Primary Strategy

Day-to-day assessment is a natural, integral and essential part of effective learning and teaching. Teachers and children continually reflect on how learning is progressing, see where improvements can be made and identify the next steps to take.

Key characteristics of assessment for learning are:

• using effective questioning techniques
• using marking and feedback strategies
• sharing learning goals
• peer and self-assessment.

Barriers to Pupil Involvement

• Poor attention
• Poor understanding of
  – curriculum
  – concepts, e.g. ‘know’, ‘understand’, ‘question’
  – judgements, e.g. ‘easy’, ‘good’, ‘useful’
• Poor expressive language and/or literacy
• Low self-esteem
• Perfectionism

National Curriculum

Knowledge, skills and understanding underpinning Speaking and Listening:

1. To speak clearly, fluently and confidently to different people, pupils should be taught to:
   a. speak with clear diction and appropriate intonation
   b. choose words with precision
   c. organise what they say
   d. focus on the main point(s)
   e. include relevant detail
   f. take into account the needs of their listeners.

2. To listen, understand and respond to others, pupils should be taught to:
   a. sustain concentration
   b. remember specific points that interest them
   c. make relevant comments
   d. listen to others’ reactions
   e. ask questions to clarify their understanding (Active Listening)
However…. 

- It’s impossible to sustain concentration if you don’t understand
- Only students with good understanding are good at active listening
- They demonstrate their understanding by asking relevant questions and seeking clarification
- How do children demonstrate poor understanding?

Why are processing difficulties often missed?

Children with poor expressive language in terms of pronunciation and sentence structure have relatively good understanding. While severe comprehension problems are often hidden by:

- clear, fluent speech
- good factual knowledge
- good memory span
- visual strengths

Active Listeners can:

- check they have understood instructions or ambiguous language correctly
- compensate when they switch off or forget
- check they have heard someone correctly
- gain time while they write something down or work something out
- cope with different teaching styles and expectations

Children lacking active listening skills tend to do one or more of these…

- give it their best shot rather than seek clarification
- ask repetitive rather than specific Qs
- go round the houses, say too much or go off-target when answering questions
- try to deflect attention

(continued…)

Children lacking active listening skills

- say nothing or play for time rather than say ‘I don’t know’
- try to answer impossible Qs
- constantly check that they are doing the right thing

Do not trust their own judgement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make it easier for pupils to attend (see ‘Attention Controls’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make sure pupils know you are talking to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish difference between instructions, questions and comments - do pupils know whether action, information or social chat is required? (Beware implied requests)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure pupils are aware that messages cannot always be understood/do not always make sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish concepts ‘I don’t know’, ‘I don’t understand’ and agree on when it’s OK to guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop independent learning by giving practice at dealing with impossible/unclear requests and modelling clarification strategies before giving help/extra clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Class rules for Good Listening, Good Thinking, Seeking Help, Correcting Mistakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make lesson goals explicit to maintain bigger picture and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear lesson objectives and success criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Step by step work-plan for disorganised/under-confident pupils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make relative terms concrete, e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– ‘easy’ = completed with little or no help/ did it all by myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– ‘very good work’ = met all success/marking criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– ‘excellent work’ = met success criteria plus new idea or met success criteria plus did it alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– ‘useful’ = helped to get job done; achieved learning objective/personal goal or individual step(s) in work-plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visual appraisal systems, e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– helping hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– emoticons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– thermometers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Comment-only marking, e.g. 2 stars and a wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comments on post-it notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear marking criteria for self- and peer-marking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make criticism easier by generally encouraging balanced thinking rather than absolutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. things for and against mobile phones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what’s do we like about the park and what could be improved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what features would you keep/change in computer game?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what’s nice about brothers and sisters and what’s annoying?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to facilitate pupil involvement (6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Value mistakes and corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– everyone makes mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– mistakes are how we learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– mistakes are memory aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– mistakes show we are thinking for ourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– mistakes show we have tried something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– mistakes = exploration and discovery, learning what doesn’t work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– corrections show we are learning from our mistakes and working out the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Class policy for mistakes/corrections – when X happens, do Y or Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social stories/flow-charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. <a href="http://www.setbc.org/pictureSET/resource.aspx?id=235">http://www.setbc.org/pictureSET/resource.aspx?id=235</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It's O.K. to Make a Mistake

If I make a mistake on my work it is all right.

