

WAIT TIME

A Listening and Spoken Language Strategy

WHAT is it?

“Wait time” is pausing for 7-10 seconds after speaking to give your child time to process what you said.

WHY do we use it?

Deaf and hard of hearing children who are learning spoken language often need a little extra time to process the information they are hearing. Using *wait time* gives your child the time for their brain to make sense of what they heard and figure out how to respond.

WHEN do we use it?

Using *wait time* as part of how you normally interact with your child is a great lifelong habit to get into. It can be especially helpful when giving your child directions or asking them questions. It is often used as part of other LSL strategies such as auditory sandwich, or auditory closure.

HOW do we do it?



WHAT does it look like at home?

Grandparent: “Who is your favorite character in this movie?” *pauses and counts 7-10 seconds in their head while looking toward the child for a response.*

child doesn't answer, might look confused, or answer with something that doesn't make sense

Grandparent: “Who do you like *best* in this movie?” *pauses again and counts 7-10 seconds in their head while looking toward the child for a response.*

Child: *after a few seconds* “ I like the princess best!”

References:

- Davenport, N. M. (2003). Questions, answers and wait-time: implications for assessment of young children. *International Journal Of Early Years Education*, 11(3), 245-253. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0966976032000147558>
- Estabrooks, W., MacIver-Lux, K., Rhoades, E. (2016). *Auditory verbal therapy*. San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing
- Ingram, J., & Elliott, V. (2016). A critical analysis of the role of wait time in classroom interactions and the effects on student and teacher interactional behaviours. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 46:1, 37-53, DOI: 10.1080/0305764X.2015.1009365
- Johnson, N., & Parker, A. T. (2013). Effects of wait time when communicating with children who have sensory and additional disabilities. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 107(5), 363-374.
- Valcante, G., Roberson, W., Reid, W. R., & Wolking, W. D. (1989). Effects of wait-time and intertrial interval durations on learning by children with multiple handicaps. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 22(1), 43-55. <http://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1989.22-43>

Special thanks to graduate students in the Listening and Spoken Language Deaf Education graduate training program at Utah State University. These pages can be reproduced for educational purposes.

©Utah State University, Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education