

Performing the Ling Sound Listening Check in Preschool

Tasks: There are three levels of response to the Ling Sound Listening Check:

- (a) Detection - The initial task is a yes/no, did he detect the Ling Sound or not.
- (b) Discrimination - the student will discriminate between two of the Ling Sounds.
- (c) Identification – the student will repeat the sound or identify an object that represents the sound.

The student may have been taught by her family to perform steps (a) and (b) prior to starting school. If not, these skills need to be learned before identification of the sounds (c) can be performed daily. Verify with the deaf/hard of hearing professional that the student is able to correctly complete the task at each level before expecting him to perform the Ling Sound Listening Check within the classroom setting with the teacher or another adult. For example, he can be performing the detection task in the classroom while working on learning the discrimination task 1:1 with the deaf/hard of hearing professional.



Background noise: It is important to teach students to listen to the Ling Sounds while in a quiet environment and at a close distance. Discrimination in noise is a more advanced task that many preschool-age children will not be ready to perform. Listening in quiet is critical for optimal performance however, if a child is able to do the task readily then performance in noise provides good practice and also a clear indication of how noise will impact student listening. If an FM system is used then the presence of noise in the environment is moot while the teacher is performing the Ling Sound Listening Check using the FM transmitter.

Distance from the student to the presenter is important. Routinely, distances of 3 and 10 feet are selected. Students who are still new to the task or those students who have very limited hearing ability with their hearing aids may need closer distances in order to achieve a feeling of success at being able to do the task well.

Visual access: During all Ling Sound presentations, the student must not be able to see the presenter's face. Covering up your face with a paper or your hand will change the acoustics of the sound. Instead, have the child look down, or at a spot on the wall during the Ling check.

Response formats: How the student responds to the Ling Sound Listening Check can vary considerably. Response formats can be very creative but should not take more than a moment of response time. Suggestions are below:

Detection:

For the yes/no detection task, this can be accomplished by having the student stand in front of the presenter and provide a non-verbal response, such as thumbs-up (yes) or thumbs-down (no or quiet trial).

Discrimination:

For the discrimination task, the student can have his back to the presenter and then hold up an appropriate card to signify which of the two sounds he heard. The student will learn to discriminate the most acoustically different sounds first. Once these are mastered he will move toward discrimination of the more acoustically similar sounds. After discrimination of two sounds has been mastered, the student can increase the set to 3, 4, 6 and finally all sounds. Once he can discriminate all sounds he should be expected to perform the Ling Sound Listening Check identification task in the classroom. It is not necessary for the student to perform the discrimination task in the classroom as this is a learning phase between detection and identification and is best mastered in a setting with the deaf/hard of hearing professional.

Identification:

1. For the identification task, the presenter will need to have the student facing them in order to clearly hear verbal responses or to see various visual responses. Therefore an acoustically transparent screen should be used in front of the presenter's face, or the student should be trained to look down during the presentations (look at your knees, look at the table, look at the back of the blue chair, etc).
2. Have a mat with a picture representation of each Ling Sound. The student touches the picture or places a chip on the picture each time he hears the sound.
3. Have real objects that represent each sound. The student will be instructed to make each one do an action when the sound is heard. For example: "Today I want you to make the Ling Things jump (twirl, skip, fly, hover, gamble about, hop)."

Signaling the end of the task:

It is a good idea to end the Ling Sound Listening Check with some kind of question to which the student should be able to readily answer or an action that he would enjoy doing. This provides a bit of a challenge to a routine task and a silly question can signal a fun end to the task.

Data collection needs to occur each time the Ling Sound Listening Check is performed.

Considerations when conducting the Ling Sound Listening Check:

- Do not let the child see you
- Speak at a normal loudness level
- Vary your distances, start close then go to 3 feet, 6 feet, and 9-10 feet
- Do not present the sounds in a rhythmical fashion, or else the child will begin to anticipate the sounds and may give you false responses (guessing)
- Present them in a mixed order each time
- Every teacher who has a child with hearing aids or a cochlear implant in his/her class should perform this test on a daily basis.
- Just make it part of your morning routine.