



'Strategies to Help Develop Language Skills...'

- Make sure you have the child/young person's full attention before speaking to him/her.
- Give choices
- If there is a sequence of instructions to follow, give instruction in the order in which it is to be carried out using 'first X, next Y, then Z...' and pause between each one to allow time to process the information.
- Be aware of the complexity of language that you are using – consider changing the length, the structure or the vocabulary to make it simpler.
- Always explain sarcasm, metaphors etc. if not understood. Jokes and sayings may also have to be taught.
- Use visual tools wherever possible e.g. pictures, objects, drawings, photos, real life experience etc.
- If a child makes grammatical mistakes e.g. "I taked it to school", repeat back correctly what they have said before responding, so that they hear good examples.
- If a child cannot think of a word, try giving prompts to help them to describe it e.g. "tell me something about it", "what do you do with it?", "can you show me/draw it?"

Difficulties with spoken language will be reflected in written language. Don't expect a child to write sentences that they can't say.

For Children/Young People...

- It's OK to ask other people to 'use less words', 'repeat', 'write the instruction down', 'draw it', 'give you time', or 'underline key words' (in class).
- Ask for help. If you're not sure how, watch and listen to how others ask.
- When work is challenging, take a short break. This could be going to sharpen your pencil, going to the toilet, standing up and sitting down again etc.