MY FIRST BARRIER GAMES

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BARRIER GAMES

What are they?
Simply put, barrier games involve two players separated by a barrier. Each player is given a set of the same objects or a picture of the same scene. The barrier is such that each person can hear the other, but cannot see the other's objects or picture. This places the emphasis on language. One player (Player One) arranges their objects or colours something on their picture and then tells the other player (Player Two) about what they have done. Player Two must then arrange their objects or colour their picture in an attempt to make them exactly the same as Player One’s. If a clear message was delivered, understood and followed, both pictures or object arrangements should be the same when the barrier is removed.
(We will discuss in detail the steps involved later in this manual).

Through barrier games, we aim to encourage the production of clear, efficient and unambiguous messages, and careful listening.

Barrier games are brilliant for developing expressive and receptive language and also the concept of referential communication. My First Barrier Games © also promotes the use of specific questioning through “question probes”. This assists in developing clarification requests.

Expressive language = the production of a message
Receptive language = understanding a message

Barrier games can be used in individual speech pathology sessions, in home programs or in schools as part of whole class programming.
There is also a turn-taking component of barrier games, which, when played by an adult and child, allows the adult to provide a clear model of speech when it is their turn to produce a message. Children with language delay can learn from this speech model. This is why, in the initial stages of using barrier games, they are best played by an adult and child (if the child has a language delay).

Barrier games can be used in a variety a ways.
The following pages will help you see how you can adapt the activities to each child’s needs and abilities.
What is Referential Communication?

Referential Communication = the ability to relate information from one person to another using a clear and unambiguous message.

- Children younger than 7 years can have difficulty with referential communication.
- Children with language difficulties, particularly children on the autism spectrum, often have poor referential communication skills.
- A child with poor referential communication has trouble judging what the listener already knows and what information they need to be told. The child often assumes that the listener knows what the child already knows and they, therefore, fail to provide the listener with a clear, full, unambiguous message. Barrier games can help these children learn that a listener may have no previous knowledge of the content of what the child is speaking about and may be relying entirely on the child’s words to generate that knowledge.

Barrier games have been shown to significantly improve the referential communication skills of children with learning disabilities.¹

An example of poor referential communication is:

CHILD: “Mum, Mr. Johns said that you need to get one of those keyboard things for me”.

(Mum doesn’t know who Mr. Johns is and child has not thought to explain this… Mum also does not know what ‘one of those keyboard things’ is. The child has assumed that his mother knows this because it’s very obvious to him what a keyboard thing is!)

What are Clarification Requests?

Clarification Requests = questions that help a listener to understand a message when it has not been understood the first time.

Good clarification requests follow the route below:

1. Listener notes that they have not understood the message.
2. Listener pinpoints exactly which part of the message was not understood.
3. Listener asks the speaker a specific question so the speaker’s answer can provide the required information.

Most adults have no problems with clarification requests and it seems strange to break the steps down as such. It is important to do this, however, as a child with language difficulties may have trouble at steps 1, 2 or 3. They may need explicit instruction and practice at the steps where the difficulty is occurring.

My First Barrier Games © can be used to “probe” whether a child can ask for clarification and whether they can do this in a specific manner. Intermittently, through the barrier game activities, it encourages an adult to give the child an unclear message and then wait to see if the child asks a specific question to clarify. The procedure for this is included later in this manual.

Clarification Requests can “repair” a failed communication attempt.

Children with language difficulties can find clarification requests difficult. When they do not understand a message, they may not ask for clarification at all – or ask for clarification in a non-specific manner.

An example of a poor request for clarification:

MUM AND CHILD ARE AT THE SUPERMARKET CHECK-OUT

MUM: “Oh, I forgot the kiwifruit…can you go and grab me four kiwifruit please. Quickly!”

(Child doesn’t know what kiwifruit are). CHILD: “What?”

MUM: “Some kiwifruit…go and get me four of them please … they are in the fruit section.”

Because the child didn’t ask a specific question, the mother clarified the wrong part – she explained where they were, not what they were. The child still doesn’t know what kiwifruit are.

Concepts:

Barrier games can also be used to teach concepts. After all, when you try and describe a picture, you need words like “long, short, big, small, next to, under” and also names of things like “dog, cat, egg” and so on.

