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# UNIT 6 LISTENING FOR PERCEPTION - AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION ACTIVITIES

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## STRUCTURE

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## 6.0 OBJECTIVES

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In the previous unit we had looked at various types of listening. One way of viewing the various types of listening was on the basis of the nature of the sound input, i.e. broadly speaking verbal and non-verbal sounds. In this unit we shall focus on the skills of identifying and discriminating between different sounds, hearing differences in intonation patterns, discriminating between similar sounding words. In other words, all the skills which enhance the child's auditory perceptions.

After you have completed this unit you should be able to :

- identify the various skills required for enhancing a child's auditory perception.
- be able to plan suitable listening activities for enhancing specific auditory perception skills.

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## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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Psychologists are careful to distinguish between the word sensation and perception. **Sensation**, refers to the process by which information about external events is detected by the sensory receptors and transmitted to the brain. **Perception**, however, refers to the interpretation of this sensory input. Stemming from this definition, auditory perception, refers to the interpretation of different sound inputs. As a child grows up, s/he begins to differentiate between different kinds of sounds. For example, loud sounds and soft sounds, or the mother's voice and an unfamiliar voice. With experience the child is able to make out even the finer distinctions in sounds and sound qualities. For example, the difference between the sound of a car and a bus. The process by which the child makes these interpretations is called **auditory perception** or **sound perception**.

One of the things a child needs to know while learning a language is a knowledge of its phonology. Phonology refers to the basic units of sound or phonemes, that are combined to produce words and sentences. Each language uses only a subset of the sounds that human beings are capable of generating. For example, English makes use of 45 phonemes and no language uses more than 100. Each language has rules for combining phonemes and for pronouncing these phonemic combinations. For instance, speakers of English recognise that it is quite permissible to begin a word with 'st' (eg. stop, stand) or 'sk' (eg. skill, skit) but not 'sd', 'sb' or 'sg'. Similarly English speakers immediately discriminate the phonemic combinations "zip" and "sip", although Spanish speakers may not, because the Spanish language does not distinguish between the phonemes s and z. The point that is important here is that children must learn to hear and to pronounce a number of these speech-like sounds in order to make sense of the speech they hear. They also need to combine these units of sound in a manner that can be understood when they try to speak.

The primary schools years (i.e. ages 5 to 10) are a period of linguistic refinement. Children learn subtle exceptions to grammatical rules and begin to understand even the most complex syntactical structures of their native language. Vocabulary continues to grow, and children gradually develop a metalinguistic awareness i.e an ability to think about the language and comment on its properties. This reflective ability emerges rather late, usually after the age 5. Before that time, children are not even consciously aware of the relation between words and their component sounds. At this young age they function purely at a perceptual level. They are just beginning to become aware of the different sounds that make up words. They become aware of beginning and end sounds in a word. Slowly they begin to realise that some words begin with two or more sound blends, such as 'fr', 'st', 'str', and so on. Questions such as "if you take the 's' sound off from the word scream, what is left?", leave little pre-schoolers quite baffled. By the age of 5 years however, children start enjoying such questions. They begin to enjoy playing with sounds. They also like jokes, riddles and puns that are "funny" because of their play on sounds, words or double meanings.

Listening tasks which enhance the child's auditory perceptions at this stage, enhance the child's language learning. These activities help to sensitize children to subtle variations in sounds, accents, intonations, tempos, rhythms, etc. In this unit we shall look at some listening tasks which can be given at the primary school level specifically to promote the child's auditory perceptions.

**Check Your Progress 1**

What do we mean by auditory perception?

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## 6.2 PLANNING LISTENING TASKS FOR DEVELOPING A CHILD'S AUDITORY PERCEPTIONS

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Perception precedes comprehension, which is the ability to understand and make meanings from the sounds that are received. At the perceptual level we are concerned only with the ability of the child to receive the sound input correctly and clearly. This is a skill which can be developed and refined through practice. It is important for the child to have practice in listening carefully and perceiving sounds clearly. This ensures the fact that there is no miscommunication or distortion. Such practice can be provided through specially designed listening tasks. These tasks help the child to develop different ways of listening, i.e. more intently when the task requires specific sounds to be heard and more casually for global sounds. These tasks also help children to appreciate the aesthetic quality of sounds.

