

Auditory Processing Intervention Activities That Score

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Visual support balls show story components to assist in recall of the narrative.

Last summer I worked with an eight-year-old girl who was diagnosed with autism, auditory processing disorder and ADHD. After speaking with her mother, I learned that her difficulty attending to and processing auditory information has proved problematic in the classroom environment as well as in social situations. Her mother explained that although she can discern when a question is being asked, her answers are usually inappropriate because she did not process the auditory information. In addition, her mother expressed concern with her grasp of temporal concepts about when certain events occurred or will occur. Two general goals for the summer semester were developed: increase pragmatic and semantic skills and increase receptive and expressive language skills.

To address the goal of increasing pragmatic and semantic language skills, her objectives were: recall three significant pieces of information from a story or conversation and repeat back to the clinician given visual, verbal and tactile cues; and follow three complex directions given visual, verbal and tactile cues. Books were chosen that correlated with the clinic's thematic units so that the client could generalize information over sessions. Instead of simply asking "wh" questions after the book was completed, I designed a variety of activities such as scavenger hunts, art projects or games for my client to participate in. Embedded into these activities were opportunities to recall information as well as follow

directions. The activities were also designed to reinforce the information or concepts discussed in the books. For example, when we read a book about a lightning bug, the activity involved finding "wh" questions and visual supports attached to glow sticks in a dark room and then creating a lightning bug craft. When we read a book about pink lemonade, the activity was to make pink lemonade with "wh" questions and visual supports taped to lemons.

One week, the clinic's thematic unit was baseball, and I chose the book *Pete the Cat: Play Ball!* by James Dean. The activity that I designed for this book was a scavenger hunt of mini white balls hidden around the clinic with visual supports of pictures that showed the correct answer taped to them. The client was asked a question about the book in her individual clinic room, with no visual supports, such as "Who was the story about?" She gave her answer, and then we left the room to search the hallway for the first ball, which allowed her to check the accuracy of her answer. When she reached the ball, we discussed whether she was right, reviewed the information from the story, and then she placed the ball in a container. She was then asked another question, and the search continued. The visual supports helped her check her recall of the information and allowed for self-correction when needed, but since she was asked the question without the visual support in sight, it allowed her to recall the information first on her own. After she had answered all the questions and gathered all of the visual support balls, we returned to her clinic room. We reviewed each question by taking the balls out one by one, but this time my client was required to tell me the information without being asked a "wh" question. After telling me about each picture, she tossed the ball into a small trash can with a laminated picture of a baseball mitt attached.

Participation in this activity required my client to follow several complex directions which were given to her before we left the room, such as: search for the picture

that showed the answer she gave, stop and check the answer, put the ball in a container and wait for the next question before continuing on in the hallway. Please see below for the list of questions and visual supports for answers I used for *Pete the Cat: Play Ball!*



Visual support + Motivational game = Home Run Intervention!

Who was the story about?	
What did Pete bring to the game?	
What happened when Pete was up to bat?	
What was the name of Pete's team?	
What happened when Pete tried to catch the ball?	
Who won the game?	
What did the teams say to each other after the game was over?	

Pete the Cat "Who" and "What" prompts to help recall the story.

In order to address my client's goals regarding receptive and expressive language, the following objectives were developed: increase receptive

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vocabulary in the area of descriptors such as temporal concepts (yesterday/today/tomorrow) given verbal, visual and tactile cues and use descriptive vocabulary (yesterday/today/tomorrow) upon request given visual, verbal and tactile cues. I found that a very simple activity was very effective. I used a cardboard trifold with the words yesterday, today and tomorrow on each space at the top. I used different color paper to back the words to help delineate them from each other. Prior to each session, I asked my client's mother to tell me something my client

participated in that was different from her daily activities yesterday, today and tomorrow. At the end of each session, I discussed these events with my client and drew very simple pictures of each event. My client helped draw the pictures, telling me details to add, who was there, what they saw, etc. Each day had its own picture, which was placed on the corresponding trifold. Then, I asked my client questions such as, "When are you going to speech – yesterday, today or tomorrow?" while touching each section of the trifold for visual support. After she improved

her ability to answer this, I faded the supports over the course of the semester first by not touching each section when I listed the options, and eventually I stopped providing the temporal concept vocabulary options for her and simply asked, "When are you going to speech?" In turn, I also asked her questions like, "What are you doing tomorrow?" Again, at first, I used visual supports of touching the picture on the "tomorrow" section of the trifold, until she was able to answer without this prompting.