

# Professional Development Toolbox

## *Listening and Speaking*



### LISTENING

- ❖ Work with teachers to establish at least one specific concrete cue to signal children that it is time to listen (PCF, p. 191)
- ❖ Have teachers brainstorm a list of interactive ways to check for understanding. For example, children are asked “If you are going to the block area, put your hands on your head.” For children who are beyond the observational/listening stage, ask them to talk about what has just happened and listen patiently while accepting their language usage, which may include code switching (PCF, p. 191).
- ❖ Ask teachers to think about their daily routines and the language they use. Walk through the daily schedule and together, develop a list of specific ways the teachers can scaffold (e.g., gestures, actions, and picture) their communication to aid in children’s comprehension (PCF, p. 192; PEL, pp. 54-55)
- ❖ Model and/or role-play ways to teach the English speaking children ways to communicate and ask questions to encourage interaction and provide additional language models (PEL, p. 54)

- ❖ Explain the importance of referring to the present situation to allow the child to understand the context of communication. Have teachers identify three ways they can use talking about the here and now during their daily routines.



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## *Listening and Speaking continued*

### SPEAKING

✿ Have a small group of teachers review the chart on pages 54-55 of the PEL Guide. Discuss how the teacher would select strategies to use with specific children. Based on the teachers' identified needs select one to three strategies to model. Provide time for the teachers to practice using the strategies during your meeting. Ask teachers to use at least one of the strategies before the next meeting. At the next meeting, have teachers discuss and reflect on their experiences using the strategies (PEL, pp. 54-55, PCF, pp. 191,199)

✿ With the teacher, review the chart on pages 54 and 55 of the PEL Guide. Ask the teacher to identify a child who is an English learner in his/her classroom and to describe the child's stage(s) of second language development. Scaffold the conversation, so the teacher is able to identify at what stage the child is currently (e.g. home language, observational/listening, telegraphic/formulaic and/or fluid/productive). Then ask the teacher to look back at the chart and identify one to three strategies he/she is already using to meet respond to the child and one to two strategies he/she would like to implement before the next scheduled meeting. Help the teacher plan for implementation. At the next visit, ask the



teacher to reflect upon his/her experience using the strategy (PEL, pp. 54-55; PCF, pp 191, 199)

✿ Ask teachers to look at their daily schedules and identify opportunities to draw children into conversation. Together, develop a list of open-ended questions to help structure and extend children's conversations in English and to do so unobtrusively and without dominating (PEL, p. 40)

✿ With a small group of teachers, brainstorm a list of activities that can be structured so that children can engage in telling stories or recounting events by expressing themselves through various means, such as speech, pantomime, pointing, and role-playing (PEL , p. 28)

✿ Review the classroom library with the teacher to identify wordless picture books. Explain that wordless picture books give the child an opportunity to make up his own stories in any language. Work with the teacher to develop a "wish list" of additional wordless picture books to add to their collection. (PCF, p. 203)

❖ When considering how to plan for dual language learners "{In addition}, some parents, just like some professionals, may confuse bilingual status with low academic performance when they see that certain bilingual children perform as a group at a lower level than mono-lingual children on certain academic subjects" (Family Partnerships and Culture p. 87). Invite teachers to think about their own views of dual language learners. Ask them to make a list of all the benefits of being a dual language learner. Then, invite teachers to consider how they share this list with families. Being aware of these benefits will help teachers and families to use a positive lens when considering cognitive development of dual language learners.