



## Junior Primary Listening: Level 1

**New to SAE:** drawing on knowledge of the world in Home Language [HL], and on HL and Standard Australian English [SAE] language and literacy (to varying degrees) and able to comprehend in the HL.

**May watch carefully what others are doing, often imitating their actions, and interpreting what is meant by gestures and intonation, etc.**

**Will join in an activity but may not speak.**

**Can comprehend through non-verbal cues which match own culture or are visually supportive.**

- Will ask for clarification or translation from other speakers of their HL.
- Will bring with them listening abilities in their HL which they draw upon when attempting to comprehend spoken SAE.
- Will use their knowledge of the world to understand the culture of the school (i.e. routines and expectations of the school context).
- May bring cultural knowledge, attitudes and values related to HL, and listening behaviours which are accepted in the home environment, e.g. relaxed, informal setting, sitting cross-legged, enjoyment of repetition, passive listening, avoiding eye contact out of respect, short attention span. When the individual decides they have heard enough, they will withdraw and find an alternative activity. This may not be a sign of disrespect, but could be the listener making an autonomous decision as they would in their home culture, or could be due to listening fatigue.

*In focused SAE lessons, students:*

- may be passive participants or exhibit inappropriate behaviours. This may indicate an inability to comprehend verbal interactions.
- may participate in action songs by mimicking others.
- may respond with actions to formulaic phrases used in games, action songs or dramatic play.

- may respond with gestures and/or facial expressions when listening to songs and stories.

## **Additional Background Information**

### **Speaking in Home Language**

- May have delays in HL and listening skills because of conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (see hyperlink on Listening Homepage: Junior Primary Listening, Specific Teaching Emphases for Students with Conductive Hearing Loss - Delays, for more information).

**Note: Children with otitis media and/or conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time. Therefore attention to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies, the teaching of specific listening skills, and use of the soundfield amplification system (SAS) and personal listening devices (such as bone conductor and behind-the-ear hearing aids) are essential at this stage.**

### **Comment:**

Teachers need to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the listening needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. As Malcolm (2001) states in reference to Aboriginal English,

*Education systems have, for the most part, implicitly denied its [Aboriginal English] existence by assuming that if Aboriginal children speak English they speak the same English as non-Aboriginal people, and should be subjected to literacy instruction and testing based on SAE. When they fail to achieve comparable literacy levels in SAE to those of other Australians, what is questioned is never the rightness of denying their cultural identity by ignoring their unique English heritage, but rather the students' ability, or their home situation, or their social disadvantage, or their lack of motivation.*

This is equally relevant for Torres Strait Islander speakers of Torres Strait Creole and Aboriginal speakers of Kriol.

## Junior Primary Listening: Level 2

**Beginning to comprehend and use routine social language in immediate, familiar environment and to explore learning in SAE:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Can comprehend and respond to high frequency greetings, courtesy phrases and simple directions.**

**Are dependent on face-to-face contact with accompanying body language.**

**Will respond physically to simple directions and instructions with extra support from the interlocutor, e.g. gestures, repetition and rephrasing as needed.**

- Will need repetition and/or simplification on the part of the interlocutor.
- Will require wait time (longer than that of SAE-speaking peers) for initial processing of questions to occur before a response can be expected.
- Will have very limited understanding of interactions amongst SAE speakers (in class activities and amongst peers).
- Are listening, observing and absorbing language used in context (i.e. using the illustrations in picture books to assist comprehension).
- Are connecting SAE words with HL concepts and are beginning to predict meaning from context.
- May tire easily and appear to tune out because of the effort required to listen and observe (language overload and/or hearing loss).

*In focused SAE lessons, students:*

- Will respond with actions, and verbally, to formulaic phrases used in games, singing, dramatic play and social routines.
- May respond appropriately to action songs, e.g. Heads, shoulders, etc.
- May have difficulty understanding questions in activities and shared reading, even when contextualised.
- Will require the support of the interlocutor, i.e. teacher, peers or aide to assist with understanding.