While planning suitable tasks for developing the child's auditory perceptions, we need to keep the following factors in mind -

### a. Interests of the children

Nowadays, children are extremely dependent upon stimulating visual approaches to learning. Television exposes them to a constant parade of visual and auditory excitement. Magazines filled with pictures present them with opportunities of viewing interesting aspects of life. Therefore, quite often children do not seem interested in an activity which does not offer the excitement they seek. It is important to make the activity interesting for children, so that they are actively involved.

### b. The attention span of children

It is not easy for children to sit quietly and concentrate on sounds for a long time. They will begin to get restless and inattentive. Start with listening exercises of short duration i.e. upto 2 or 3 minutes, then gradually increase the time span. The attention time span will naturally vary with the age level of the children.

### c. Preparation for the listening experience

1. Distracting objects should be put away and the room settled before a listening activity begins.
2. Background sounds should be minimized.
3. The children should be made to sit comfortably and as informally as possible. Each child should be within a reasonable distance of the speaker or the source of the sounds - (i.e a taperecorder or cassette ).
4. Children should be made aware that they're expected to remain seated during the course of the listening activity.
5. Children should be told not to interrupt while the activity is on. They can raise their hands and clarify their doubts at a later stage, after the tape has been played or the speaker has finished speaking.

6. If there are any materials required for the task, these should be collected before hand.
  7. If you are using the cassette recorder make sure it is working.
- d. **Clear instructions**

The instructions for the task should be simple, clear and brief. Children should know exactly what to do while listening, as well as after listening. For example, they should know how they are expected to check their response.

e. **The role of the teacher**

The teacher needs to be accepting. Children are often unable to pay attention. Sometimes they are untrained in their capacity to follow directions. Through a carefully planned programme, they can be gradually made to acquire these skills. One of the most important things a teacher can do is to be a good listener. The teachers' facial expressions will show the children just how interested and attentive she is when talking and listening to a child. As a good listener, the teacher should be interested in the child as an individual and concentrate on comprehending the incoming messages from children. This makes her a good role model.

**Check Your Progress 2**

Why do we need to provide special listening tasks for developing auditory perception?

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### **6.3 THE LISTENING EXPERIENCE**

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It is useful to divide the actual listening task into three stages i.e.

1. **The pre-listening**
  2. **While listening**
  3. **After listening**
1. **Pre-listening** - This is the stage where the child's interest is built-up and she is motivated to listen. Children's attention is focused on the topic or subject matter of the task through discussions, stories or related visuals. This will help to familiar-

ize the child with the theme of the task and on the necessary vocabulary. This stage is generally a warm up. It could be an activity like giving out a set of words from the task you will be using and ask the children to make stories; or giving rhyming words, associated words or opposites; or find words they think do not belong in the group or try to guess where these words have been taken from.

2. **While listening** - This is the stage where the child's attention should be totally focused on listening. The children may be required to listen for something specific, in which case they would be doing intensive listening. If the children are required to make any responses at this stage these should be very simple and non-productive. It should not require too much effort so that the child does not get distracted from listening. These responses could be in the form of asking children to number words in the sequence in which they are heard. The children may be asked to tick the words that have been changed or circle words that did not appear. Another possibility is to ask them to show the picture related to what was heard.

To keep the children's attention level high it helps to sometimes stop during a listening activity and ask the children to predict what is going to come, and then listen to see whether they were correct.

3. **After listening** These activities are based more on memory, i.e. recall or recognition. It may be a response based on the task, it may be a reconstruction or pointing out the mistakes. At this stage the children can if required check their responses. The children can also be lead on to follow-up activities which enable them to give personal expression to what they hear either through questions, dramatisations, or expressing their ideas with paper, paint and clay.

### Check Your Progress 3

How do we plan listening tasks for auditory perceptions?

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## 6.4 ACTIVITIES WHICH ENHANCE AUDITORY PERCEPTION AT THE SOUND LEVEL

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1. **What makes that sound?**

Skills :- Listening intently.  
Identifying familiar sounds.

