

**Information Carrying Words**

**Directions/ Learning in a classroom/ or at home can be delivered in complex, quick language. Often using multiple directions at one time. Containing many Information Carrying Words. A child with SLCN will find it difficult to understand the meaning of these sentences. Adults can help children understand spoken language better if:**

* Sentences are short & simple
* Sentences limit the use of Information Carrying Words

**What is an Information Carrying Word?**

**INFORMATION CARRYING WORDS (ICW) are words that carry MEANING**

Many words in a sentence are not needed in order to understand what is needed. Children will ‘know’ from clues you are giving with your body, like eye pointing and gesture. They will know from routines or by imitating others.

E.G. ‘Put your coat on please.’ (Adult holds out coat) The child can understand what to do from the context. No understanding of language is needed to succeed. In this context ‘Put your coat on please’ = 0 ICW

Introduce a choice (adult holds out a coat and a cardigan) ‘Put your coat on please’ now involves the child hearing ‘coat’ or ‘cardigan’, understanding the vocabulary and making the choice.

In this context ‘Put your coat on’ = 1 ICW and ‘Put your cardigan on’ = 1 ICW

Broadly speaking children understand the following number of ICW

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Information Carrying Words Understood  | By the Age of … |
| 2 | 2 years |
| 3 | 3 years |
| 4 | 4 years |

Adults can challenge and develop children’s skills by knowing exactly what number of ICW the child finds easy. This can be carefully targeted to increase the number.

**If you can cope with 4 ICWs you can access the Year 1 Curriculum.**

Attention, memory, language difficulties make this difficult.

**Working with Information Carrying Words develops:**

* Vocabulary
* Memory Skills
* Understanding spoken words
* Expressive language (telling you what to do)
* Other communication skills
* Social Skills

**Strategies to increase the number of Information Carrying Words children can remember in a sentence**

* Use pictures, objects, symbols, drawings
* Assess the number of ICW a child is successful with
* Link the activity to topic vocabulary
* Target verbs/ adjectives/ colour/size/ positional vocabulary
* Ask children to ‘be the teacher’ and give you the instructions for the activity, ‘what would you like me to do?’
* Increase the number of ICWs by introducing 1 extra choice at a time

**What might an ICW game look like?**

Put the dog in the bed = 1 dog and 1 bed = 0 ICW (no choices)

 

Put the dog in the red bed = 1 dog and 2 different beds = 1 ICW (1 choice)

 

Put the little dog in the blue bed = 2 different size dogs and 2 different colour beds = 2 ICW (2 choices)



Put the big dog is behind the blue bed = 2 dogs, 2 beds, position = 3ICW (3 choices to be made… which dog, which bed, where?

**Put the little dog in/ behind the red bed and give him a bone = 4 choices to make = 4 ICWs.**



**Record it like this**

Put the **little** dog **in** the **red** bed and give him a **bone.**

 **big behind blue rope.**

**Record what the child does. (Any symbols will work)**

**Does a wrong answer mean:**

* **Child does not know vocabulary. (teach vocabulary// concept)**
* **Child has reached ICW memory capacity. (Practice and slowly develop capacity through ICW games in small groups or individually)**

**REMEMBER**

* **PRESENT THE ACTIVITY AS A STORY TO MAINTAIN INTEREST!**
* **AVOID EYE POINTING: LOOK AT THE CHILD**
* **AVOID GESTURE: SIT ON YOU HANDS!**
* **CHECK CHILD KNOWS VOCABULARY YOU HAVE PLANNED**
* **CHECK YOU HAVE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT**
* **RECORD WHAT CHILD SAYS AND DOES**





