

Secondary school classroom teachers place a major emphasis on presenting curricular content and instruction through oral language. Teachers use oral language to:

- Explain
- Instruct
- Discuss
- Question
- Recap and summarise
- Explore
- Illustrate
- Embellish and expand
- Reason
- Summarise

As a result, secondary students spend a great deal of time listening to, and processing, teachers' oral presentations. The oral language of secondary classrooms can range from everyday, conversational-type content to highly complex, technical and subject-specific content.

Students with LI may be challenged in this verbal environment due to:

- Auditory processing difficulty, affecting their ability to retain information and follow instructions
- Attention inhibition problems so that they become easily distracted by sounds in the classroom other than the teacher's voice
- Slow auditory processing time, needing extra time to process information and organise their thinking to make a response
- Experiencing tiredness and 'auditory overload' due to having to work extra hard at listening in class
- Multi-modal learning difficulties, such as listening, looking at the board and writing notes simultaneously.

One aspect of the collaboration is to **raise teachers' awareness** of the importance of effective oral delivery in the classroom, and to **explore together each teacher's oral communication style**. This is the most individualised aspect of the program, since we all have a particular oral expressive profile.

If it is felt that a teacher is demonstrating an aspect, or some aspects, of oral language delivery that could be usefully modified, the SLP and the teacher will work together to set realistic goals for bringing about change. SLPs have expertise in oral communication and will use their professional knowledge to create a program of change in each individual instance.

This chapter provides the following resources to assist this aspect of the SLP/teacher collaboration:

- Guidelines for observing and discussing aspects of teachers' oral language practices.
- A teachers' oral language checklist.
- Examples of some specific approaches to modifying teachers' oral language use.
- General oral language techniques useful for all classroom teachers.