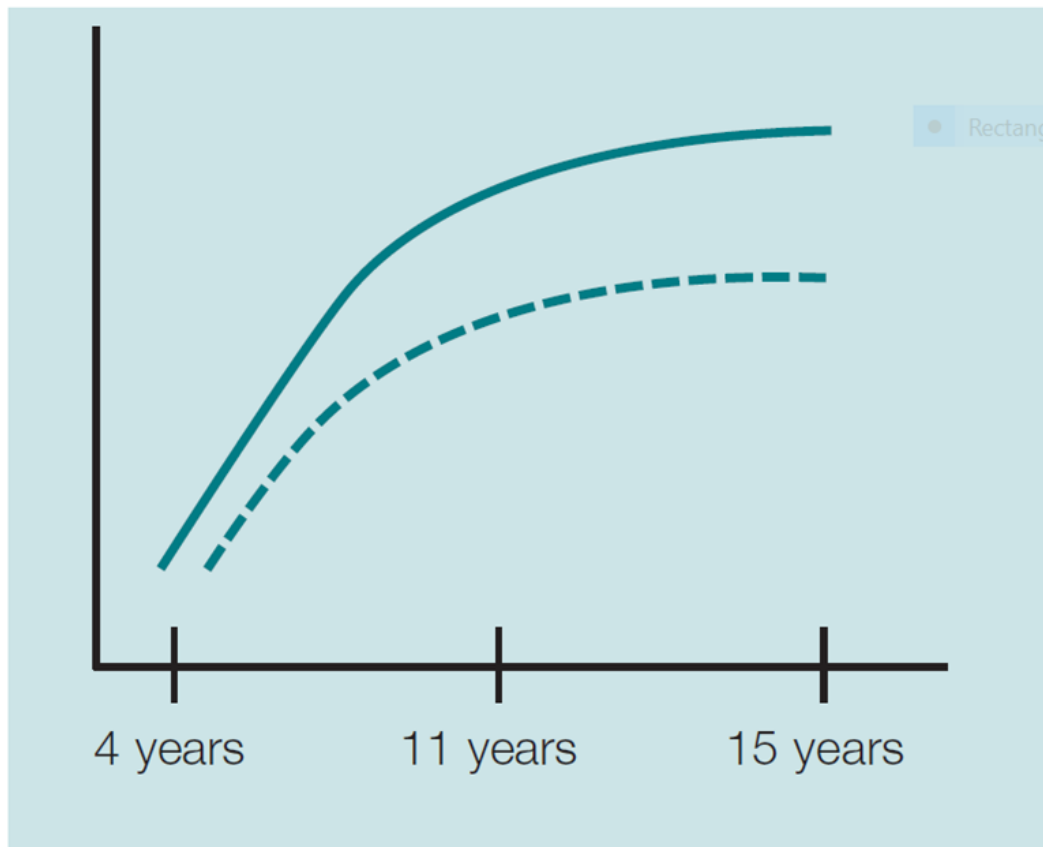
Output

# Limits to auditory (verbal) memory

- Distraction
- Trying to hold in mind too much information
- Engaging in a demanding task

Once information has been lost from working memory it is gone for good.

# Changes in working memory capacity with age



OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

## What are you noticing?

- Reserved in group activities
- Rarely volunteers
- Doesn't answer direct questions
- Behave as though they have not paid attention
- Frequently lose their place in complicated tasks
- Forget the message
- Poor recall of events
- Weak verbal reasoning skills

## Part 4:

Universal and targeted strategies for  
auditory memory



# Classroom support: Shaping a safe environment

- No clear evidence base for interventions directly improving auditory memory

What is effective?

- Shaping the environment to manage the memory load in the classroom.
- Modelling strategies moving to ownership of what works for me.



KS1



KS2



KS3



KS4

# Voice of the young person

“Explain first. Do a diagram so I can picture it. Leave it on the board for the whole lesson.”



“There’s a lot of noise going on. It’s hard to listen. I have 1 ear concentrating on a word and the other ear is trying to listen to the conversation.”

“Don’t talk too much. It becomes noise I can’t work out.”

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

# 4 step approach



# 1. Recognise and monitor

- Look for warning signs of memory overload
- Evaluate the demand – abstract vs concrete, amount
- Check in -ask the child what are they doing
- Encourage to ask - repair strategies
- Environment



## 2. Weigh up the size of the language demand and reduce

In order to prevent failure decrease the amount of information.