Everyone makes mistakes.

After making a mistake, I can go back and fix the mistake.

If I make the same mistake again, I can go back until I get it right.

Everyone makes mistakes and it's O.K.

That's how I learn.

That's how others learn, too.
References

• Maggie Johnson and Carolyn Player (2009) Active Listening for Active Learning: A resource pack for mainstream inclusion

• Maggie Johnson (2007) Helping Children Hang On To Every Word

Both from QEd Publications (www.qed.uk.com)

References


Primary Strategy
http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/19949

National Curriculum: Speaking and Listening
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00198874/english/ks1/en1

References

• Johnson, M. (4th edition, 2005) Functional Language in the Classroom (and at Home). Clinical Communication Materials, Manchester Metropolitan University, contact Jessica Berrigan, Tel: 0161 247 2020 j.berrigan@mmu.ac.uk
Are you comfortable before you start?

Are you on time, well-prepared and know what’s happening?

Can you keep your mind on the task without feeling tired or confused?

Is anything stopping you concentrate?

Are you comfortable before you start?

Are you on time, well-prepared and know what’s happening?

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Can you keep your mind on the task without feeling tired or confused?

Is anything stopping you concentrate?

Are you on time, well-prepared and know what’s happening?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comfort</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Distractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Am I sitting comfortably in a good position?</td>
<td>Do I know…</td>
<td>Do I feel awake?</td>
<td>Do I know what I should be focusing on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I move easily?</td>
<td>What I have to do?</td>
<td>How many things do I need to think about?</td>
<td>Do I keep looking at or listening to other things?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are my clothes comfortable?</td>
<td>What the teacher is looking for?</td>
<td>Can I concentrate on them all at once?</td>
<td>Can I ignore them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there good light?</td>
<td>How long it will last?</td>
<td>Is it making sense?</td>
<td>Can I remove them or move away from them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am I the right temperature?</td>
<td>What’s happening next?</td>
<td>Is it wearing me out?</td>
<td>Do I keep thinking about other things?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is anything hurting or disturbing me?</td>
<td>Have I got a workplan?</td>
<td>Will I do better if I tackle one thing at a time?</td>
<td>Can I tell someone and then get on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did I last go to the toilet?</td>
<td>Have I got everything I need?</td>
<td>Will I do better after a short break to move around?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding</th>
<th>SuXess Factor</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Troubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I know what’s going on?</td>
<td>Can I do this?</td>
<td>Am I enjoying this?</td>
<td>Am I feeling angry, upset or worried about anything?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I know why we’re doing it?</td>
<td>Can I do it if I keep trying?</td>
<td>Why not?</td>
<td>Am I afraid to make a mistake?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I hear properly?</td>
<td>Have I got enough time to do it?</td>
<td>What would make it better/easier?</td>
<td>Am I thinking about these things most of the time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I see properly?</td>
<td>Have I got enough help?</td>
<td>How can it benefit me?</td>
<td>Who could help me change things so those thoughts and feelings went away?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the words make sense?</td>
<td>Could I do just part of it?</td>
<td>What will happen if I don’t do it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the pictures make sense?</td>
<td>What part could I manage?</td>
<td>Is it worth putting off any longer?!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it going too fast?</td>
<td>Can I see how well I am doing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I remember it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I need more clues?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who do I ask for help?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*‘Helping Children Hang On To Your Every Word’, Maggie Johnson, 2007, QEd Publications*
WHAT IS AN ACTIVE LISTENER?
Someone who realises that messages cannot always be understood, and takes responsibility for seeking clarification when confused, stuck or unsure.

WHOLE CLASS STRATEGIES
FOR DEVELOPING ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- Develop class rules for ‘good listening’:
  - ☑ SIT quietly in your own space
  - ☑ LOOK at or FACE the speaker
  - ☑ THINK about the words
  - ☑ WAIT - one person speak at a time

- Create a safe environment where children expect to make mistakes, know they won’t understand everything & are shown what to do when this happens

- Promote the idea that it’s ‘good to ask’. Flag up the benefits of seeking help or clarification using good role models - children need to see that everybody asks questions and gets stuck from time to time.

- Respond positively to requests for information, and the ability to say ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I don’t understand’.

- Give children practice in deciding if requests or instructions make sense, and seeking clarification when they don’t (e.g. during Circle Time).

