

Section 4.1

Remembering two things at a time



Why is this important?

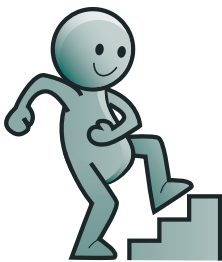
Verbal understanding is like a ‘list’ of things/items that need to be remembered in order to carry out the task. An example of a two-word level instruction is ‘Give doll a *banana*’ (e.g. children have to remember ‘doll’ and ‘banana’). If children can’t do this, it may be that their auditory memory is not yet sufficiently developed.

What to do

- Put out four everyday objects (e.g. cup, teddy, pencil, sock).
- Say ‘Give me pencil and teddy’. Make sure the child waits until the end of the instruction before responding.
- Hold out your hands for the items.
- Replace and ask for two different items.

N.B. Try to remember not to look at the items as you ask for them, or eye-point during the task as this gives clues over and above the meanings of the words only.

- Work towards the same aim via different activities:
 - ★ Play a shopping game, or put two animals into the field, or two items of clothing into the washing machine, etc.
 - ★ ‘Kim’s Game’ is good for developing memory and observation skills and is also great fun. Collect a small number of items on a tray and cover them with a cloth. Sit in a group where all the children can see the tray. Take away the cloth and allow the children time to scan the items carefully. Re-cover the tray then ask each child which items they can remember. The one who remembers most wins the game.



Step up

- The child has to wait for you to say ‘Go’ before collecting the objects, or the child has to walk across the room to collect the items.
- Gradually lengthen the time between the instruction being given and the ‘go’, or extend the ‘walk’ across the room.
- Increase the number of objects on the table to five.
- Ask for three items instead of two.
- Try using picture cards: name and then place them face down on the table; take it in turns to remember what was where.
- Extend this to a more traditional ‘pairs’ game.

Step down

- Do point and/or eye-point!
- Use signs or gestures.
- Reduce the number of items on the table to three.
- Start by asking for one thing.
- Ask for things in the order they are set out on the table (left–right).
- If the child finds it difficult to wait until the end of the instruction, place your hands gently over his/hers.

