

# Gestalt Language Processing

Did you know – There is more than one way to develop language?  
Have you heard of Gestalt Language Processing?

Many children learn single words first however other children may start with phrases.

## There are six stages of Gestalt Language Processing:

- 1 – Whole chunks of language  
e.g. *'We're going on a bear hunt'*.
- 2 – Shorter/mix and match phrases  
e.g. *'We're going'* + *'to play dinosaurs'*.
- 3 – Single words  
e.g. *'dinosaur'*.
- 4 – Early grammar  
e.g. *'dinosaur goed up'*.
- 5/6 – Advanced Grammar  
e.g. *'I will play with the dinosaurs tomorrow'*.

**This is a different and natural way of developing language.**

Your child might be a Gestalt Language Processor if they:

- Use long repeated scripts of language learnt from songs, TV programmes, books or by repeating what someone else has said.
- Use rich intonation or hum familiar songs (with or without words).
- Use long strings of unintelligible speech.
- Have developed single words but are not combining them to two or three word phrases.
- Have not responded to previous language support strategies e.g. modelling single words.

## TOP TIPS

'Delayed Echolalia' or a 'gestalt' is a chunk of language that is heard, stored and used later. It has meaning to the child and can be communicative.

Acknowledge your child's language – You can nod and smile or repeat the language they use.

Think about where your child has heard the language they are using. Where have they learnt it from? (TV, book, previous comments). Keep a record to notice patterns.

Try not to interpret the language literally. The meaning may be linked to the original experience rather than the literal meaning of each word.

During play follow your child's lead – what are they interested in? Watch, listen and join in or play alongside.

Use comments rather than asking direct questions. Talk as if you are the child e.g. instead of saying 'Do you want juice?' try saying 'I'm thirsty', 'let's get a drink'.

Further information, including leaflets, videos and blogs can be found online via:

'The Communication Development Centre'

<https://communicationdevelopmentcenter.com/>

Or 'Meaningful Speech'

[www.meaningfulspeech.com](http://www.meaningfulspeech.com)



Contact us:

Phone: 01752 434844

[www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk)