



Concept Development

Supporting School Age Children

Speech and Language Therapy (Exeter and West)

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childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk





Why you have been directed to training to support concept development?

- Formal Assessment may have highlighted that this is an area of language that the child is finding difficult
- You may have been asked to do some practise on concept words with the child



Aims of training

- To explain what a concept is
- To explain when and how children develop concept knowledge
- To explain why concepts are an important part of language and key to your child being able to access learning
- To schools how to help children to learn and use concept words





What is a Concept?

Concept words are important as a part of a child's vocabulary to describe properties and ideas such as:

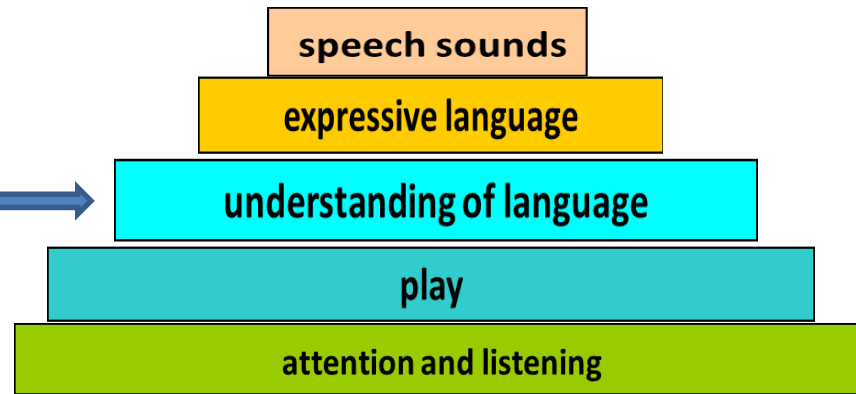
- **Quality**
- **Quantity**
- **Time or Sequence**
- **Position or Location**
- **Personal Qualities, Emotions and Feelings**
- **Movement**



Why are concepts important?

Concepts:

- Help us to understand language
- Help us to develop language
- Help us to express ideas



Communication Development Pyramid



Everyday Concepts

Quality	Colour and shape (spot, line, round, cross, triangle, curved, corner, circle, flat, straight)	size (big, heavy, long, small, light, short, tall, thin, fat, full, heavier, longer, large, wide, tallest, deep, wide, narrow, shallow, thick, wide	texture (wet, hot, dirty, new, hard, rough, soft, cold, dry, furry, smooth) sound (noisy, quiet, loudly, softly)	similarities and differences (same as, like, different, or)
Quantity	Number, equal, quarter, half unequal	a bit, all, a lot, some, many, another, few, most, enough, plenty, except	gone, more, none, less, nearly, only, part, whole	as much as, about, both, every, each, several, other
Time or Sequence	now, after, soon, later, before, early	again, never, always, sometimes, and then	today, yesterday, tomorrow	first, last, second, third, once, never
Position or Location	on, in, under, by, in front of, off, beside, next to, across	up, down, over, through, to, around, behind, between, above, below, against	outside, inside, bottom, top, high, low, middle, side, row	away, near, facing, apart, together, far
Movement	fast, slowly, quickly,	stop, go, moving	still, smooth, jerky	backwards, towards
Emotions, Feelings & Personal Qualities	good, bad, nice	hungry, thirsty, asleep, awake	pretty, silly, clever, kind	sad, frightened, excited, pleased



When do Concepts Develop? Early Years

Pre-School children typically know and use Early concepts that:

- Are object based
- Relate to what is in front of them





When do Concepts Develop? Foundation Stage

By Reception children typically know and use many more concepts:

- To be able to understand and follow general classroom instructions
- To support new learning – reasoning, vocabulary and topics, storytelling, developing numeracy skills





When do Concepts Develop – Key Stages 1 & 2

By the end of Primary School concepts become:

- Less concrete or physical
- More complex, specific and abstract



How do children learn concepts?

- Children learn concepts in a particular order
- Most children learn concepts through real life experiences
- They relate their experience to the 'label' you provide for what they are doing and seeing
- Then hear the word several times in different situations



Why can concepts be difficult to learn?

Concepts:

- are often abstract
- have multiple meanings
- depend on the situation or context
- are perceived differently by different people
- can exist simultaneously



Impact of Reduced Concept Knowledge

Language Use:

- May use simplistic or immature sounding sentences
- Incorrect use of concept words
- Difficulty telling and re- telling stories and news
- Difficulty answering questions about what they read or hear

Understanding Language:

- Difficulty following instructions or knowing what order to do things in
- Difficulty following classroom routines
- Difficulty understanding stories and explanations





Impact of Reduced Concept Knowledge

Learning:

- Reduced access to the curriculum
- Limited educational progress

Social Situations:

- May present as quiet and withdrawn
- Difficulty fully expressing how they feel
- May have challenging behaviour



How do you choose what concept to work on?

- Use Information from your Speech and Language Therapy report and programme
- Use the Concept Checklist handout to determine the order and monitor progress
- Observe the child during class, small group, 1-2-1, activities



How do I teach a concept?

Stage 1 – allow the child to experience the word

Stage 2 – work on it in a structured game

Stage 3 - add more information

Stage 4 – generalise to different situations

Stage 5 - help the child compare concepts



General Rules for Teaching Concepts

- Work on understanding a concept before using it
- Teach only one concept at a time contrasting it with a negative rather than a pair/ opposite
- Work on no more than 4 concepts at a time
- Be careful not to use concept words the child does not yet know to teach new concepts

Practical Activities

- Please refer to the attached handouts for suggestions and activities to target a range of concept words
- [Concept Milestones.docx](#)
- [Concept Checklist.docx](#)
- [Concepts Practical Ideas.docx](#)

Thank you.