### Listening Experience

Say to the children: "Sometimes we don't hear a sound because we are thinking of something else. Put your head down and listen carefully. Try to think what I am doing to make each sound. Raise your hand when you think you know what I'm doing"

Among the things you might do to produce familiar sounds are the following:

Opening a window

Dropping a book

Bouncing a ball

Dropping a pencil

Sliding a chair

Crumpling a paper

Shuffling your feet

Writing on the blackboard

Cutting cardboard with scissors

Pouring water into a container

Flipping the pages of a book

Closing a window softly

Dropping coins on a desk

Opening a drawer

Shaking paper clips in a tin

### Evaluation

Do the children give the appropriate situation for the sound?

### Variation

You can make a sound and then ask children to come in turn and make the same sound. The child who guesses correctly can be asked to make the next sound, while the other children guess.

Taped sounds can also be played and the children asked to guess.

### 2. What's going on?

**Skills -** Perceiving sounds in the immediate area

Listening intently

Listening to the sounds heard

### Listening Experience

Say to the children "There are sounds about us all the time, but sometimes we don't think about them. Let's put our heads down and close our eyes. We'll be very quiet and listen. We'll try to hear every sound and remember what we've heard. At the end of two minutes I'll clap my hands. When you hear the clap, raise your heads and write down as many sounds that you can remember."

### Evaluation

How many sounds is the child able to identify and list?

### Variation

As the children are listening ask them to listen separately for sounds that are near and sounds that are far away.

### 3. Noise or sound?

**Skills -** Discriminating between noise and sounds.

Help the children to distinguish between noise and verbal communication by using Onomatopoeia - i.e. the formation of a word by imitating a natural sound, for example splash, crunch, buzz. Say to the children "There are some words that we use that imitate sounds that we hear, for example kiss, chatter, splash (list out some more). Can you give me some more sound words?" After the children are suitably familiar with such words, ask the children to make a list of as many such words as they can think of in 2 minutes.

**Evaluation**

How many such words are the children able to list out?

**4. Feeling sounds**

**Skills** - Associating sounds with emotions, moods, time and colour.

**Listening Experience**

Let children make a collection of sounds associated with different feelings. Give the children different categories such as : pleasant sounds, unpleasant sounds, angry sounds, early morning sounds, night sounds, danger sounds, winter sounds, summer sounds and so on. Ask the children to keep adding to the sounds under each category. The children could make sound scrapbooks with one page for each category of sound. Cards or loose leaf notebooks may be used. They could draw pictures to illustrate the sounds. The children could be asked to work on these lists over a period of time, say two weeks or a month.

**Evaluation**

The children's lists will not be identical. Check to see whether children are able to relate time and emotions with sounds.

**5. Cats and Kittens**

**Skills** - Recognising disguised voiced perceiving the direction of the sound.

**Listening Experience**

The leader chooses four children to be cats. The rest of the class become kittens. The cats stand at the front of the room with their backs to the kittens. The leader points to a kitten, who disguises his/her voice as he says, "Mew! Mew!"

If a cat thinks, he knows the identity of the kitten who mewed, s/he raises his/her hand. s/he then has three guesses. If s/he wishes the kitten to mew again s/he says, "Meow!". S/he then turns his/her back, to listen to the kitten. If the cat guesses correctly, s/he sits down and the kitten becomes a cat. Each cat can only 'Meow' once. If the cat is still not able to guess, s/he is out of the game.

**Variations**

- a. A child is chosen to be Mr. (or Mrs) Ear. she stands with her back to the class. The leader points to someone to start the game. The selected child addresses Mr. Ear with "Hello, Mr. Ear, can you guess who I am?" Mr. Ear has three chances to

identify the speaker. If she succeeds then she gets another turn. If she is not able to identify the speaker she sits down and the speaker becomes Mr. Ear.

- b. The teacher chooses three detectives who leave the room, while the class selects someone who will hum. Everyone, including the hummer, covers his/her mouth with his/her hands. The detectives are called in and the hummer starts to hum a tune. The detectives have to locate the hummer. The hummer can stop humming if the detectives are very close. If the detective guesses s/he becomes a player and the hummer becomes a detective.

