

Activities for Discriminating Between Sounds: The Second Level of Learning to Listen

To help a child to localize or find a sound, have them close their eyes, or blindfold them, and have them point to the direction from which the sound comes. The following sounds may be used; bell, whistle, knocking, water running, calling (not shouting), etc.

Have the child match objects according to the sounds they make. Use several items such as wooden sticks, a bell, a hammer, a whistle, 2 spoons. Ask the child to turn or close their eyes so they cannot see the item. Make one of the objects produce a noise. Then see if the child can identify what made the sound.

Play the game, same and different. Use shakers, like rattles, (the plastic eggs you may have at home work great for this activity) that contain different objects; rice, penny, beads, beans, cotton ball-or empty for detecting silence, paper clips, sugar, and other such items. Have 2 rattles filled with the same things. Have the child shake the shakers until they find the 2 that sound the same.

Drop objects that are completely different in sound when dropped. Some objects might include a ball, a key, a keychain, a piece of crumpled paper. Let your child tell you verbally what was dropped or show you the object dropped. This is also a great way to work on turn taking.

The child should be encouraged to discriminate sounds that are near and far away. If a siren is heard in the distance, call this to the attention of your child then as it comes closer, note this also. Another activity would be to have your child turn their back and guess if you are near or far when you make a sound.

Teach your child the difference between loud and soft. Make loud and soft noises vocally by tapping your hand, by beating on instruments, etc. Have the child tell you if the sound is loud or soft. Have the child make the sounds loud and soft and you tell them which it is. Let them be the teacher. Make sure to make mistakes so they can make the corrections for you. Fun!