

Language Rich Environments: Creating a World of Words

Launching LEAD-K Michigan

Michigan Department of Education Resource for Deaf/Hard of Hearing



Language is Caught, Not Taught

Incidental learning is learning without trying to learn.

Incidental learning happens as children take in experiences and language from all around them.

Examples of Incidental Learning

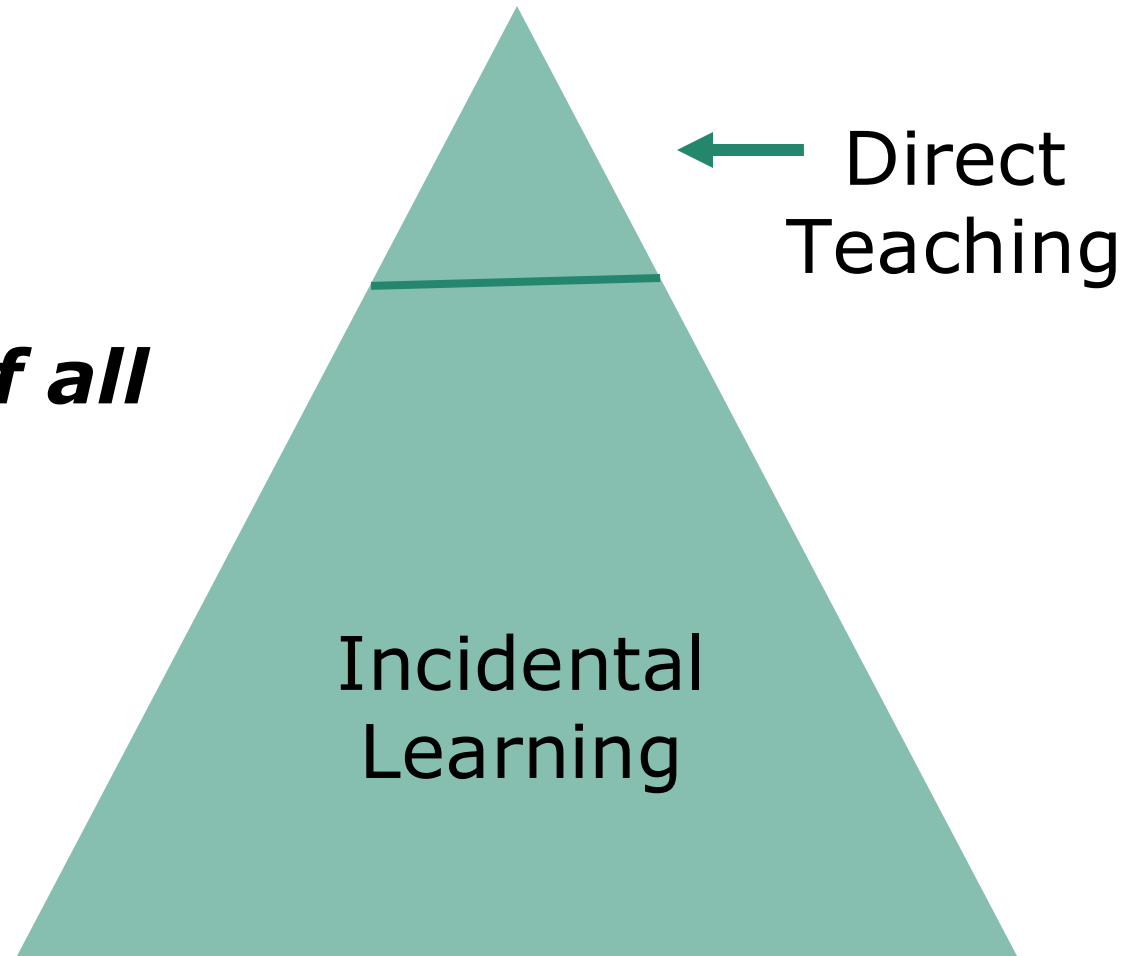
Incidental learning happens in many ways

- Learning a new word by watching TV
- Learning to use your hand as a map of MI

Incidental learning leads to valuable knowledge!

Incidental Learning is a Big Deal

Approximately 90% of all learning happens incidentally.



Incidental Learning Challenges for DHH

Regardless of communication modality, incidental learning is a challenge for DHH children.

Access to language can create barriers; more intentionality is needed for learning.

Creating a Language Rich Environment

A language rich environment addresses barriers to access. Give consideration of

- Physical space
- Background sights and sounds
- Language learning strategies

Language learning strategies increases access to incidental learning opportunities.

Language Rich Strategies

Simple language strategies can add so much to your language rich environment

- Attention
- Bombardment
- Highlighting
- Sabotage
- Sandwiching



Attention

WHAT—Alerting your child to language.

WHY—Alerting to language signals what to focus on.

GOAL—Alerting will help your child be ready for the language exposure or interaction.



Attention Example

ALERT

(Get attention and direct to language input.)

