

## **Strategies to support discrimination and identification**

Discrimination occurs at different levels including:

- environmental sounds;
- animal sounds;
- vocalisations – suprasegmental e.g. syllabic pattern; individual sound / phonemic level;
- word level;
- individual sounds and words within a sentence including variation within word endings e.g. "She walks to school" compared to "She walked to school".

In the early years, discrimination should develop naturally if personal amplification systems are effectively fitted and consistently used; these ideas may be useful for developing listening through play:

- Lots of experience of listening to varied sounds including everyday environmental sounds – adults need to be "sound aware" and point them out to children; musical instruments – these can be simple and may be home-made e.g. yoghurt pots with dried peas inside; voices – children love rhymes and songs especially with actions; animal noises - link these with responses e.g. making animal faces to go with the sounds, masks to put on or pointing to them in a book
- There are apps that are linked to sounds including some of the phonic programmes which may have useful sound resources but beware of focussing on sound/phoneme links before it is appropriate; some of the personal amplification manufacturers have programmes / ideas on their websites. These may also be useful for children who are late to listening,

For older children there are a range of games that might be used:

- sound lotto (check sound quality);
- find the matching object / musical instrument;
- try to discriminate & identify 2 / 3 sounds being played together;
- discriminate and classify sounds – e.g. animal sounds / kitchen sounds / musical instruments;
- identify the odd one out e.g. a musical instrument amongst animal sounds. The response could range from pointing to a picture or naming / describing;
- discriminate words that sound the same / different. This could be syllabic pattern e.g. dog / cat / elephant; rhymes e.g. cake / take / make / pull; words that sound the same / different e.g. pat / pat – same, pat / pit – different; initial sound odd one out e.g. cup, cake, man, cat. This is a good foundation for future phonic development
- I spy..... for initial phonemes

For children with more language and better developed listening:

- Listen to discourse e.g. a story & put a button in the cup each time you hear sound / word etc.

- For wider skills, provide opportunities to listen & discriminate in the presence of background noise or listening to sounds with eyes closed to determine which direction the sound is coming from or trying to decide which of three boxes has the sound make in it. This will help deaf children to understand some of the challenges of listening day by day.

### Identification of sounds

- Most of the above games can focus on identification as well as discrimination
- Sound walk – identify environmental sounds; also learning to localise
- Identification of which nursery rhyme / song and join in

Also:

- Learn how to describe sounds – low / high; loud / quiet; irritating / pleasant etc.

### Listening imaginatively

- For older pupils listen: Recognise the sounds and build a story around it
- Listen to voices and try to determine the emotion associated