

General Suggestions for Improving Memory and Comprehension

1. Keep your sentences simple and give instructions in short sentences one at a time.
2. If you get no response or an incorrect response, repeat exactly what you said again OR if you get no response or a strange response, change how you said it or say something else that adds information. Pay close attention to what you said that may have been confusing so you can figure out where the error is coming from and make adjustments. Be sure you do not overload with too much verbiage.
3. Make sure they are attending. Watch the student for signs of inattention and observe what may be distracting them.
4. Prompt for evidence that you have been understood. Ask for a repeat of what you said or a paraphrase. If the student makes an error, explain it to them.
5. Exaggerate your natural stress and pausing pattern. This is a very effective strategy because it makes the natural chunks of information obvious and assists natural comprehension strategies.
6. When using figurative language, follow with a clear statement of what you meant. For example: "I know the number off the top of my head.", " I mean that I have the number memorized so get a paper and pencil and I will tell it to you."
7. Give the student time to respond. You may even teach the strategy of delay since this is frequently an effective method for getting the student to process more deeply what has been said before responding impulsively.
8. Give much repetition and drill with examples. It seems that children with weak language skills need more examples of, and more practice with everything before the underlying principles can be abstracted.
9. Encourage the use of helping strategies. For example:
 - a. re-auditorizing (saying it over again)
 - b. attention to relevant words or features of the environment being coded
 - c. writing down key words, etc.
10. When the student will necessarily be in situations where the skills of auditory memory and comprehension will be stressed, use every compensation possible, e.g., note takers for class, assignments given in written form, etc.

Source: **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE** by Dr. Genese Warr-Leeper, Western University, Ontario