Eye contact

Gestures (wave hands, point)

Lights

Vibrating devices



Bombardment

WHAT—Using a single word several times during an activity.

WHY—Your child needs to experience a word many times before they can use it themselves.

GOAL—Repeated exposure can help grow your child's vocabulary.



Bombardment Example

USE THE TARGET WORD

"I like the beach in summer."

USE THE TARGET WORD AGAIN

"My toes hide in the sand at the beach."

AND AGAIN

"Daddy does not like the beach sand in the car."



Highlighting

WHAT—Emphasizing a vocabulary word in connected language.

WHY—Your child will be drawn to pay attention to the exaggerated word.

GOAL—Emphasis can help point out new words to grow your child's vocabulary.



Highlighting Example

EMPHASIZE KEY WORD

"You have a truck. It is a **blue** truck."

- Increase or decrease sign size/voice volume
- Stretch out the sounds/signs
- Play with speed/pitch



Sabotage

WHAT—Creating a silly or unexpected situation.

WHY—Your child is learning to confirm that language makes sense.

GOAL—The unexpected can help your child think carefully about and process language.



Sabotage Example

USE A SILLY or WRONG STATEMENT

"I will bring my coat to the beach."

WAIT FOR A RESPONSE

"It's too hot for a coat."

CONFIRM ERROR

"You're right. I will bring my sunhat, but not my coat."

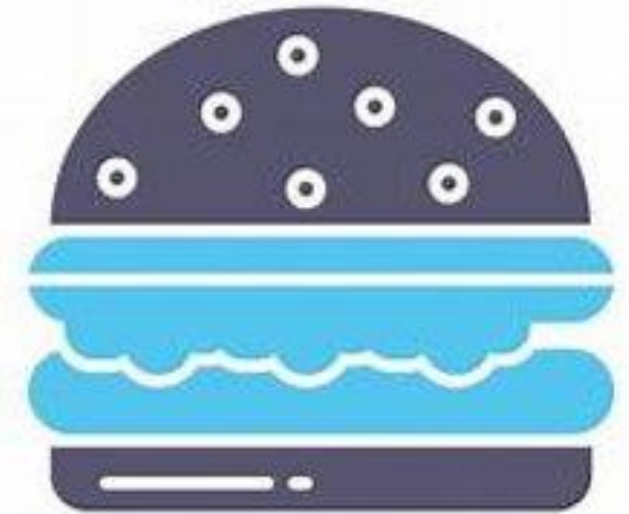


Sandwiching

WHAT—Using language before and after showing an object or picture.

WHY—The use of real objects or pictures can help fill in gaps of understanding.

GOAL—Visual can support language comprehension.



Sandwiching Example

LANGUAGE

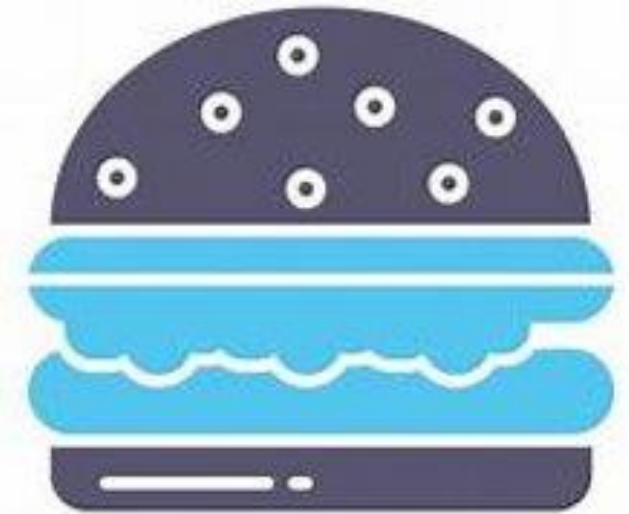
“Please dispose of the wrapper.”

OBJECT/PICTURE

Point to the wrapper and trash can.

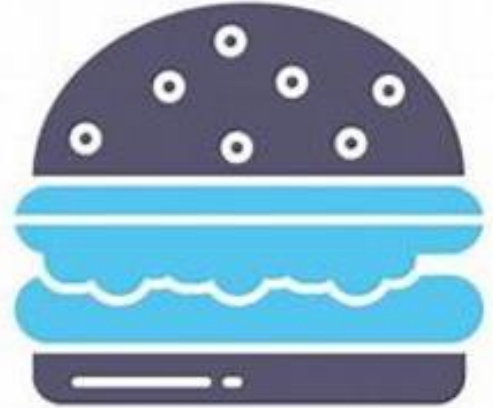
LANGUAGE

“Please dispose of the wrapper; throw it away.”



Access What is Possible

Unlock the journey of **language to literacy** through an intentional language rich environment.



Questions?



Thank You for Joining Us!

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References

ASL at Home

[ASL at Home](https://aslathome.org) (aslathome.org)



Hear to Learn

[Resources for Parents and Professionals
Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing | Hear to
Learn](https://heartolearn.org) (heartolearn.org)

