



The Learning Institute

Supporting Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) – Part 2

Overview

As covered in *Supporting speech, language and communication needs – part 1*, speech, language or communication needs are complex.

Through an understanding of the language pyramid, this second CPD opportunity will further develop your understanding of the principles associated with language development. You will look at the profile of a child who struggles with speech, language or communication, and then at strategies that may support them.

Target audience

Teaching assistants, support workers

Duration

Approximately 1 hour

The Learning Institute provides opportunities for individuals and communities through high quality education, training and research programmes that challenge personal barriers and promote social inclusion. To find out more, please get in touch.

Introduction

Children and young people with speech, language or communication needs (SLCN) cover the whole ability range and their needs may be complex, so effective support is important.

This CPD will help you to understand the language pyramid in the development of speech, language and communication. It will enable you to examine the profile of a child and then consider the strategies that may support them.

Context

Speech and language therapists (SLTs) play an important role in supporting schools/settings to meet the needs of children with SLCN, and in supporting good practice across **universal**, **targeted** and **specialist** approaches. They have a distinct role in **assessing, planning, delivering and evaluating** support for children and young people with a range of speech, language and communication needs. SLTs play a key role in **diagnosis** of children with different speech, language and communication needs.

Speech and language therapists are key partners for schools, local authorities and early years settings where they can:

- Support senior leaders to ensure whole school communication and supportive practice.
- Provide assessment, including screening or more specific assessment of individuals to determine specific areas of need and strategies to support development.
- Provide workforce development, including training, coaching and modelling support for other adults.
- Deliver programmes for specific groups or individuals.
- Work closely with families and other professionals.

Objectives

- To understand the language pyramid in the development of speech, language and communication.
- To identify strategies to support specific SLC needs.
- To identify the strategies to support a specific child

Resources

Pen and paper for note taking

Notes and/or mind maps from *Supporting SLCN – Part 1*

Internet access to following:

- Preschool Learning Alliance: Supporting Children's Speech, Language and Communication Development [video] available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImgbUsmpKpk>
- The Communication Trust: Don't Get Me Wrong [document] available at <https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/174/dontgetmewrong.pdf>

Task 1: The Language Pyramid

Provision for children and young people with communication and interaction difficulties should reflect:

- The need for support in developing social relationships
- An awareness of increased risk of emotional or mental health problems

Interventions to support children and young people with communication and interaction difficulties might therefore include:

- rich oral language environments
- individual support
- alternative means of communication

An understanding of the language pyramid is helpful in supporting the speech, language or communication needs of individuals.

Watch the video *Supporting Children's Speech, Language and Communication Development in Early Years Provision*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImgbUsmpKpk>.

(Watch specifically from 11:57 to 16:39, where the team introduce the language pyramid to show how speech, language and communication develops in young children)

Draw the pyramid and note the layers.

Task 2: Strategies and Support

Strategies to support children with a SLCN could include:

- Pre-teaching vocabulary (Goldilocks words)
- Combining words with visuals (multi-sensory aspects)
- Explicit teaching of listening skills
- Providing opportunities for inference (eg. Language and Stories for Thinking)
- Planned opportunities to teach collaboration skills
- Increasing time for pupils to respond (wait 10 seconds)
- Adapting teacher questions and responses

Watch a second extract from the same video (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImgbUsmpKpk>), where they share strategies and ideas to support each layer of the language pyramid.

(Watch this time from 17:33 to 41:44. Note - they experience a technical hitch in between).

Make notes or add to the mind map that you created during Part 1.

The strategies and ideas discussed are suitable for young and older children alike. You may find it helpful to watch the film through the first time listening carefully. Then watch it through again making notes.

Task 3: Assessment Task – Meeting the Needs of a Specific Child

Go back to the research by The Communication Trust, *Don't Get Me Wrong*, available at: <https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/174/dontgetmewrong.pdf>, and skim read pages 20 - 29.

Here you will find the profiles of nine different children.

Choose one of them and read the profile through again carefully. Some of the children have a SLCN alone, others also have additional special educational needs.

For the child you have chosen:

- Note the conclusions you have drawn about this child's special educational needs whilst reading the profile.
- Then check page 30, where you will find a summary of the child's diagnosis.
- If this child was in a class you were working in, what support and strategies could you put into place to help them?

Task 4: Reflection on learning

Please consider:

- What knowledge did I already have that has been refreshed by this CPD?
- How has this CPD developed my knowledge and understanding?
- Something from this CPD I will share with a colleague is...
- One question I will follow up and discuss with a colleague
- How can I apply what I now know to my practice?

Sources

EYAlliance (2019) *Supporting Children's Speech, Language and Communication Development in Early Years Provision*.8 February. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImgbUsmpKpk>. (Accessed: 20 April 2020).

The Communication Trust (2009) *Don't Get Me Wrong!* Available at: <https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/174/dontgetmewrong.pdf> (Accessed: 3 April 2020).

Further reading

The Communication Trust website, available at <https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk>.

This is the second part of a series of four professional development modules on speech, language and communication needs in children and young people. The professional development modules should be undertaken in order, 1 - 4. All of the modules will be available on the Learning Institute website at www.learninginstitute.co.uk/cpd.

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