- Shortening sentences – demand of amount
- Making links to something meaningful and familiar – demand of new learning
- Simplify the language – demand of complexity of language



So we are going to learn about digestion. Digestion is what happens to the food we eat. All the food we eat gets broken down into tiny pieces. The body is really clever it knows the things we need from our food and it is able to get rid of all the things we don't need or can't use. This whole process is called digestion.





- **Digestion = what happens to the food we eat**
- Our body **breaks food down** into **tiny pieces**.
- It **keeps** the things from food that we **need**.
- It **gets rid** of things from food that we **can't use**.



# Demand of amount

- Break multi step tasks to one step tasks, supported by memory aids such as visual task boards.

TITLE			
	Learning objective 	1- 10	





## 3. Repetition of key information

- Regularly repeat information that is key to the activity – from general to specifics
- Encourage requesting for repetition - being active in listening

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

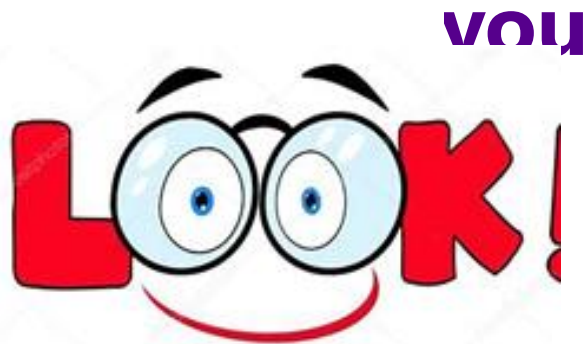
AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK



## 4. Memory aids

- Make use of other memory aids such as word banks, leaving key information on the board, task boards from simple 1, 2, steps to more, visual cue cards – listening, using repair strategies.
- Need to have practice using aids before they will be successfully used in the class



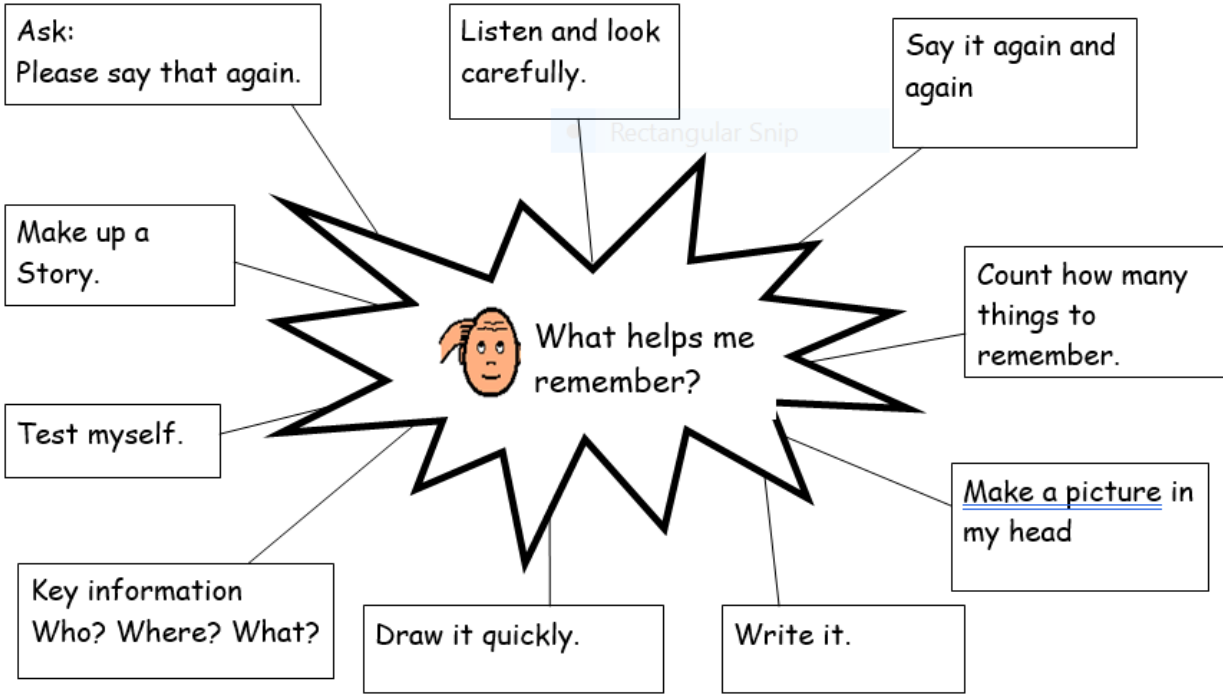


OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

# Develop own strategies



# What next for you?



OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK



**Thankyou for actively  
listening**

