



## Children's Therapy Team

### Speech and Language Therapy Advice Sheet

## Supporting Children with Understanding and Answering Blank Level Questions

### Helping children understand and answer different types of questions

The Blank Levels were developed to help children build their understanding, thinking, and language skills. There are 4 levels. Each level gets harder — starting from simple naming, to more complex reasoning and problem solving.

#### Blank Level 1: Looking and Naming

Children answer simple questions about things they can see, hear, or have just seen or touched. They may point, name or show the object.

They are **learning** to:

- Match and name things
- Recognise what they've seen or heard

#### Example questions:

- "What is this?"
- "Show me the same one."
- "What did you hear?"
- "What did you touch?"
- "What did you see?"

#### Blank Level 2: Noticing and Describing

Children now answer questions that need more thought. The answers are still there, but not always obvious. They must notice details (like size, colour, shape or use).

They are **learning** to:

- Describe objects and actions
- Understand how things are used
- Follow simple instructions

#### Example questions:

- "Who is this?" / "Where are they?"
- "You brush your hair with a...?"
- "Find one that is blue and round."
- "What's different between these?"
- "Find one that can cut."
- "What is happening in this picture?"

### Blank Level 3: Thinking and Predicting

Children answer questions that involve thinking beyond what they can see. They use memory, logic, and imagination to solve problems and make guesses.

They are **learning** to:

- Predict what might happen
- Explain what's going on
- Compare and sort ideas
- Give directions

#### Example questions:

- "Find one to use with this."
- "What might happen next?"
- "How are these the same?"
- "Which one is not soft?"
- "How is he feeling?"
- "Put these in order to tell a story."
- "Tell me how to make toast."
- "What does that word mean?"

### Blank Level 4: Explaining and Solving Problems

This supports children to think for themselves. They need to reason, explain choices, and talk about things they cannot see, using experience or imagination.

They are **learning** to:

- Give reasons and explain ideas
- Understand cause and effect
- Solve problems and make choices
- Use what they already know

#### Example questions:

- "Why did the tower fall down?"
- "Why would you choose that?"
- "What made the glass break?"
- "What should she do if she's lost her keys?"
- "Why do you like that?"
- "Why can't we take things without paying?"
- "How do you know this picture is taken in winter?"

**Note:** Do not continue any of the advice if it is causing the child distress and seek professional advice when unsure. This is a generic advice sheet to help you get started or to help you remember key advice given to you by your Speech and Language Therapist.

If you have tried using these strategies and you are still concerned about the impact of your child's communication differences, you can:

- Look on our website for further information and advice: [York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - Speech and language therapy \(yorkhospitals.nhs.uk\)](https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk)
- Contact us via our 'Request for Help' line – see our website for further details