## **Additional Background Information**

### **Speaking in Home Language**

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**Note: Children with otitis media and/or conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time. Therefore attention to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies, the teaching of specific listening skills, and use of the sound amplification system (SAS) and personal listening devices (such as bone conductor and behind-the-ear hearing aids) are essential at this stage.**

### **Comment:**

Teachers need to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the listening needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. As Malcolm (2001) states in reference to Aboriginal English,

*Education systems have, for the most part, implicitly denied its [Aboriginal English] existence by assuming that if Aboriginal children speak English they speak the same English as non-Aboriginal people, and should be subjected to literacy instruction and testing based on SAE. When they fail to achieve comparable literacy levels in SAE to those of other Australians, what is questioned is never the rightness of denying their cultural identity by ignoring their unique English heritage, but rather the students' ability, or their home situation, or their social disadvantage, or their lack of motivation.*

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### Junior Primary Listening: Level 3

**Developing an extending range of social and classroom language and moving into learning through SAE:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Can pick out some key words and phrases from teacher talk and television programs on familiar topics and where contextual support (pictures, gestures, etc) is provided.**

**Can comprehend and respond (e.g. Yes/No) to routine enquiries (Did you have a good weekend?) with little difficulty.**

**Can follow a short sequence of instructions related to classroom procedure, e.g. bring your book to me and show me your story.**

**Will have difficulty following interactions at SAE speaker speed.**

- Need time to process new language. Repetition, simplification and paraphrasing by the interlocutor is needed, but not before time is allowed for initial processing to occur.
- Will experience difficulty comprehending if background noise is present.

*In focused SAE lessons, students:*

- May be able to verbally respond to questions pertaining to routine (e.g. What did you do in the holidays?)
- Can comprehend and respond to a short (familiar) sequence of instructions.
- Are able to comprehend familiar verbal interactions which are conducted at a slower rate of speech. This is indicated by their responses.

#### **Additional Background Information**

##### **Speaking in Home Language**

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**Note: Children with otitis media and/or conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time. Therefore attention to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies, the teaching of specific listening skills, and use of the sound amplification system (SAS) and personal listening devices (such as bone conductor and behind-the-ear hearing aids) are essential at this stage.**

**Comment:**

Teachers need to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the listening needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. As Malcolm (2001) states in reference to Aboriginal English,

*Education systems have, for the most part, implicitly denied its [Aboriginal English] existence by assuming that if Aboriginal children speak English they speak the same English as non-Aboriginal people, and should be subjected to literacy instruction and testing based on SAE. When they fail to achieve comparable literacy levels in SAE to those of other Australians, what is questioned is never the rightness of denying their cultural identity by ignoring their unique English heritage, but rather the students' ability, or their home situation, or their social disadvantage, or their lack of motivation.*

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## Junior Primary Listening: Level 4

**Extending the range of language beyond own immediate social environment and experimenting with learning through SAE:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Are able to comprehend social SAE in familiar contexts (e.g. in general school context: in classroom interaction around activities, in playground interactions, on excursions, etc) with ease, with only occasional help given by the interlocutor.**

**Are able to follow instructions within the classroom learning activity if explained and presented clearly (ie. With clear steps, modelling of the task, logical sequencing of steps) though will often rely on further repetition of instructions on a one-to-one or small group basis.**

- Will require intense concentration to fully comprehend.
- Are likely to lose comprehension if there is high background noise.
- May use strategies which give the impression that full comprehension has taken place (e.g. nodding, smiling, copying actions of others, silence) which may be misinterpreted by the teacher in learning activities.
- Need time for processing of language experienced (e.g. before having to answer a question, during teacher talk, during class discussion).
- Have short concentration span if topic of lesson is unfamiliar.
- Will lack precision in understanding, e.g. will miss many details of the language they hear, (may not understand a wide range of prepositions, e.g. between, below, beneath), and will have difficulty with complex structures (e.g. although, how often...etc.).
- Are restricted by a limited vocabulary.

*In focused SAE lessons, students:*

- May have difficulty with complex instructions involving a range of prepositions (on, under, between) and directional language (forwards, backwards, left).
- Will successfully follow a series of simple instructions (e.g. a logical sequence of steps) although at times may require repetition.
- Will respond verbally to questions in familiar social contexts.
- Will be able to comprehend short verbal interactions which are conducted at almost SAE speaker speed – familiar social contexts and topics only.