## 6. Stealing the Mouse

**Skills**—Listening intently to perceive faint nonverbal sounds.

### Listening Experience

A child chosen to be the cat, sits on a chair in the front of the room with his/her back to the class. Under the cat's chair is a mouse. (You could use an eraser to make a mouse). The cat has to try and prevent his/her mouse from being stolen, but s/he must not turn around. The leader signals to a player to begin. The player sneaks up behind the cat. If the cat hear the thief coming, s/he mews, "Meow!". The player returns to his/her seat without the mouse. If the cat mews when there is no thief, another cat takes his/her place.

If the thief succeeds in stealing the mouse, the cat turns, faces the class, and tries to guess who stole his/her mouse. s/he gets three guesses. If s/he guesses who the thief was, s/he continues being the cat. If s/he fails to identify the thief, the successful thief becomes a next cat and the unsuccessful cat becomes a player.

**Skills** — Identifying various sounds in nature.

### Listening Experience

Take the children for a short walk or on a field trip to listen to the sounds of nature. When you are ready for your walk say to the children "We will now go on a silent walk. We will keep our mouths shut, but our eyes and ears wide open. On this walk we will listen for sounds made by trees, birds, insects, air, water, animals or any other sound from nature. If you want to share your sound with someone, just tap them very gently on the shoulder and point out to what you hear. We will not talk. As soon as your walk is over please write down as many sounds as you can remember hearing."

### Evaluation

How many sounds can children hear when they are quiet and attentive.

Can children hear the sounds of little creatures like bees?

## 8. Musical Sounds

- Skills**
- Identifying various rhythms and beats
  - Identifying particular instruments when several instruments are playing
  - Discerning changes in pitch and loudness.

**a. Following rhythm patterns**

Clap a rhythm or beat or a drum. Let different children clap out the rhythm. Change the rhythm patterns. Call out the names of two children in the class. Clap a rhythm to one of the names. Ask the children to guess which name was clapped. You can do this with first names or last names. Later play the first time of a song or poem and clap out a rhythm for it. Then ask the children to repeat it. Let children clap out rhythms to lines of poems or songs. You can use the tape-recorder for this. Children can also be asked to create simple rhythm instruments such as tom-toms, castanets or sound boxes using boxes, nails, bottle tops, cans, etc. They can then create a rhythm band. (see the appendix for the words).

**b. Spotting instruments**

The primary classes are a very good stage to introduce children to different types of musical instruments i.e. percussion instruments that give the beat, string instruments, wind instruments and so on. Take one instrument at a time. Have someone play the instrument or use a recording. Next ask the children to pick out the sound of the instrument in a recording in which the instrument is used.

**Variations**

To make this activity more interesting, you can ask the children to do a particular action everytime they hear a particular instrument. For example - jump when they hear the table, turn around when they hear the flute, sway when they hear the guitar, wave their hands every time they hear the piano and so on. Children can be grouped and each group can be allotted one action or movement to be done when they hear their instrument.

Children can also create a musical story — with each musical sound depicting a character or feeling.

**c. Music and attentive listening**

Music is a wonderful source to develop attentive listening. The children can listen for:

1. The number of taps made by sticks, piano notes or feet on the floor.
2. Which sounds are louder or softer as the teacher uses bells, blocks, rubber balls, etc. to make sounds. Why?
3. High and low, long and short, loud and soft notes played on a flute or a harmonium. Taped sounds can also be used for this activity.

Pre-listening and after listening activities have not been suggested for the above activities, as it is useful to plan these spontaneously based on the specific interests and needs of the class. If it is a very boisterous, noisy class, they may need a group activity like singing or listening to music as a 'warm up' activity. If the class is very quiet and subdued, they may require a loosening up activity such as movement or marching to a beat. It is important to have a build-up activity, to ensure that the children become attentive and mentally prepared to listen.

Sometimes the follow-up activity can be suggested at the time of the warm-up. The teacher could say, "after you have made your list of sounds and we have looked at the lists, I will ask you to draw two things that you think made the loudest sound". By

doing this, the teacher is trying to capture a greater degree of attentiveness. Ultimately the teacher needs to use her discretion about the type of pre-listening activity as well as the follow-up activity. The duration of the listening experience would also vary, based on the specific needs of class.