Many barrier games are too difficult for young learners as there are two many variables. They are provided with two many objects and too many possible positions. With young children, or children who have language difficulties, it can be impossible to finish up with too identical pictures.

My First Barrier Games © provides simple pictures that are non-ambiguous. Each picture targets a specific concept – either a preposition (under, in, on) or an adjective (long, short, big, little).

Children are assisted in using these words in a carefully graded manner – first there are only two variables and later there are more and more. Once again, this is all explained later in the manual.

More detail about Teaching and Learning Concepts is on Page 18.

All the concepts targeted are all listed in the RECORD SHEET on Page 17.
Setting Up for My First Barrier Games:

1. I suggest starting with the STARTING OFF pictures. Open the Folder “Pictures” and click on the document STARTING OFF.
2. Print out the document. It has 3 pages.
3. The first page is your record sheet. You can use this within a session and then transfer the results to the larger record sheet at the end of this document.
4. Cut each picture out carefully. At the top of each page is a text box that you can keep separately with each pair of pictures. These are the suggested words for you to use when playing the barrier games.
5. Either slip each picture into a plastic pouch (see left) or laminate. This way, the pictures can be used again and again.
6. Find/make a suitable barrier. This could be a large book or a stiff clipboard or you can easily make one by cutting up a large cardboard box (see above). It needs to be high enough so you cannot see over it and it needs to stand freely on a table.
7. Each player will need a set of two or three whiteboard markers. Each set should include the exact colours. (To make barrier games more difficult you increase the number of whiteboard markers).

NOTE: Some children cannot easily colour due to physical difficulties – others I have met are perfectionists when it comes to colouring and take far too long! If this is the case, you can use either different coloured dot stickers or counters to place on the objects instead of colouring them.

Introducing the games:

Some children need little explanation about what is required to play barrier games. Others need lots of explanation and examples. Some children respond well to “seeing” how to play the games before actually playing them. The following pictures can be used to show and “talk through” the idea of barrier games. The pictures on page 6 show a basic game. The pictures on page 7 goes through a scenario when a child doesn’t “hear” all the message and does not ask for clarification – he guesses instead. The pictures in page 8 show a child requesting clarification.

In the folder “Pictures” you will find a file “CUE CARDS”. These are pictures to print out and make into cards. They can be used to prompt clear messages, careful listening, no pointing and also questioning. These can be used at the start or during a game to remind the child about the rules of the game, about transfer of clear messages or (when needed) about asking for questions to clarify. There is also a larger set that can be shown to a class when discussing the strategies used in barrier games.
These boys are playing barrier games. They want both their pictures to be the same.

It is this boy’s turn to colour first. He colours his circle red. He can see the circle is red. He knows the circle is red.

This boy waits. It’s his turn to listen. He can’t see the colour-in, so he doesn’t know what to do with his picture.

This boy says: “The circle is red.”
This is a good clear message.

This boy listens carefully. He now knows that he needs to colour in the circle and he needs to choose red.”

He colours the circle red.

He is finished so he takes the barrier away. The pictures are the same. Careful listening and clear messages are great for getting it right!
These boys are playing barrier games. They want both their pictures to be the same.

It is this boy’s turn to colour first. He colours his circle red. He can see the circle is red.
He knows the circle is red.

This boy says:
“The circle is red.”
This is a good clear message.

This boy waits. It’s his turn to listen. He can’t see the colour-in, so he doesn’t know what to do with his picture.

This boy doesn’t listen carefully. He knows that he needs to colour in the circle but he didn’t hear the colour. He guesses the colour is green.

He colours the circle green.

He is finished so he takes the barrier away. The pictures are NOT the same. He needs to try and listen carefully next time!
These boys are playing barrier games. They want both their pictures to be the same.

It is this boy’s turn to colour first. He colours his circle red. He can see the circle is red. He knows the circle is red.

This boy says:
“Colour the circle.”
This is NOT a good clear message. He didn’t tell his friend about the colour.

This boy waits. It’s his turn to listen. He can’t see the colour-in, so he doesn’t know what to do with his picture.

This boy listens carefully. He knows that he needs to colour the circle, but his friend didn’t tell him which colour, so he doesn’t know which colour to choose.

