

Receptive language

Receptive language, or 'language input' refers to the understanding or processing of language, developed through listening to verbal communication, interpreting non-verbal cues, and comprehending written language. It is vital to understanding text and constructing a more robust vocabulary.

Receptive language enables us to attend and listen to the speaker, apply meaning to spoken words, and understanding grammatical markers.

What to do

Gain the learner's attention by saying their name before giving an instruction. Simplify your own language, and consider the amount of words being used.

Explain the meanings of new vocabulary, idioms and non-literal language.

Give instructions in the order of the task, and allow extra processing time (follow the 10 second rule). Check understanding by asking the learner to repeat back what they need to do.

When to raise a concern

If the learner has difficulty paying attention to verbally presented information, or during discussions.

If they have difficulty following and understanding text, including vocabulary and abstract concepts, such a quantity, spacial, sequence or temporal, or has difficulty with verbal reasoning.

If the learner has difficulty understanding non-literal or ambiguous language, or grammatical language (such as tenses).

If the learner is unable to recall and record information that has been verbally presented, or takes additional time to process what has been said.

How to assess

Observation checklists can be accessed through several online organisations, such as The Communication Trust. SENCos can also provide more information on referring to SALT services.