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## 6.5 ACTIVITIES WHICH ENHANCE AUDITORY PERCEPTIONS AT THE WORD LEVEL

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The important thing to remember while planning suitable tasks for auditory perception at the word level is, that we are concerned primarily with the sounds of the words — these could be beginning sounds, medial sounds or ending sounds. The activities may require the children to discriminate between different words on the basis of their differences, or to group words with similar sounds, etc. We are not concerned with the meanings of the words. We shall be looking into meanings of words under listening comprehension activities, which will be taken up in the next unit.

We are leaving the pre-listening and after-listening activities to the discretion of the teacher, just like we did in the previous section, so that these can be specially geared to the needs of the particular group. In this way these activities reinforce the learning. It should also be mentioned that all the activities mentioned in this as well as in the previous section are presented as suggested samples. The teacher would need to use her innovation to create several other activities.

### 1. Sound-alike words

**Skills** - Listening to a speech sound and recognising it when it is heard again.

#### The listening experience

The teacher needs to make it clear to the children that since this is a strictly oral activity (i.e oral-aural), the children are not required to spell the words, but rather to identify the sounds. The teacher accepts matching sounds regardless of their spellings—salt and circle for /s/, sugar and shells for /sh/, tea and greet for /e/.

The teacher says “we’ll pretend we’re in the bazaar. I’ll name two things that I can see that begin with the same sound. If I say bangles, bananas and papaya, which two begin with the same sound? Let the children add two or three things that they would see in the bazaar, which begin with the same sound. The teacher would then read out her list. And ask the children to raise their hands or clap for an odd sound or write the word they feel does not belong. Initial consonant sounds.

/s/	salt	soap	(slippers, cycle, straw, shoes)
/ch/	cheese	chutney	(chips, chocolates, shampoo, chair)
/p/	potatoes	pear	(packets, buckets, plates, blankets)
/k/	carrots	kites	(cream, candles, charcoal, gold)

Add on more items to the list.

To make the activity more difficult, ask the children to listen to the initial vowel sound of the word you will say. Then from the list of four or five words you call out, the children have to say which words have the same medial vowel sound -i.e. the same vowel sound in the middle of the word.

Let the children note the odd one out. Some examples:

Initial vowel sound. Medial vowel sounds

/a/ apple ant, lamb, carrot, cake

In this case cake is the odd sound. Make the children sensitive to the fact that we are not looking at alphabets or vowels, but we are listening for similarities and differences in sounds.

Some other words you could try

/e/ egg bread, pepper, bed, pan, pet, thread

/e/ cheese meat, pea, bin, heels, ring

/o/ soap soda, coke, bowl, boat, look

/i/ icecream rice, bike, mint

The words can be taped, and the children asked to listen and respond.

### Evaluation

Check the number of words each child gets correct. If a child has too many words wrong, you may need to work individually with him.

### Variation

Think of an object beginning with a particular sound. Then say "I spy with my little eye something beginning with say p". Let the children guess. Whoever guesses gets the next turn. Limit the number of guesses.

## 2. Ear Sharpeners

Skill- distinguishing between same and different initial sounds.

### Listening Experience

Ask the children to stand beside their chairs and tell them. "I will say four words while you listen. Listen to the sound that starts the first word. When you hear a word raise your right hand. If you raise your hand for a word that doesn't start like the first word, you must sit down."

Use any of the suggested word groups below or make up your own.

- |     |         |           |          |         |
|-----|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| 1.  | dog     | boy       | day      | deer    |
| 2.  | lamb    | like      | mine     | little  |
| 3.  | town    | table     | duck     | touch   |
| 4.  | wall    | war       | elephant | wasp    |
| 5.  | ape     | ate       | army     | acre    |
| 6.  | eat     | egg       | east     | eel     |
| 7.  | ill     | important | ice      | igloo   |
| 8.  | October | open      | occupy   | octopus |
| 9.  | see     | sit       | cereal   | kite    |
| 10. | ocean   | over      | open     | October |

### Variation

Ask the children to distinguish between like and different ending sounds, example, sip, zip, rat, soap, hope, rose. You can also give initial sounds blends like stink, stick, slime or green, grass, glisten or sharp, shoe, chick.

### Evaluation

Check the number of correct words each child gets. This will give you a good idea of the child's ability to discriminate sound.