He asks a question. His question is about what he needs to know.
“What colour is the circle?” he asks.

Now this boy knows to colour the circle red.

He colours the circle red and then pulls the barrier away. Both the pictures are the same. Well done!
STARTING OFF:

After the child understands about barrier games, set up in a quiet area a child who has a language delay, it is best to start with that child and an adult can play barrier games together. Let us pretend the adult is you.

1. Make sure the child has the same picture as you in front of them. You may tell the child that it doesn’t matter if their colouring is not extremely neat. It’s not a colouring contest!

2. Start with the pictures in the document called “Starting off”. These contain four familiar objects and the request is simply “Colour one of the things” or “Colour one of the animals”. To begin, the child and you should each have one whiteboard marker of the same colour. Leave a pause and when the child has finished colouring, say “Tell me about your picture.” You may add “I am going to try and make mine the same”. Listen to what your child says and follow the child’s instructions. Withdraw the barrier and check whether you have coloured in the same picture. Discuss the outcome. Were you right? Was the child’s message clear? Did you listen carefully?

YOUR INSTRUCTIONS WHEN IT’S THE CHILD’S TURN TO COLOUR FIRST:

“Colour in one/two ________.”
Wait for child to finish colouring.
“Tell me about your picture…”
I will try and make my picture the same.”

3. When things go wrong:

- Often a child will point to a picture and say “Colour that one.” Remind the child that a rule in this game is “NO POINTING”. Tell the child, “I can’t see what you are showing me; you have to use your words to make me understand.” Show them the NO POINTING cue card.

- Sometimes children start to describe the object instead of naming it precisely: For example, “It’s a fruit, it’s round, it’s sometimes red…” If the child starts to do this, tell them; “This is not a guessing game. In this game, you have to tell me as quickly and clearly as you can about the thing to colour in. You can use its name.” Then give an example. With these initial STARTING OFF pictures, you can tease out all the problems or confusions about the barrier game concept.

- If the child does not tell you clearly enough what to colour in, check they know the name of all the objects included.
4. Next, wipe the colour off each picture and it’s your turn to colour. Tell the child “It’s my turn to colour” and colour in one object. Tell the child about your picture and then tell them “Make your picture the same”. Wait for your child to complete colouring, withdraw the barrier and check. Discuss the outcome. Were they right? Did they listen carefully?

5. Next provide two colours to each player. Each set of whiteboard markers should be the same. Again say “Colour in one object/animal/thing…” and when the child has completed colouring, say “Tell me about your picture” and then “I want to try and make mine the same.” This time the child needs to give you a two-part message – they need to tell you what to colour and what colour to use.

6. Give the child specific feedback about their message. For example, “That was a really clear message- you told me the colour and the thing’s name, so now I know what to colour in” or “Hmm, I know I have to colour in the fish, but you didn’t tell me what colour. It could be blue or red.” At this point the child might clarify. For example, “It’s red”. Model the entire sentence back to the child. “Aha! Now I understand. Colour the fish red. That’s a clear message.”

7. After this step is mastered, and you have each had a few turns, you can make the task more difficult. Give the instructions “Colour two things/animals” wait, then say “Tell me about your picture…I will try and make mine the same.” The child must colour in two different objects and tell you about them. This is a four-part message – they need to tell you what to colour and what colours to use for each. For example, “The flower is red and the fish is blue.” This is four pieces of information to remember. Some children will produce the sentence without a problem (expressive 4 part), but struggle following the instructions when it is their turn to listen to you (receptive 4 part). For this reason, talk about the concept of “careful listening” when following long instructions. Model and explain what you do when you listen to long instructions. For example, “Wow, that’s a lot to remember, I better ask you to say that again and I better listen carefully” or “OK, flower is red, fish is blue…it helps if I say it to myself again.” By modelling careful listening strategies, the child should learn these too.

8. When it comes to the child’s turn to listen to a long instruction, you might say: “There is lots to remember, so careful listening… perhaps you could say it after me…That will help you remember.”

