

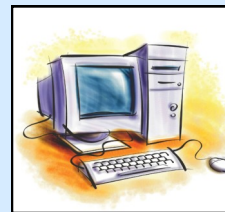
# Games and Activities:

- 'Simon says' game; slowly introduce more instructions.
- Obstacle courses; take turns in giving instructions for which way to go.
- Screen games;
  - set up familiar objects on both sides of the screen. Position the child on the opposite side to you. Give instructions on what to do with the objects and then see if they have done the same.
  - have various objects on your side of the screen, describe an object in terms of its characteristics and see if the child can guess what it is.
- Use 'deliberate mistakes' when carrying out an activity/task. For example, indicate to a boy playing with a dog in a book when actually it is a girl playing with a cat. Observe whether the child picks up on the mistakes.
- Cooking/craft activities that require following instructions; give the instructions verbally.
- Inference games to look for clues and use background knowledge to answer questions about scenarios.



## Useful websites and resources:

- [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)
- [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)
- [www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)
- [www.elklan.co.uk](http://www.elklan.co.uk)
- 'Receptive Language Difficulties' by Liz Baldwin
- 'Speech, Language and Communication-Pocketbook' Victoria Mason & Emela Milne



*Information from [www.icommunicatetherapy.com](http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com)*

*[www.childdevelopment.com.au](http://www.childdevelopment.com.au)*

*NEPS Good Practice Guide 2015*

*Cover image from [www.bilingualistics.com](http://www.bilingualistics.com)*

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## How to Support Children with Receptive Language Difficulties



## What is Receptive Language?

Receptive language is the ability to understand words and language. It involves gaining information and meaning from routine, visual information within the environment, sounds and words, concepts such as size, shape, colours and time, grammar and written information.



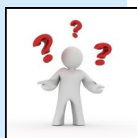
## Why is Receptive Language important for learning?

Children with receptive language difficulties may have problems with the comprehension of language, understanding words, sentence structure or concepts. They may appear to understand because they can pick out key words and follow non-verbal clues, e.g. gesture, eye gaze etc. but this does not mean they are secure with language.

Within the school setting, difficulties in understanding language may lead to attention and listening difficulties and/or behavioural issues. It will also impair their ability to access age-appropriate curriculum and activities.

Receptive language difficulties may also impact on:

- social skills
- sensory processing
- executive functioning
- expressive language
- planning and sequencing
- auditory processing



## Classroom strategies:

- Always encourage; visual/verbal, looking/listening, showing/telling.
- Obtain the child's eye contact before speaking to them; cueing them in with their name can promote this.
- Limit the amount of instructions you give them at one time; short, clear steps using simple language is ideal.
- Ask the child to repeat the instruction back to you once to ensure they have understood what to do.
- Use connectives to order your instruction, e.g. *first, then*. Demonstrate the meaning of these words.
- Where possible, model the task you want the child to complete.
- Use visual aids to support oral instructions/tasks. These could be pictorial, body language, facial expression etc.
- Start a personal dictionary to support their vocabulary knowledge—use pictures to go with the words.
- Encourage play-based activities where appropriate; use a 'buddy' with good language skills to model vocabulary for them.
- Reduce background noise where possible; foster quiet working conditions and minimise distractions.
- Timetable additional guided reading sessions which are based on discussion and questioning.
- Teach the child to indicate when they have not understood something so you can support them without impacting on their self-esteem.
- Work on passive sentences, e.g. 'John was beaten by Peter...who was beaten?' 'The rat was caught by the mouse...who was caught?'



## How to help at home:

- Talk about things as you do them so your child learns to link actions with words.
- Play with your child often; play helps speech and language skills.
- Avoid complex or confusing words; give instructions in short, clear steps,
- Make sure there are no distractions when you talk to them, e.g. TV, music.
- Get down to your child's level when speaking to them or playing with them.
- Give your child time to think and process what you are saying to them.
- Read together; discuss what you see, name objects and ask questions.
- If you ask them to do something, encourage them to relay back what you've said to ensure they have understood.
- Sometimes give them an instructions with 2 or 3 things to remember and encourage them to rehearse the information to remember it.
- Good sleep patterns and a healthy diet can positively impact on their attention and concentration skills throughout the day.