### 3. Think fast

**Skills** - Hearing commands and responding quickly, recognising and matching sounds.

One child becomes the leader and come to the front of the class. S/he calls out a particular initial consonant sound. S/he points to any child, who has to stand and say as many words as s/he can beginning with that sound. The other children listen to detect errors. When a child detects an error, s/he takes the next turn. Once again our emphasis here is on sounds and not on spellings. For example for the /h/ sounds we would accept who and horse but not honest. And for the /f/ sounds we would we accept phone and photo.

### Evaluation

The teacher should note down the number of words each child is able to call out correctly.

### 4. Clapping on signal

**Skills** - listening attentively for particular words  
- Responding with an action.

### Listening Experience

Read out or tape someone reading the following poem about farm animals. Tell the children to clap their hands whenever they hear the name of an animal.

#### A Walk on a Farm

Lets pretend we are walking

on a farm

And see what we see

Around the barn.

There's old Motia cow

Who gives milk and moos,

And on the grass she quietly chews.

Then the snowy white duck,

Gives a waddle and a quack,

As he watches water roll over his back.

See Raja the black horse ?

He likes to neigh

And gallop around

In his pasture all day.  
Our friend Mr. Bhondu Cock  
Struts in his pen  
And crows "Cock-a-doodle-doo"  
At 5 a.m.  
Look at lazy pig !  
Oinking and squealing  
He wallows in the mud -  
What a slippery feeling !  
And here's Rani Hen  
Who clucks all around  
And lays her eggs  
Right on the ground.

### Variations

Read "The three Bears" to your class and ask the children to make a sound or sign whenever one of the three bears is mentioned - for example a big grrr for father bear, a middle sized grrr for mother bear and a very faint grrr for baby bear.

- Use animal stories from the Panchatantra.
- Sing "Old Mac Donald had a farm" and ask the children to do an action every time they hear an animal sound.
- Sing or play the song "There was an old woman who swallowed a fly" Let each child draw a picture of one character in the song such as the spider or the fly or the cow or the horse. Since the song has a lot of repetition, the children need to listen carefully, and have a lot of fun doing this activity.

### 5. Rhyming clues to riddles

**Skills** – Being able to rhyme words

#### Listening Experience

The object of this game is to fit the clue given by the leader with a suitable rhyming word. Here the clues pertain to sound and meaning. For example, the leader might say "I'm thinking of a colour that rhymes with chew. What is it?" (blue).

The child who answers correctly becomes the leader and presents the next riddle. If a child's answer satisfies the requirements of the question, it is considered correct, even if it is not what the leader had in mind.

It's a good idea to give the children a few minutes time before starting the game to prepare one or two of these rhyming riddles. You may want to act as a leader for the first few times, especially with younger children. Here are a few suggested rhyming riddles.

I'm thinking of an animal that rhymes with hat. (cat, bat, rat)

I'm thinking of a flower that rhymes with hilly (lily)

I'm thinking of something to eat that rhymes with lake (cake)

I'm thinking of a colour that rhymes with sack (black)

I'm thinking of an ocean animal that rhymes with tail (whale)

I'm thinking of that part of our 24 hour day that rhymes with fight (night)

#### 6. Word endings

**Skills** - Listening attentively to the word endings.

- calling out words beginning with a specific sound.

#### Listening Experience

Divide the class into two equal lines facing each other. The teacher designates the first child to play. S/he calls out any word eg. kitten (To make the game more challenging, words can be limited to particular categories, for example names of animals, or names of countries). The child directly opposite him/her in the next line must say a word that begins with the ending sound of the word kitten i.e. 'n' - and the game continues. A word cannot be repeated. A player sit down if s/he repeats a word or is unable to think of a word. When all the children in one line are down, the other line wins.

#### 7. Happu hathi and Gopu the goat

**Skill** - Perceiving the direction of sounds.

#### Listening Experience

The children form a circle and choose one child to be Happu hathi and another one to be Gopu the goat. Both children are blindfolded and placed in the centre of the circle. Happu hathi tries to catch Gopu the goat. He calls out "Gopu, where are you?"

Gopu must reply, "I'm here Happu."

Both children depend entirely upon hearing to determine the location of the other—Happu in trying to catch Gopu and Gopu in trying to elude Happu.

When Happu catches Gopu, both children choose replacements for themselves and the game continues.

#### 8. Rhyming words

**Skill** - To be able to identify words that rhyme

- To be able to discriminate words that do not rhyme.