9. Continue taking turns. The games can be made more of less difficult by varying the number of colour markers provided. In the PREPOSITIONS GALORE file, there are many items duplicated. When using these pictures, you can specify that up to seven items are coloured in.
PROMPTS TO USE WHEN IT’S THE CHILD’S TURN TO COLOUR FIRST
(particularly if they are having difficulty)

“Remember to say a clear message.”

“I can’t see your picture. Your words will tell me what I need to do.”

“Remember to tell me all the things I need to know.”

“No pointing! You have to use your words in this game!”

USE CUE CARDS (see File: CUE CARDS)

PROMPTS TO USE WHEN IT’S THE CHILD’S TURN TO LISTEN THEN COLOUR
(particularly if they are having difficulty)

“Ready for careful listening?”

“There is a lot to listen to. Try saying what I say – that might help you remember.”

MAKE YOUR FEEDBACK SPECIFIC WHEN COMMENTING ABOUT A CHILD’S MESSAGE...

“That was a really clear message – I know which puppy to colour and which colour to use.”

“Good try – I know which puppy to colour but I still don’t know what colour to use.”

“Great – that was a great message and you told me all the things I need to know.”
Probing for Questions:

Children need to learn to ask for clarification when they do not understand what has been said to them. On Page 3, take a look at the flow-chart for clarification requests.

In order to check whether the child is able to request for clarification, you can occasionally “probe” for questioning. This means that when it is your turn (as the adult) to construct and deliver the message, you can do it poorly, leaving out some important information. Take note as to what the child does and record this on the record sheet (see the next section Recording Results).

For example, let’s pretend you have picture two from STARTING OFF. To probe for questions, you should produce an incomplete or ambiguous message. You could say, “Colour it blue.” Your child will probably do one of three things:

1. Colour any object blue.
2. Say “What?” (general request at which point you could repeat exactly what you said first).

Depending on the level of your child’s functioning, you may be able to explain about questions. Go through the pictures on page 8. Show Cue Card number two (See File: CUE CARDS). Ask the child “What do you need to know?” then “Can you ask me a question about that?”

Probing for questions (by producing an ambiguous message) can be introduced after a child has been playing barrier games for a while. Only probe for questions occasionally. In most games, you should be modelling good clear messages.

The questioning cue card. (See the file: CUE CARDS).
Recording Results:

In each of the 14 documents, there is a record sheet. There is no strict way to use these, however following are some suggestions.

Columns RECEPTIVE, EXPRESSIVE: You can note whether a child uses the concept expressively and receptively.

Rows CONCEPTS (eg. Big Little): Place a tick or write the actual phrases next to these when the child uses (expressive) or understands (receptive) the particular concept listed. You might even develop your own code (B=big, L=little).

Remember that just because a child uses the concept with one picture, they may not use it correctly with another. For example, one child, when playing barrier games with the ON UNDER pictures said “The blue kitten is under the table”... but then later, “The blue frog is down the mushroom.” The word “under” may have been learnt in one context, but it has not been mastered. You will learn more from a child’s errors than what they say correctly. In the above case, you could write the sentences on the record sheet next to UNDER.

I also like to write dates next to my ticks, crosses or sentences.

What if the child doesn’t use the exact concept listed?
There are some appropriate alternatives to each concept. Some of these are listed.

A child who says “The large bag is blue” is perfectly correct. You might make a note that they used the alternative “large”. You can also include some of these alternatives in your messages and see if the child follows them.

In the ON UNDER picture of the monkeys, a child might say “Colour the monkey that’s up the tree.” Once again, this is an acceptable response and it is clear, so you would note this as correct. However, if they said “The kitten is up the table”, this is not the correct use of “up” in this context, so you would model back … “Up on the table” or simply “On the table” and you would make a note of this next to ON (expressive).

Rows 2 PART 4 PART: A two-part message is one that specifies a colour and the concept. It is when two or more markers have been provided and the instruction “Colour in one ________” has been given. Or it is when you, as the adult give a message with two parts. For example, if looking at the bag picture in BIG LITTLE file, you might say “Colour the little bag blue.” Two pieces of information have been specified.
A four-part message is one that specifies a colour and two concepts. It is when two or more markers have been provided and the instruction “Colour in two ________” has been given. Or it is when you, as the adult, give a message with four parts. For example, if looking at the bag picture in the BIG LITTLE file, you might say “Colour the little bag blue and the big bag red.” Two pieces of information have been specified.

