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Helpful Strategies for Auditory Memory

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Memory impacts a person's ability to perform almost any activity. *Memory* is how "knowledge is encoded, stored, and later retrieved" (Kandell, Schwartz, and Jessell, 2000). Even mild memory deficits can impact a student's success. There are different kinds of memory, including long-term memory, short-term memory, working memory, auditory memory, and visual memory. *Auditory memory* is the ability to take in information that is presented orally (out loud), process it, retain it in one's mind, and then recall it (Bellis, 2003; Roeser & Downs, 2004; Stredler-Brown & Johnson, 2004). Auditory memory requires working memory.

Working memory is "the management, manipulation, and transformation of information drawn from short-term memory and long-term memory" (Dehn, 2008). Working memory is responsible for processing higher level linguistic information, and if the task is more complex, working memory spends more time processing (Daneman and Carpenter, 1980). Working memory capacity has significant relationships with reading

decoding, language comprehension, spelling, following directions, vocabulary development, note taking, and GPA (Engle, Tuholski, Laughlin, and Conway, 1999).

Auditory Memory Deficits

Auditory memory deficits include remembering multi-step directions, relating new information to prior knowledge, oral language comprehension, taking notes while listening, verbal fluid reasoning, written expression, and oral expression (Dehn, 2008). Individuals with deficits and weaknesses can benefit from direct teaching of strategies which can improve working memory performance. According to Dehn (2008), effective strategy teaching can include:



- Engaging in one-on-one brief, focused sessions over several weeks;



- Teaching one strategy at a time;
- Explaining purpose and rationale;
- Explaining and modeling the steps of the strategy;
- Providing plenty of practice and offering feedback;



- Teaching cues to help remember the strategy;
- Providing positive reinforcement and data tracking;



- Encouraging children to monitor and evaluate strategy use;
- Encouraging generalization across sessions.

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Types of Auditory Memory Strategies

Different types of auditory memory strategies include:



- **Verbal Rehearsal** – repeating words or numbers, either vocally or subvocally (e.g., Try saying the numbers over and over, like this: 2, 7, 5; 2, 7, 5; 2, 7, 5.);



- **Elaborative Rehearsal** – associating new information with prior knowledge, such as creating sentences of the to-be-remembered word or creating a story, or paraphrasing [reorganizing larger amounts of information into smaller, more personally meaningful units (Donahue & Pidek, 1993)];



- **Chunking** – pairing, clustering, grouping, or association of different items into larger units (e.g., Try putting the numbers together. So if you hear 2, 4, 8, 3—think 24, 83.);



- **Relational Strategies** – making the information being memorized more meaningful through mnemonics, imagery, or elaboration (e.g., Try to make a simple sentence using the words you hear. If you hear dog, hat, bed, make a silly sentence like, “The dog found a hat under the bed.”).



Resources:

- Bellis, T. J. (2003). *Assessment and management of central auditory processing disorders in the educational setting: From science to practice* (2nd ed.). Clifton Park, NY: Delmar Learning.
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- Stredler-Brown, A., & Johnson, C. D. (2004). *Functional auditory performance indicators: An integrated approach to auditory skill development* (3rd ed.).

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