Learning to Listen: Following Auditory Directions

Examples

Toy Manipulation

One critical element: (material needed - dog)
- Make the dog walk.
- Make the dog turn around.
- Make the dog jump.
- Make the dog fall down.

Two critical elements: (materials needed - tiger, lion, monkey, hippo)
- Make the tiger walk.
- Make the hippo jump.
- Make the lion run.
- Make the monkey sleep.

Three critical elements: (materials needed - spoon, fork, strawberry, banana, bowl, cup, box, bag)
- Put the spoon and the banana in the box.
- Put the strawberry and the fork in the bag.
- Put the fork and the spoon in the bowl.
- Put the banana and the strawberry in the cup.

Four critical elements: (materials needed - Mommy, Daddy, boy, girl, baby, car, train, boat, plane)
- Put Mommy and Daddy under the car.
- Put the girl and the boy next to the boat.
- Put the baby and the boy behind the plane.
- Put Daddy and the girl in front of the train.

Actions

One critical element:
- Touch your nose.
- Touch your head.
- Touch your tummy.
- Touch your foot.

Two critical elements:
- Stand up and turn around.
- Clap and fall down.
- Blink and jump.
- Sit down and laugh.

Three critical elements:
- Run to the window and jump.
- Walk to the door and sit down.
- Crawl to the chair and clap.
- Skip to the table and turn around.

Four critical elements:
- Touch your chin and rub your knee.
- Clap before you jump and fall down.
- Close your eyes while you laugh.
- Run after you close the door.
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**Paper and Pencil/Crayon**

One critical element: (material needed- a picture with multiple animals containing at least two ducks, two horses, two pigs, and two sheep)
- Color a **duck**.
- Color a **horse**.
- Color a **pig**.
- Color a **sheep**.

Two critical elements: (material needed- a picture with multiple animals containing at least two ducks, two horses, two pigs, and two sheep; and at least a green, pink, blue, and red crayon)
- Color a **duck** **green**.
- Color a **horse** **pink**.
- Color a **pig** **blue**.
- Color a **sheep** **red**.

Three critical elements: (material needed- a picture with at least two ducks, two horses, two pigs, and two sheep; and at least a purple, green, brown, black, blue, and yellow crayon)
- Color a **duck** and a **horse** **purple**.
- Color two **sheep** **green**.
- Color a **pig** **brown** and **black**.
- Color a **horse** **blue** and **yellow**.

Four critical elements: (material needed- a picture with multiple animals containing at least two ducks, two horses, two pigs, and two sheep; and a pencil)
- **Underline** a **pig** that is **next to** a **sheep**.
- **Circle** a **horse** that is **under** a **duck**.
- **Cross-out** a **sheep** that is **above** a **pig**.
- **Color** a **duck** that is **below** a **horse**.

**Colorforms/ Felt boards/ Magnetic boards/ Apps & Computer Games**

These materials may depict scenes, such as a house, a store, a farm, etc. The associated items, such as furniture, clothes, animals, etc. may be placed in various locations as directed, or a scene can be created using any of these materials.

One critical element: (material needed- Colorforms Dressing Miss Weather)
- Put a **hat** on Miss Weather.
- Put a **mitten** on Miss Weather.
- Put a **boot** on Miss Weather.
- Put a **coat** on Miss Weather.

Two critical elements: (material needed- House scene)
- Put **Mommy** in the **kitchen**.
- Put **Daddy** in the **bathroom**.
- Put a **bowl** on the **table**.
- Put the **baby** in the **bed**.

Three critical elements: (material needed- Farm scene)
- Put the **horse** **next to the fence**.
- Put the **pig** **in the water**.
- Put the **chicken** **on the barn**.
- Put the **cow** **in front of the tree**.

Four critical elements: (material needed- Colorforms Eric Carle Basic Shapes)
- Put the **big blue circle** on the **top**.
- Put the **little yellow triangle** on the **bottom**.
- Put the **medium green rectangle** on the **side**.
- Put the **big red square** on the **corner**.
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Hints and Tips

Short simple sentences are used in directions at the one critical element and two critical element levels. Longer and sometimes more complex sentences are used at the three and four critical element levels and beyond.

Directions containing four or more critical elements should not be targeted until a child demonstrates facility with complex language in a variety of other contexts.

Regardless of the number of critical elements required for a given level, a variety of choices must always be provided for each critical element – at least four is recommended, although more than four is encouraged. This ensures that the child is can differentiate among at least four items for each critical element in the direction and is not following the direction correctly simply by process of elimination.

Prior to beginning each activity, check the child’s comprehension of each item and/or action in the activity by having the child name the item and/or demonstrate the action.

Directions which are similar to those which have been used in previous language activities or those which include tasks that occur throughout the child’s daily routine may be easier to follow than those which are novel.

Directions can include a carrier phrase, such as “Go get your”, preceding the critical elements to alert the child that key words are about to be presented. Any carrier phrase is not included in the critical element count (e.g., Go get your backpack and coat.) as long as that same carrier phrase is used for each direction in the set.

It is worth noting that some directions will be easier than others to follow when a previously known relationship exists. For example, Color the pig pink generally will be easier than Color the pig purple since pigs are typically thought of as being pink.

When practicing Following Directions, children who have difficulty retaining two or more critical elements may benefit from the teacher/therapist using strategies to help him develop this skill, which may include:
- emphasizing the critical elements through acoustic highlighting
- emphasizing the critical elements by pausing slightly before and after each critical element
- cueing the child visually (e.g., holding up a finger) as each critical element is stated

IEP Goal Templates

Amy will improve her auditory skills through listening alone when using her cochlear implants in quiet by demonstrating the ability to follow 10 auditory directions containing 2 critical elements in each of 3 different contexts with at least 80% accuracy.

Amy will improve her auditory skills through listening alone when using her cochlear implants in background noise by demonstrating the ability to follow 10, 2-step auditory directions containing 4 critical elements in each of 3 different contexts with at least 80% accuracy.
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Resources

AB Listening Adventures by Advanced Bionics (app)
AB Vocab Scenes by Advanced Bionics (app)
Colorforms® by University Games (game)
Cranium Hullabaloo by Cranium (game)
Following Auditory Directions by Jean Gilliam DeGaetano (book)
Following Auditory Directions CD by Josef Sanders (CD)
Following Directions Get Ready! Book by Barbara Gregorich (book)
Following Directions K-2 by Frank Schaffer (book)
Fun with Directions by Hamaguchi apps (app)
The Listening Room by Advanced Bionics (website)
Listening skills for Young Children by Trish Novels (book)
Make a Scene by Innivo Ltd. (app)
  - Farmyard
  - Pets
  - Easter
  - Christmas
Melissa & Doug® Reusable Sticker Pads (sticker scenes)
More Fun with Directions by Hamaguchi apps (app)
My PlayHome by Shimon Young (app)
My Scene by MyFirstApp.com (app)
Outdoor Fun by Virtual Speech Center (app)
“Say and Do” Early Social Scenes for Schools by Susan Rose Simms (book)
Super Duper® Fun Deck® Following Directions (card set)
Toddler Seek and Find Picture Book by Wonderkind Apps (app)
  - My Animals
  - My Little Town
  - My Animal Circus
UNISET Travel Toys (magnetic scenes)

Webber® Hear Builder® Following Directions by Susie Loraine and Mark Strait (software)