When constructing a four-part message, a child may sometimes produce a sentence such as “Colour the big bag red and the ___ bag blue.” (That is, they didn’t use the word little.) This is acceptable. You may make a note on the record sheet that the child is expressively using the word “other”, by writing the word OTHER in the left column and writing the sentence or placing a tick under the expressive column.

Here is an example.

The writing in blue is what has been written on the record sheet. Adding dates is a great idea too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Expressive</th>
<th>Receptive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big (B)</td>
<td>The big ball is red. 04-05 Colour the big egg. ✓ ✓ ✓ 04-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little (L)</td>
<td>The little one is green. ✓ ✓ ✓ 04-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 part</td>
<td>Colour the little chair red.✓ Colour ✓ Little ✓ 04-05 Colour ✓ Little ✓ 04-05 Colour ✓ Big ✓ 07-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 part</td>
<td>The big hat’s red, the little one’s green. ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 07-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>The larger hat’s blue 04-05 ✓ 07-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Colour the big balloon red, and the other one green. 04-05 ✓ 04-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>× 04-05 (used for big) ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 08-05 Taught explicitly ✓ 07-05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What about different sentence structures?
If the child said “The big bag is red” or “Colour the big bag red” or even “Colour the big one red” they would be correct. Put simply, if they convey the information clearly, they are doing well.
If the child said “Colour red at the big bag”, they have still conveyed all the information, but in a grammatically incorrect sentence. In this case, I would write the sentence on the record sheet and note if these type of sentences are common in the child’s speech. I would also model the correct sentence back to the child each time: “Colour the big bag red.”

What about incorrect pronunciation?
If the child said “The bid bad is red” or “Tolour the bid bad red”, they are recorded as being correct. These errors indicate that the child is having difficulty with production of sounds and depending on their age, this may become a separate goal in speech pathology intervention.

Section QUESTIONS:

When you begin Probing for Questions, you can write some comments next to this section.
When the child is able to automatically ask a specific question for clarification, place a tick in the box and write the date.
Here is an example.

Questions:

04-05 Asked a general question “WHAT?”
04-05 Didn’t ask any question – coloured in wrong bag.
08-05 I explained about questions – he asked “What colour?” with some prompting

✓ Asks specific question when needing clarification 08-05

The final record sheet on page 17, can be printed and used to record all the information from each of the record sheets. I use it to record the dates when the concepts listed under column one have been mastered within the barrier game activities. Over the page is an example. There are also some other concepts listed that arise in many of the activities (all, other, both). Feel free to add more.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>RECEPTIVE</th>
<th>EXPRESSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>04-05</td>
<td>04-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>07-06</td>
<td>07-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>top</td>
<td>09-05</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<td>square</td>
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<td>round</td>
<td>07-06</td>
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<td>clean</td>
<td>09-05</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<td>dirty</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<td>happy</td>
<td>10-05</td>
<td>010-05</td>
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<td>sad</td>
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<tr>
<td>front</td>
<td>15-06</td>
<td>15-06</td>
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<tr>
<td>back</td>
<td>15-06</td>
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<td>long</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<td>short</td>
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<td>whole</td>
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<td>half</td>
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<td>in</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 part</td>
<td>09-05</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 part</td>
<td>Can’t do 4 part 10-12</td>
<td>09-05</td>
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<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>04-05</td>
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<tr>
<td>other</td>
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<tr>
<td>both</td>
<td>09-10</td>
<td>still doesn’t use 10-12 uses “two” instead</td>
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<td>large</td>
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Child’s Name:  
Year:
Teaching and Learning Concepts:

My First Barrier Games © is used, not only to develop referential communication, but to develop the receptive and expressive use of concepts.

There is no set order to the pictures, however BIG-LITTLE is a good place to start as these are early developing concepts. There is also no reason to stay with one set of pictures. You may use pictures from different files in a session.

If it becomes evident that a child does not know the concept required, you should remove the barrier and talk about the picture with the child. For example, show which item is big, and which item is little. Use the other pictures from that file to show further examples of these concepts. This is an example of explicit teaching. You may use gestures too (or Auslan signs), to reinforce the concepts.