- Avoid giving children more information as soon as they get stuck, as this removes both the need and opportunity for them to practice seeking help independently. Suggest appropriate clarification strategies instead.
  e.g. “It’s difficult to hear me with everyone talking, isn’t it. If you want me to say it again, just say ‘A bit louder please’. How would you like me to say it?”

- Stick to simple repetition unless children actually request clarification.

- Encourage children to check with each other before going to an adult.

- Indicate your own need for clarification, rather than guessing.

- Adopt consistent language and class rules for guessing:
  * ‘guessing’ = giving an answer when you don’t know if it’s right
  "It might be wrong! So first check it’s OK to guess.
  * ‘having a go’ = trying to answer when people know you’re not sure
  * ‘working it out’ = using clues to get the right answer

Don’t guess - if you don’t understand or hear properly
- if a grown-up needs to know ‘the truth’

Guessing is fine - if you let people know you are guessing
- if a grown-up asks you to ‘have a go’
- in guessing-games

© ‘Active Listening For Active Learning’, QEd Publications, 2009 Maggie Johnson & Carolyn Player 8
Giving and Seeking clarification

Suggestions for classroom discussion/policy

No-one understands everything – I can’t always understand you, and you don’t always understand me. How do we feel when that happens?

A. You try to tell me something but I don’t understand
   1. I will let you know I don’t understand
   2. You need to do one or more of the following:
      * Say it again trying to put in all the sounds
      * Explain it a different way or give me a clue
      * Mime it
      * Draw it
      * Point to it or show me
      * Leave it. People often take a while to work things out.
      We can always try again later.

B. I am talking to you but you don’t understand
   1. You need to let me know you don’t understand
   2. Do you need me to:
      * Say all or part of it again?
      * Explain it a different way?
      * Tell you what one or more of the words mean?
      * Show you or draw it?
      * Write it down?
      * Give you a clue? (more information)

C. I ask the class to do something but you’re not sure what to do
   1. See if the person next to you can explain (they mustn’t do it for you).
   2. If neither of you know what to do, check with the rest of the table.
   3. If none of you know, put your hands up or ask ______ to come over.
   4. If ______ doesn’t know, one of you needs to ask the teacher/put your Help! sign up/post a Q in the question-box… (select as appropriate).
TASK

What do I need? (make a list)

What do I have to do?
1. Get everything I need
2.

What to do when finished

taken from ‘Functional Language in the Classroom and at Home’, M. Johnson (2005)
Organisation Sheet

1. Read all through your task
   **ASK IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND**

2. Think what to do first, then what to do next

3. Write it down if you need to
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.
   6. ↓ until you have finished

4. Make a list of all the things you need to complete the task

5. Put away everything that you do NOT need and make sure you have enough space to work in

6. Get all the things you need

7. **DO IT!**

8. If it is written down, cross off each stage as you do it

9. Check you have done what was asked

10. Tell an adult you have finished

Appendix 3  *Helping Children Hang On To Your Every Word*, QEd Publications (2007)
Disorders of Language and Literacy - where is the overlap?
Children with diagnoses of language disorder, autistic spectrum disorder, dyslexia and dyspraxia have as much in common as they do distinguishing characteristics. Maggie offers a unique model of language acquisition which has helped teachers, parents and support workers develop a greater understanding of the complex issues involved in diagnosis, and their role in providing appropriate support. For aspects of assessment, extend to a full day.

Order! Order! (combine with either of the next two courses for a full day)
Developing narrative through self-organisation and awareness of time
The poor oral and written narrative abilities of pupils with specific language and literacy disorders and dyspraxia are commonly associated with difficulties in general organisation, sequencing, task analysis, planning, following routines, creative play/drama and calendar knowledge. Maggie pulls these various threads together and offers a practical approach to intervention which supports the national Literacy Strategy.

Making the World a Less Confusing Place (combine with next course for a full day on managing behavioural difficulties)
Many children find the world a confusing place and do not seem to respond to reward systems or praise. Perhaps they cannot read the hidden language of non-verbal communication, social behaviour and normal routine that most of us take for granted? Or is fluent speech and rote memory masking significant comprehension difficulties? Maggie considers practical ways to help children make sense of the world by capitalising on their visual strengths.

