

Auditory Processing Disorder

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) (also called Central Processing Disorder) is a receptive language disorder, in which a person hears sounds, but cannot process the information correctly. Students with Auditory Processing Disorder cannot recognize the difference between sounds in words, even when the sounds are spoken loudly. They do not recognize the subtle differences between sounds in words. In addition, when two words have nearly the same base frequency, students with Auditory Processing Disorder may be able to hear the sounds correctly, but due to the disorder may not be able to interpret the information. Due to these difficulties, it is extremely problematic for students with Auditory Processing Disorder to process information in a classroom/lecture setting.

Students with APD may have difficulty:

- Processing information quickly
- Paying attention
- Remembering information
- Following verbal directions
- Remembering names and places
- Repeating numbers or words sequentially
- Understanding incomplete sentences

- Understanding words, especially in noisy backgrounds
- Listening skills
- Reading and spelling

Suggestions for Helping Students with Central Auditory Processing disorder in the College Classroom

Classroom

- Minimize auditory environmental distractions
- Be aware of the difficulties these students may have during classroom discussions; when possible repeat or paraphrase what is shared by the other students during discussion.
- Accept "yes" or "no" answers and provide extra time for the student to answer; it takes these students additional time to process information and respond.
- Allow for preferential seating if desired; sitting in the front of the class can minimize distractions and can increase the student's focus on what the instructor is saying.
- Give short breaks from listening when possible.

Lecture

- Use "pre-tuner" words such as "listen, read, and begin".
- Pronounce words distinctly and use breaks between them.

- Vary pitch, tone, and speed to help with listening capacity.
- Use key words and phrases such as in addition, consequently, next, finally, and in conclusion to key students as to where the lecture is headed.
- Use a high degree of gesturing and examples when lecturing.
- Use visual aids, charts, and Power Point if possible
- Present concrete presentations/examples
- Give "alert": cues when you are about to input instructions
- Keep directions brief; if working one-on-one with the student ask him/her to clarify understanding.
- Provide an overview of what is to be covered and the expected outcomes.
- Present one or two tasks at a time if possible.
- Use cumulative review regularly.

Assignments

- Write assignments on board or point out page numbers where assignments are located in the syllabus.
- Provide both written and verbal instructions
- Give clear, direct instructions for all tasks.

- Allow adequate time for in-class reading and writing assignments. Some of these students may qualify for a note taker or scribe.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Does APD affect the student's ability to hear?**

Students with APD are not hearing-impaired. They have the physical capability to hear what is said. However, APD causes them to need additional time to process the content of what is spoken.

- **Will speaking loudly help the student with APD?**

No, Students with APD can hear adequately. However, speaking words distinctly and at a slower rate may be helpful. Also, using breaks between words could be beneficial to the student.

- **Does APD affect the student's ability to communicate?**

Most students with APD can communicate adequately. However, they may have a slowed verbal response time when addressed due to processing difficulty. They also may have difficulties following/

participating in fast moving conversations.

- **What other academic areas are affected when a student has APD?**

Students with APD often have difficulty with reading, spelling, and sometimes writing due to their decreased phonological awareness skills. Note taking can be a problem.

- **Can background/classroom noise affect the student with APD?**

Background/classroom noise can affect the student's concentration ability and processing speed. Students with APD perform best in quieter settings and when auditory information is accompanied by visual tactile skills.

Further Questions, please contact:

**Disability Services
(located in the Learning
Assistance Lab in the
Campbell Learning Resource
Center, C-218)
(734) 384-4167**

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