

EXAMPLE OBSERVATION REPORT

5th grader with a mild to moderate sensorineural hearing loss.

Observations

Jane Thomas, Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf observed Sam in his classroom setting during three separate activities on May 29, 2019. This observation was scheduled to assess the impact of Sam's hearing loss in his general education classroom and how he uses his hearing during lecture, small group, and independent work times.

Classroom Environment:

Mrs. Johnson's portable classroom was carpeted with acoustic tile on the ceiling. A sound field system was part of the classroom technology. Mrs. Johnson's class size is currently 27 students. Sam was seated in a pod of 5 students at the front of his classroom and had good visual access to his teacher and the students to his side and across from him. He did not have good visual access to the students behind him, which was the major portion of the class. This made speechreading difficult.

In addition to the sound field system, an FM system compatible with his hearing aids was utilized in the classroom. The noise level in the classroom fluctuated with the activities that were scheduled during the observation time from moderately loud (small group discussions) to quiet (independent seat work). Sam wore both his hearing aids and receivers for the FM system. A sound check and listening check performed both in the morning and later showed they were functioning properly. Sam's teacher supported information during classroom discussions by rephrasing student responses giving Sam access to information he was missing outside his listening range.

Description of Lesson Observed:

Sam was observed in 3 separate settings involving a group activity: (1) a counselor led a lesson on careers with visuals (PowerPoint presentation), (2) a follow up activity in social studies which involved group discussion, and (3) a teacher led discussion and independent seat work. After the observation, Sam was taken out of the classroom and asked questions about the lessons. The following listening behaviors were noted during the observation.

Observed Listening Behaviors:

- Sam was instructed with his group to discuss and find a solution to a monthly money shortage. Sam did not take part in the discussion and he appeared unable to access other student's comments due to the noise level in the room from other groups engaged in discussion.
- When the counselor asked "What could you do to earn more money?" (focusing on monthly wages with a high school diploma and paying living expenses), Sam was only able to share his own solution. ("Work a second or third job, sell the TV, ride a bicycle, that's about it"). He was not able to share any of the other suggestions given by his group.
- Later when asked if it was easy or hard to hear what his pod was saying during the group discussion, Sam replied, "It was hard".
- Sam missed instructions on what materials to take out (Social Studies big book and practice book). He had to observe students in his pod before he was able to follow these directions.
- On 3 occasions during the teacher led instruction, Sam missed page numbers which were given in quick succession. He depended on watching his classmates in order to get to the correct page.
- When given multiple step directions, Sam missed the page number in his practice book and was uncertain which paragraph he was supposed to read (Text or practice book). He had to ask a classmate for clarification.

- When asked for an important person's name, Sam raised his hand and repeated the answer just given by a classmate. He was unaware that answer was already presented.
- When given directions for practice workbook 86, Sam watched the students in his pod to see what they were doing before beginning.
- During independent work time Sam had to check with Mrs. Johnson several times to make sure he was understanding the workbook page. She redirected him back to his text and asked him what he was not understanding. He responded with the correct answer to the question.

Listening Comprehension Data:

When asked about his small group science project, Sam could not identify the purpose of the project, only that it was about the "...inner world, inner something....I dunno....Earth, Mars, Venus, Mercury and the sun." When asked what they were going to do with the project, he did not know.

During the counselor's instruction on careers (30-minute period) five key points were reviewed and discussed:

- High School graduate vs College graduate income – he understood this one.
- Group discussion to improve income – he could only give his own example.
- How choices he can make in middle school can help put him on track for college
- Kinds of choices available in middle school
- \$2.4 million choice

Sam was only able to show comprehension of 20% of the five key points above, which were presented orally during counselor instruction and group discussion.

Sam's class transitioned to Social Studies. Sam was given a multiple step direction of what items to take out, what pages to turn to and what expectation for reading would be required.

- He relied on his peers to get started on his seat work (what page to start on, what paragraph to read and what items to answer).
- After he transitioned to Social Studies which was focused on the Revolutionary War, Sam participated with his class in attempting to answer questions. After the lesson, Sam was removed from the classroom for follow up questions. The following items are results from the questions, some of them rephrased or probed to see if he understood it given in a different way. Starred items are correct responses.
 - When asked to scan the selection in class, Sam did not know what "scan" meant or how that was different than just reading the selection.
 - *He knew how the British and Continental Armies were the same and how they were different using the Venn Diagram in his practice book.
 - *He knew who the Red Coats were. (British)
 - He did not know who the Patriots or Continental Army were.
 - Asked "Who won the war?" He replied "What war?"
 - After it was explained he said the British ruled (won).
 - *He knew the war was about taxation. He did not know it was about independence.
 - Asked again who won the war, he replied again, "The British ruled. The British won. There were over 1000 men dead and many wounded."
 - *Asked, "Who were the Patriots? He replied "Colonists"
 - *Who are the colonists? "Americans"

- Who won the war? “British”
- He said the British were French.
- Did not understand the British were in America.
- He knew the colonists were the Americans but did not know they were the Continental Army or that they won the war.
- He did not know what “surrender” meant.
- When asked about mercenaries Sam said they were “armies? Trainees? Don’t know”.
- He did not know what a treaty was or what the Treaty of Paris was for.

Of the 17 questions or items reviewed, Sam was able to answer five correctly (29%). Much of this information was review, not new. Sam was surprised when told the British were from England, not France, they lost the war and that the Continental Army was made up the colonists/Americans and they/we won the war in America, not in France.

Interpretation of Classroom Observation Data:

This classroom observation and follow up questions during the 90-minute portion of his school day showed that Sam has limited access to general education curriculum and comments/discussions of his peers. Sam’s level of understanding is an area of concern.

Sam was able to demonstrate 20% comprehension based on the information delivered and reviewed from previous session on careers and career planning and 29% of the questions identified as key concepts within his current social studies unit.

His current audiogram shows a mild to moderate sensorineural hearing loss. Even with the FM system, extra support from an itinerant teacher of the Deaf and classroom accommodations on his 504, his understanding of current classroom curriculum is limited.

The pace, level of complexity in relation to new concepts and vocabulary and language loaded curriculum in all areas at his current grade level highlight Sam’s difficulty to access and internalize new information at the same rate as his grade level peers. It will be important for Sam’s team to consider these types of observational data and look at the kind of supports it will take for Sam to access increasingly more abstract concepts and high-level vocabulary at an ever-increasing rate. Without a concerted effort and plan for intervention, the gap that is seen at the fifth-grade level will only continue to increase.