

Meeting Listening & Language Challenges in a Busy Preschool

Cara King

Objectives: The participant will be able to:

- 1) Create an acceptable listening environment to support social language development.
- 2) Balance curriculum and IEP goals to continue to develop listening and language acquisition.
- 3) Include families to support language learning outside of the classroom and promote a positive preschool experience.

What we are all undertaking requires purposeful planning, data collection and reflection, specialized skills and time. We are playing in preschool but we are playing with a purpose. Here is what I think I do all day...

Multitasking!

Get to Know Your Students and Families

Home Visits:

- An opportunity to get to know families and their children's daily lives
- An opportunity to understand a family's expectations
 - Hopes and Dreams: Big and Small (handout)
- An opportunity to understand your student
 - Preschool Student Information Sheet (handout)
- Take pictures

The first and last day of school are the hardest for a teacher. The first day you are starting all over again. The last day you are letting go of the progress that was made. What comes in the middle is the building of a classroom community. Create your classroom community first, and the learning will fall naturally into place.

Kathy Griffin's Teaching Strategies
Copyright 2013

Getting to know you, continued!

Social Story about school to leave with families or send to families

School Orientation: Have support so you can share orientation with focused adults and allow the kids an opportunity to play and get to know each other.

Supporting Transition to Preschool

- Family Pictures in the classroom
- Bringing things from home
- Social stories
- Pictures of the children
 - Check- In Board
 - Cubbie
- Use of Visuals
 - The day's schedule in pictures
 - First / Then
 - Pictures of procedures
 - Arrival
 - Hand washing
 - Meal time
 - Rest Time
 - Recess
 - Working with specialists

Classroom Procedures & Rules

Know your procedures and rules take time to teach them.

- Write out your day and include what procedures are required when and what your expectations of your children are.
- What visuals could you create and use to support your children learning these procedures and rules?
- What auditory cues could you use?
 - Good morning song? Clean up song? Transition cue?

These procedures and rules will have to be explicitly taught and reviewed and practiced OVER and OVER and OVER again!

These procedures and rules will have to be reviewed and recognized / reinforced OVER and OVER and OVER again!

Parallel Talk- talk about what you are seeing, what your students are doing

Meeting Listening & Language Challenges in a Busy Preschool

Cara King

Balancing curriculum & IEP goals

Curriculum

- North Carolina Foundations of Early Learning: http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/pdf_forms/NC_foundations.pdf
- The Creative Curriculum: <http://teachingstrategies.com>
http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/Creative_Curriculum_Touring_Guide.pdf
- Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language & Speech:
<https://forms.diamondmindinc.com/sunshinecottage/edstore?token=152484545>
- Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>

PURPOSEFUL PLANNING

- Know your students and their needs
- Theme based? Literacy based? Study based?

Theme based and Literacy based

- Picking vocabulary and language structures based on the theme and pairing with books allows for multiple opportunities to experience and use new vocabulary and language structures
- Study based: See article from Creative Curriculum regarding Theme Based versus Study Based
- Think about your day, are there times that specific vocabulary and language can be naturally incorporated in a meaningful way? Arrival? Circle Time? Centers? Meal Time? Bathroom breaks?
- Center materials: Choose materials, arts and crafts projects that support vocabulary and language structures by providing many opportunities for repetition and meaningful experiences.

More ways to incorporate and balance...

- Plan with your team
- Share across your team & with your families: Website, Newsletter, Wonderful Words Book
- In your classroom write it out and review it where everyone can see it
- Post 'cheat sheets' in appropriate places with reminders of ways to work on your targets?
- Don't forget a central place for data collection too!
- In your lesson plans - Write it out

What about listening in this busy classroom?

- Use of technology: Daily listening checks! Soundfield? Personal FM?
- Consider your room set-up
 - Quiet centers away from noisy centers
 - Quiet place to have small group / one on one work
 - Out of the classroom? Near closed centers, low visual distractions
- Consider noise sources
 - Is there as much carpeting as possible? Soft surfaces to cover hard surfaces? Tennis balls (Hush-Ups) on chair legs
- Consider your kids and your schedule
 - Better to work with small group or one on one when?
 - Working in small group or one on one when noisy centers are closed
- Naming centers: Happy Home, Play Place, Creation Station
- Build in opportunities to improve auditory memory
- Practice auditory closure and use of contextual cues
- Have a universal "quiet" signal or way to gain group attention.
 - Visual for large group, visual for small group, song or phrase
- Teach and model strategies for all students to support peer communications in centers
 - Close and quiet
 - Appropriate ways to gain attention
 - Limit amount of children in centers to support social interactions

Meeting Listening & Language Challenges in a Busy Preschool

Cara King

- Remember to use language facilitation techniques
 - Wait time
 - Narration
 - Repetition / restating using familiar vocabulary / Asking for repetition

Team Approach

The more opportunities a child has to be exposed to language structures and vocabulary in a meaningful way, the faster they will learn the targets and grow their vocabulary and language.

- Use your mighty team of experts
 - T.A., SLP, P.T., O.T., V.I.,
 - SCHOOL COMMUNITY
 - FAMILIES

Ways to include families

- Classroom and home connection
 - Newsletters, Homework
 - Daily Communication Notebook
 - Wonderful Word Book
 - Parent Power Pak (Dr. Jean)
http://www.drjean.org/html/monthly_act/act_2011/07_Jul_css/pg03.html
- Families in the classroom
 - Mystery Reader
 - Experiencing a Day in the Life of Preschool
 - Partnering with their children in the classroom when available
 - Families sharing family customs / celebrations
- Workshops – example (Provided through Project Enlightenment and Wake County Public Schools)
<http://literacyconnection.wcpss.net/Connecting%20with%20Families/Workshops%20for%20Families.html>
- Resource sharing
 - Agencies? (Department of Health and Human Services , etc.), Websites
 - Community outings for families and children with special needs
- Family Coaching sessions
- Scheduling, Frequency, Remember to take turns (Show what you know, sit back and coach!)
- Community Visits -See suggested list in handouts

"If kids come to us from strong, healthy functioning families, it makes our job easier. If they do not come to us from strong, healthy, functioning families, it makes our job more important."
- Barbara Colorose

Conclusion

- Get to know your students and their families. Understand their hopes and dreams for their children so that you can support them reaching those goals.
- Support transition to preschool through strong home and school connections.
- Teach and reteach rules and procedures using visuals and auditory signals in your classroom whenever possible to support student understanding and learning.
- Balance IEP goals and curriculum by purposeful planning with your team.
- Set-up your sessions and classroom to support listening in a busy setting.
- Provide opportunities for your families to be involved as much as possible.
- **Resources**
www.handsandvoices.org/pdf/parent_checklistpdf
www.cdestatecous/cdesped/download/pdf/FAP1_3-1-04gpdf
<http://www.agbell.org>
www.beginnings.org

Teach, play, learn and laugh in preschool.