## **Additional Background Information**

### **Speaking in Home Language**

- May have delays in HL and listening skills because of conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (see hyperlink on Listening Homepage: Junior Primary Listening, Specific Teaching Emphases for Students with Conductive Hearing Loss - Delays, for more information).

**Note: Children with otitis media and/or conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time. Therefore attention to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies, the teaching of specific auditory skills, and use of the SAS continue to be very important.**

## Junior Primary Listening: Level 5

**Consolidating language use in an expanding range of social contexts but limited in their ability to comprehend complex ideas in SAE in learning activities:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Are able to comprehend SAE in a range of social contexts pertinent to their age level.**

**Are less dependent on extra help from the interlocutor, and have little need to ask for repetition or reformulation, especially if the topic is familiar.**

**Will comprehend main points and most detail in learning activities on familiar topics if activities are language-focused (ie. Teacher is aware of language demands of the task); will continue to have some difficulty comprehending extended teacher talk at normal speed and with more complex ideas in learning activities when they are expressed through complex language.**

- Can comprehend gist of new topic-specific language if contextual and language support is given, and time is allowed for processing.
- Will miss some specific details because of lack of ‘depth’ of language, e.g. limited range of vocabulary, lack of understanding of complex structure and relationships such as degrees of certainty/uncertainty (ie. modality), e.g. (might, could), problem/solution (if, then), before and after, compare/contrast (similar to, different from).
- Lapses in comprehension of spoken texts can be caused by gaps in vocabulary, overload of new vocabulary, and gaps in concepts because of previous lapses in understanding.
- May lose the thread once lapse occurs.
- May lose concentration if topic and language of the lesson are unfamiliar.

### **Additional Background Information**

#### **Speaking in Home Language**

- May have delays in HL and listening skills because of conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (see hyperlink on Listening Homepage: Junior Primary Listening, Specific Teaching Emphases for Students with Conductive Hearing Loss - Delays, for more information).

**Note: Children with otitis media and/or conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time. Therefore attention to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies, the teaching of specific auditory skills, and use of the SAS continue to be very important.**

## Junior Primary Listening: Level 6

**Becoming competent user of SAE in most social contexts, use of SAE in learning contexts is sound but gaps need filling:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Can comprehend easily in most social and learning contexts relevant to their own age and phase of schooling.**

**Can understand extended teacher talk at normal speed even about a new topic, however lapses which sometimes occur will generally not affect overall comprehension.**

**Can sustain understanding of main ideas in group and whole class discussions involving an increasing number of interactions.**

- Are able to follow quick interactions and changes in topic.
- Can comprehend well despite presence of background noise.
- Have a well-developed listening vocabulary in most areas, though some gaps will still be evident. Can understand colloquialisms and idioms relevant to the junior primary context (e.g. We had chook for tea last night. He's talking his head off. Pop your book on the desk.)

**Note: Children with conductive hearing loss will continue to require support that addresses access to language e.g. modification to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies by the teacher, and use of the SAS, irrespective of their competence in SAE.**

## Junior Primary Listening: Level 7

**Competent users of SAE in all social and learning contexts related to their age and phase of schooling:** drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

**Can readily comprehend (within the range of ability expected at their phase of schooling) all spoken texts normally encountered at the learner's age and phase of schooling.**

- Will have occasional gaps in comprehending SAE where there are no HL equivalents (e.g. 'develop' a photo, escalator) or because their experience in this area has been in their HL (e.g. language of the kitchen).
- Can comprehend most idiomatic expressions and cultural references within the Australian context. However may not be familiar with some cultural references, e.g. nursery rhymes, traditional stories, especially if they entered junior primary at a later stage.

### *Additional Background Information*

If home background is strong in HL, will continue to benefit in many ways from using their HL with HL-speaking peers and adults (e.g. at school, at home, in the community, at place of worship) and from being able to draw on their HL knowledge of the world.

**Note: Children with conductive hearing loss will continue to require support that addresses access to language e.g. modification to the listening environment, use of appropriate teaching strategies by the teacher, and use of the SAS, irrespective of their competence in SAE.**

## References

Malcolm, I. (2001) **Making Room for Communication** in *Prospect: An Australian Journal of TESOL*, Vol. 16 No. 1. pp.4-16.