#### Listening Experience

Read out each horizontal line of five words after directing the children to listen for one word that does not rhyme. Children may call out the non-rhyming word or write down the non-rhyming word.

- |    |      |      |      |       |       |
|----|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. | bird | word | girl | heard | third |
| 2. | man  | toy  | boy  | joy   | Roy   |
| 3. | gun  | fun  | sun  | bun   | pen   |

- |    |       |       |       |       |       |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 4. | any   | many  | penny | funny | jinny |
| 5. | tree  | three | me    | see   | try   |
| 6. | cow   | now   | how   | bow   | go    |
| 7. | fight | ride  | night | kite  | light |
| 8. | crew  | blew  | flew  | bow   | threw |

You can ask the children to think more words that rhyme with the words in each line.

### Variation

Read out the following poem and ask the children to call out the two rhyming words in each line. Ask the children to write a similar poem of their own as a follow-up activity. Let the children also listen to the rhythm of the poem.

A hawk can't talk,  
A fox can't box,  
A calf can't laugh,  
But a dog can jog.

A fly can't cry,  
A bug can't hug,  
A pig can't wear a wig,  
But a girl can whirl.

A sheep can't weep,  
A cow can't bow,  
Nor a flea drink tea,  
But a bee can see.

Can see, can see,  
Even you and me.

### 9. Spotting the sound-alike words

- Skill - developing attentive listening
- being able to discriminate between words that sound alike.

### Listening Experience

Read out a simple story for the children to hear. The children could be made to hear the story on tape. Tell the children to listen very carefully to the story, as you will repeat it again, but the next time you will change some of the words in the story with different words which sound like the earlier words. The children will have to spot the changed words. Let the children number the words and tell you how many words have been changed. Let them note the words that have been changed.

In the story given below, the words in bracket are the words that have been changed. You can use any suitable story. Do not make the story too long.

### The Best time of the year

It was winter. It was cold (bold)

"How unhappy I am" said the Donkey (Monkey). "It is cold, I have no green (clean) grass to eat. Oh! when will spring come!"

Spring (Bring) came. It was warm. The sun (been) was bright. The Donkey had plenty to eat. But he had to work very hard. When night (flight) came he was tired.

"When will summer come!" said the Donkey "In summer I will not have so much to do"

Summer came. Days were long (strong) and nights were short. It was hot (not). The Donkey had no time for sleep (creep). He was tired.

"I don't like summer. Oh when will autumn come!" cried the Donkey.

Autumn came, the crops (drops) were harvested and the Donkey carried hay (gray) and straw upon his back (sack) all day long. He had no time for sleep (sleet).

"Oh, when will winter come!" cried the Donkey.

"In winter I have not must work to do. Oh, how happy, I shall be in winter! It is the best rest time of the year!"

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## 6.6 ACTIVITIES WHICH ENHANCE AUDITORY PERCEPTION AT THE SENTENCE LEVEL

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### 1. Pass it on

- Skills** - Listening and receiving a whispered sentence
- Recalling and message correctly
  - Repeating the message accurately

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Begin by whispering a sentence to a child, who then whispers it to another and so on till the last child, who tells the class what s/he heard. Then you ask each child to repeat what they had heard, loudly for the whole group to hear. It's quite a lot of fun to trace back distortions in the original sentence.

### Evaluation

This is a good exercise to give insight into children's listening, recalling and repeating abilities.

### 2. Topsy-turvy sentences

- Skills** - Listening intently.

### Listening Experience

Read or tell the sequential parts of a story in the correct order. Then repeat the same story, but this time change the order of some of the sentences. Ask the children to call out the incorrect sequential order. Do not use too many sentences - not more than 6 and 8 initially. Using a familiar story such as the 'Lion and Mouse' or the 'Hare and the Tortoise', is a good idea as the children are then dealing with a familiar sequence.

### 3. Odd one out

- Skills** - Listening intently

## Listening Experience

Read out six to eight sentences, related to a particular topic.

One of the sentences will not be related to the topic. Ask the children to listen carefully and tell which sentence is not part of the theme or story.

We made a Ravana with a funny smile

We put a red shirt on his back

We used two coal for the eyes

We went for a walk

We danced around the Ravana

We filled him up with fire-crackers.

