

ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP ATTENTION & LISTENING SKILLS

One of the most common characteristics of children with difficulties in understanding and using spoken language is limited attention and listening skills. Here are some ideas that you can work on at home or at school with **older children**.

Odd one out



Say a list of four words (e.g. cat, dog, slipper, bird) where the child has to listen to the list and tell you which is the odd one out. This activity also requires good auditory memory and organisational skills.

Fruit Salad



A group of more than four people sit in a circle. Each person chooses a fruit (you can give the children a picture of his/her fruit to help them remember it). The person in the middle calls out two fruits who have to change places (e.g. if mango cherry are called the two people who chose those fruits have to change places). The person in the middle can call out "fruit salad" which means that everybody has to get up and change places.

Shopping game



This game requires at least four to five players. The first person begins by saying, "I went shopping and I bought a" The next person must then repeat the phrase, remembering what the previous person 'bought', and adding another item.

Going to different places



These are all variations on shopping game, above:

I went to the market and bought...

I went to the zoo and saw...

I went on holiday and took...

Observation game



The game begins with all group members looking at how everybody else is dressed. One person leaves the room and the rest of the group have to change something about themselves (e.g. take jumper off, remove glasses). The "guesser" returns and has to identify what has changed.

Chinese Whispers



Each player has a turn at thinking of a message which is then passed around the group by whispering it to the person next to them. The last person compares the message in it's final form with the original message.

Blink Murder



One person leaves the room. The rest of the group select a 'murderer' to 'kill' the rest by blinking at them. The person in the middle has to identify the 'murderer' before the rest of the group is killed.

Bean there!



This works best with a group of children and some room! The caller can call various types of bean and the children have to respond as follows:

Long bean – stand up with arms in the air

Broad bean – stand up with arms stretched out to the side

Baked bean – crouch down, making themselves as small as possible

Jelly bean – shake everything

You can make this easier by having fewer types of beans or harder by adding different types of beans.