Introduction

Many children with deficits in comprehension and/or auditory processing have difficulty answering simple *Wh-* questions about information in single sentences, multiple sentences, and short stories. Answering questions about simple stories requires simultaneous efficiency in multiple tasks such as attending, auditory memory, word retrieval, and formulating responses. A child with a problem in any of these areas may be unable to provide an appropriate answer to a *Wh-* question even immediately after hearing the question.

While many clinicians address IEP goals targeting these deficits and include storytelling activities in their therapy sessions, it can be difficult for the busy clinician to find appropriate story materials for younger children or to make up stories on the spot for therapy. *No-Glamour Listening Comprehension* provides the clinician with plenty of stimulus material and *Wh-* questions for the child who has difficulty with early listening comprehension skills for sentences or stories.

The stories and associated questions are organized in a general hierarchy from the easiest to the most challenging. *No-Glamour Listening Comprehension* includes many one-sentence stories that can be used to teach comprehension of simple *who, where, what, when, what happened, how,* and *why* questions in isolation or in a sentence. The target information needed for a response may be in the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence. Next two-sentence and three-to-four-sentence stories with more complex *Wh-* questions are introduced, with more complex comprehension questions. Finally stories with four or more sentences are provided for targeting story comprehension, higher-level auditory/language processing, or story retelling. Pictures for multiple-sentence stories are also provided and can be used as cues in teaching visual compensatory strategies.

Guidelines for Use

Before presenting *No-Glamour Listening Comprehension* to a student, test the child's ability to respond to questions about stories by completing the Pretest on pages 9-17. Administer the most appropriate section(s) for the student. If you expect the student to give a complete sentence as a response, inform the student about your expectation.

If the Pretest shows that the child is unable to respond with appropriate information to simple *Wh-* questions about single sentences with 80-90% accuracy, begin by working on

the child's ability to answer *who* questions about single sentences. Prepare the child by saying, "I am going to tell you a short story. Listen carefully and then I will ask you questions about the story."

Read a one-sentence story.

"John went to the store on Saturday."

Ask the target *who* question about the story.

"Who went to the store?"

If the child responds acceptably ("John"), praise him. Move on and read a single-sentence story that has a target *what* question.

If the child is unable to answer the initial *who* question, read the story again and try to emphasize the answer within the story by reading a certain part more slowly or more loudly or with more emphasis on the key word.

"*JOHN* went to the store on Saturday."

Repeat the target *who* question. If the child still doesn't respond appropriately, provide the answer and have him repeat it. Read subsequent stories and ask *who* questions until the child is able to respond to *who* questions about a sentence with 80-90% accuracy. Then continue by working on the child's ability to answer *where* questions about sentences, using the same procedure. Continue and require the same 80-90% accuracy criteria before moving on to the next type of question.

Make sure the child can answer a question without regard to the location of the target information in a sentence. For example, if a child can only answer *who* questions when the answer is in the beginning of the sentence, do not move on to the next group of target questions until she is able to answer correctly regardless of the location of the key information in a sentence.

Once the child can answer all of the various target questions about single-sentence stories with 80-90% accuracy, move on to asking questions about simple two-sentence stories. When the child is able to answer all of the various target questions about simple two-sentence stories with 80-90% accuracy, move on to asking questions about simple three-to-four-sentence stories. Then move on to asking questions about stories with four or more sentences.

Depending on the student's ability, you may want him to look at the picture while you read the story, or you may want to wait and use the picture as a prompt. In general, once a child is able to answer questions about stories while looking at a picture, it is helpful to generalize this ability by then having him answer story questions without using a visual aid.

You may also wish to use *No-Glamour Listening Comprehension* to work on a child's ability to retell stories with appropriate sequence, sentence structure, and accuracy. Use the multi-picture stories on pages 218-253 for this task. In this case, say to the child, "I am going to tell you a short story. Listen carefully because when I finish, I want you to tell the story back to me." Read the story as the child looks at the pictures. When you are finished, say, "Now *you* tell the story." Have the child look at the pictures as he retells the story. The child is not required to tell the story back verbatim, but he must include important details in the proper sequence. Once a child can retell a story while he looks at the pictures, have him retell the story without looking at the pictures.

Helpful Hints

When you present many stimulus items consecutively, you may find that the child's accuracy in responding becomes poorer as each new item is presented. The presentation of multiple consecutive sentences or stories may be too taxing on the child's ability to process information, and she may become fatigued. Here are a few strategies to help increase the child's accuracy of performance.

- Take brief breaks between target sentences or stories and questions.

- Do a different type of activity that does not require specific or significant processing (e.g., labeling) between stimulus items.

- Let the child know how many questions you are going to ask before taking a break so she understands this will not be an endless task. If necessary, show the child how many questions she will be asked by having her cross off a set number of boxes or take tokens off a board for each question after she answers it.

The Answer Key (pages 258-264) lists responses as examples. Accept other logical answers as appropriate also.

Suggested I.E.P. Objectives

Below are suggested I.E.P. objectives that mirror the hierarchy of tasks within *No-Glamour Listening Comprehension*.

Long-Term Objective 1: The child will improve receptive language and/or auditory processing skills.

Short-Term Objectives
- The child will demonstrate appropriate auditory attention to speakers during specific listening activities 80% of the time without prompting.

- The child will demonstrate comprehension of simple *who*, *where*, *what*, *when*, *what happened*, and *how/why* questions about a sentence by responding with appropriate information with 80% accuracy independently.

- The child will demonstrate comprehension of simple *who*, *where*, *what*, *when*, *what happened*, and *how/why* questions about multiple sentences by responding with appropriate information with 80% accuracy independently.

- The child will demonstrate comprehension of simple *Wh-* questions about short stories by responding with appropriate information with 80% accuracy independently.

- The child will demonstrate comprehension of *how*, *why*, and other complex *Wh-* questions about short stories by responding with appropriate information with 80% accuracy independently.

Long-Term Objective 2: The child will improve expressive language skills.

Short-Term Objectives
- The child will answer simple *who*, *where*, *what*, and *when* questions with 80% accuracy independently.

- The child will answer *how*, *why*, and other complex *Wh-* questions with 80% accuracy independently.

- The child will encode actions and events from a short story sequentially with 80% accuracy independently.