In usual language development, certain concepts are learnt earlier than others. More obvious concepts are learnt first, as are concepts that the child experiences more often. For example, “dirty” is usually learnt earlier than “clean”. This is because a parent is more likely to talk about something that is dirty with more emphasis than something that is clean. The concept of dirty is more visual, has more impact and is easier to learn.

Some children may demonstrate that they know one concept in a certain picture, but not the other. For example, they might say “The dirty sock is red” but then “The nice sock is blue.” In this case, you could say “I think I know which sock you are talking about… the nice sock… can you think of another word for ‘nice’?” The child might then say “Not dirty.” This is commonly seen when the child has a concept of opposites, but does not know an exact word. Of course, they would be correct to say “The sock that is not dirty is blue.” They have related all the information that you need correctly. This, however, is a perfect opportunity for explicit teaching. You could say “When something is not dirty, we say it is clean”.

In an attempt to cement the understanding of new concepts, I would make a note of these words and make sure I use and reinforce them in other situations that come up during the day. This would be perfect as something for the parents to follow up at home.

There are other concepts that may arise during the use of barrier games (such as all, both etc…). If these are causing difficulties, you may need to teach these explicitly also. If they are causing too much confusion when playing the games, you may try using words like “two” instead of “both” and “every” instead of “all”.
Transfer of Skills:

There is little point in being able to use wonderful referential communication skills and specific clarification questions when playing barrier games, if the child cannot transfer these skills to everyday situations. To assist in the transfer of these new skills, simply use the prompts used in barrier games throughout the day in different situations such as “Remember your clear messages” or “Ready for careful listening?”

For example, if the child asked “Can I have one of those things in the fridge?” you could say;

“Thing is in the fridge? Which thing? Try again with a clear message.”

Also when giving the child messages, you could say something like;

“Careful listening now – go and get your red socks out of the bottom drawer.”

Hopefully, the child learns to use and understand new concepts through “My First Barrier Games” ©. Be aware that children with language difficulties can learn concepts quite rigidly and may not understand the true nature of each concept. The learning of concepts, particularly ones that have been a bit tricky, should be followed up with lots of examples in different real-life situations.

For example,

If the child has been working on the concept of LONG versus SHORT, you should try and talk about LONG and SHORT things in lots of different contexts.

“Do you think that swan has a long neck – or a short neck?”

“Those flowers are long aren’t they?”

“Look at that long timber!”
Using My First Barrier Games © as a general programming tool in schools:
Many schools use barrier games in the early years of primary school as general programming tools. They are used to highlight the notion of clear messages and careful listening. Clear messages are very important when a child is starting out at writing. They need to understand that the reader may have no previous knowledge of what they are writing about. They need to develop a sense of referential communication.

Careful listening strategies can also be highlighted and rehearsed using barrier games. The strategy of repeating instructions (particularly long instructions) can be introduced. Careful listening is important for following directions in class.

The concept of specific questioning can also be discussed with the class. If a barrier game between a teacher and a student is demonstrated to the class, specific questioning can be modelled and discussed.

Teachers find the large cue cards useful. (See File: CUE CARDS).

Print them out, laminate them and use them to lead discussions with the class.

After introducing the concept of barrier games, children in the classroom can be set up in pairs to play them independently, however some children may need some extra direction and assistance from an adult.

The Next Step: My First Barrier Games © is a very structured program based on the barrier game concept. The next step is to introduce pictures with more variables. Look in colouring books for appropriate pictures and make some duplicate photocopies. There are also many colour-ins on the internet too. Pelican Talk Speech Therapy Resources plans to produce another barrier game resource in the future that will include lots of pictures suitable for a more difficult barrier games. Keep an eye on www.pelicantalk.com under the section, Language Resources.

An alternative is to play some barrier games with two sets of objects. You might buy two cheap sets of plastic farm animals and grab two long sticks, two short sticks, two big rocks, two little rocks from the garden. Or you might make some duplicate sets of objects from plasticine (two long red snakes, two long blue snakes, two short blue snakes, two short red snakes and so on). Take turns to arrange your items and then tell each other about the scene you have created.

Above all, keep language learning fun!

Please email me with any questions regarding this resource. lucia@pelican talk.com