Ramu went to the zoo

He saw many animals

The elephants were eating

They ate leaves from the trees.

The lions were sleeping

Ramu has a pet dog

The monkey were playing

They jumped from tree to tree.

### Check Your Progress 4

- On the basis of the given tasks, use your own ideas and resources to plan out :
  - a) An auditory discrimination task at the sound level for a group of 5 year olds.
  - b) An auditory perception task at the word level for a group of 8 years olds.

Remember - The tasks given in this unit are presented merely as samples and suggestions. It is for you to use your own ideas and locally available resources to plan listening tasks which are geared to the specific needs of the children you work with.

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## 6.7 LET US SUM UP

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Perception refers to the interpretation of a sensory input by the brain. While auditory perception refers to the interpretation of the sound inputs. Listening tasks which enhance the child's auditory perception, sensitise children to subtle variations in sounds, accents, intonations, tempos, rhythm, etc., and thus enhance language learning. While planning these tasks we need to cater to the child's interest and attention span. We also need to make adequate and suitable preparations, and offer clear instructions.

The actual listening task is offered in three stages. The first is the build up or pre-listening. This is followed by the actual listening experience, and then finally the follow-up activity which comes after the listening experience. By dividing the task into these three stages we maximise the active involvement of children in the task. These tasks may be offered at the basic sound level or at the word level or at the sentence level. The important thing to remember is that these activities require children to discriminate between different sounds or words, on the basis of similar or different

sounds. We are not concerned with the meanings of these Words. Meanings are looked at when we are doing listening comprehension exercises.

In the above unit several examples of listening tasks at the sound, word and sentence level, were looked at. These were however, illustrations, to help teachers to use their initiative and imagination to create other similar tasks, as and when the opportunity arises.

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## 6.8 SUGGESTED READING

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Boyd, Gertrude A. *Teaching Communication skills in the Elementary school*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company 1970

Chappel, Bernice M. *Listening & Learning (Practical Activities for Developing Listening skills)*. Calif Petman Learning Inc. 1983.

Micallef, Mary, *Listening: the Basic Connection*. Good Apple Inc. 1984.

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## 6.9 ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress 1

Auditory perception refers to the interpretation of various sounds by the brain. If you or I hear a sound, we are quick to interpret it as a voice, a piece of music, or perhaps the churning of a motor. The perceptual world of an infant is quite primitive by adult standards. Psychologists believe that the various sensations combine to form a global or holistic experience in a little baby. With maturation and learning (through the various experiences an infant encounters), these become more distinct.

As a child grows up the child begins to differentiate between different kinds of sounds. With experience the child is able to make out even the finer distinctions in sounds and sound qualities. The process by which the child makes these interpretations is called auditory perception or sound perception.

### Check Your Progress 2

Perception precedes comprehension which is the ability to understand and make meanings from the sounds that are received. It is important for the child to have practice in listening carefully and perceiving sounds clearly. This ensures the fact that there is no miscommunication or distortion. Unless the brain receives all the sounds clearly, it will not interpret them correctly. These tasks also sharpen the child's ability to tune into the sounds carefully, and pick up specific sounds when required. The child learns to listen intently when the task requires specific sounds to be heard or subtle sound discriminations to be made. In other tasks the child may need to listen more casually for global sounds. These tasks therefore help children to understand different

ways of listening. They also help children to appreciate the aesthetical quality of sounds.

### Check Your Progress 3

While planning suitable tasks for auditory perception we need to ensure :

1. That it suits the interests of the children.
2. The duration of the task is suitable. This will vary according to the age level and attention span of the particular group of children.
3. The room setting is appropriate i.e. there are not too many background noises or distractions and the children are relaxed and sitting comfortably.
4. The teacher provides an appropriate role-model by paying attention and listening carefully to the children.
5. The instructions for the task should be clear and brief.

Each task should be planned in three stages. ie.

1. **Pre-listening** - These activities serve to arouse the children's interest in the listening activity, as well as help them to settle down and pay attention.
2. **While listening** - Which is the listening experience related to the task. The important thing to remember is that the child's expected response should not distract him/her from listening attentively.
3. **After-listening** - These are follow-up activities which help to reinforce the learning from the listening task.