Helping Children Hang On To Every Word (combine with next course for a full day on curriculum access - Getting The Message Across)
If children are opting out, switching off, passively waiting for direction or guessing randomly without focus, we need to find ways of helping them engage by making the learning experience more meaningful and rewarding. Maggie looks at ways of improving attention and concentration, and considers difficulties often masked by inappropriate behaviour.

Active Listening for Active Learning
A whole-school approach to reducing the confusion & sense of failure experienced by children with comprehension and language processing difficulties by enabling them to take an active role in improving their learning experience and contributing to AfL. Strategies include improving concentration, recognising the difference between guessing and ‘working it out’ and seeking clarification. Often the most immediate effect is seen in improved self-esteem.

Lost for Words (half or full day or combine with next course)
Practical strategies to support vocabulary acquisition, concept development & word retrieval.

Synthetic Phonics for All / Letters and Sounds for the special needs child
The National Curriculum recognises the importance of phonological awareness in the development of literacy. But not all aspects are included, reducing the effectiveness of early input and literacy support for poor readers. This session explores the link between phonological awareness, language development and reading readiness with practical strategies to benefit students of all ages who struggle with phonics.
(Extend to a full day to include support for students with disordered speech pronunciation)
The Reluctant Speaker: Working with Selectively Mute Children (half or full day)
Persistent failure to communicate creates high anxiety for both families and professionals. This introductory session gives an overview of patterns of communication withdrawal, assessment and management procedures involving home, school and the wider community. The content is suitable for a wide range of professionals, including those in mental health settings. Please note, a twilight/half-day session is most appropriate for early years settings, while the full day covers the full age-range from pre-school to young adult and provides greater opportunity for case discussion and planning in small groups.

Understanding and Coping With Dyspraxia (half or full day)
_A Speech and Language Therapist’s Perspective_
Maggie aims to make you feel dyspraxic in order to appreciate and begin to compensate for the difficulties experienced by children with developmental co-ordination disorder. The session includes consideration of the overlap with disorders of language and literacy and coping strategies for home and at school. These themes can be developed in more detail in a full day, with opportunity for group working and discussion. Please note this course covers body dyspraxia rather than the more specific verbal or articulatory dyspraxia.

Creating a Communication Friendly Environment – Nursery? Classroom? College?
Maggie invites us to consider what brings out the best - and worst! - in us in a learning situation and suggests that often it's the simplest changes that can make the biggest difference to a person's sense of belonging, purpose, enjoyment, success and motivation.

Functional Language in the Classroom (full day)
Practical strategies for identifying and supporting children with specific comprehension disorders on a day to day basis, both at home and in school. Coping strategies are covered in four themes – recognition, active listening, appropriateness and turn-taking. In response to participant feedback, this course is also offered over two days to include time-awareness, organisation and narrative skills. All areas are supported by the course manual ‘Functional Language in the Classroom – and at Home!’ (Maggie Johnson, 3rd edition, 2005).

The Here and Now Child
Many children operate extremely well in the ‘here and now’ where language is linked to concrete experience and all they need is right in front of them. But when poorly developed visualisation skills prevent them linking this experience to past and future events, problems with attention, understanding and behaviour will follow. Maggie presents simple and practical strategies to help achieve immediate improvements.

About the speaker
Maggie is a speech and language therapist advisor specialising in childhood communication disorders and selective mutism. With over twenty years experience in education and community settings, Maggie works closely with families and schools in East Kent and provides training and workshops for schools, parents and health professionals across the UK and abroad.

Maggie was a key contributor to the Primary National Strategy for children with special educational needs (DfES 2005). Her publications include ‘Functional Language in the Classroom’ (Manchester Metropolitan University), ‘The Selective Mutism Resource Manual’ (Speechmark Publishing Ltd), ‘Helping Children Hang On To Your Every Word’ and ‘Active Listening for Active Learning’ (QEd Publications). Maggie has also designed a range of practical language resources for Taskmaster, including the popular classroom social skills posters Good Sitting, Good Listening, Good Talking, Good Waiting, Good Asking, Facing Fears, Good Friends, Watch This Space and Do I Tell?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>27 Monkton Rd</th>
<th>FEES (Academic year 20012/13)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minster</td>
<td>Full day £675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsgate</td>
<td>Half day £360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent CT12 4EB</td>
<td>Twilight £295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01843 824069 (Fax/phone)</td>
<td>plus travel charge 50p per mile &amp; overnight expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:talktalk@compuserve.com">talktalk@compuserve.com</a></td>
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