



Center for
Listening & Learning

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Functional Capabilities of the Human Ear

Hear sounds
Perceive sounds accurately
Discriminate between higher and lower sounds
Focus on sounds we want to hear and tune out the rest
Give & receive muscle movement information

Know direction of sound
Stimulate the brain
Establish balance/coordination
Control the speaking voice
Assist musical ability

Difficulties Caused by Listening Problems

Misunderstanding spoken words
Reading/writing difficulties
Word-finding problems
Sensitivity to sounds
Slow to process information
Trouble with balance
Poor coordination

Short attention span
Difficulty with spelling
Poor memory
Poor or hesitant speech
Low motivation,
Poor Handwriting
Inadequate Social Skills

Possible Causes of Listening Problems

Ear infections
Prenatal or birth problem
Frequent criticism or ridicule
Psychological trauma
Accident or illness
Noisy Environment

Stroke
Depression
Autism & PDD
Down Syndrome
Head Injury