

# Dichotic training using “Zoo Caper Skyscraper”

Zoo Caper is a game designed to incrementally improve dichotic listening skills. It introduces dichotic concepts slowly and allows the player to improve as they play through the game. It uses animal sounds or speech sounds in each ear requiring the listener to correctly identify which animal is making a sound.

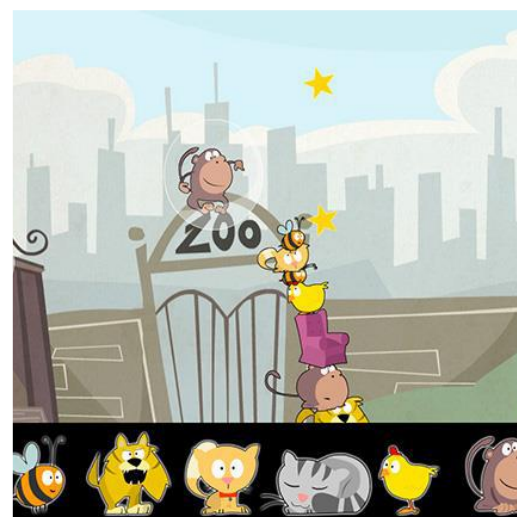
## The evidence behind the practice

Studies confirm the effectiveness of Zoo Caper (ASHA, 2015; JSPT, 2018; LSHSS, 2020).

**We now know that impaired dichotic listening skills will prevent children from learning to read at the pace of children with intact dichotic listening skills.**

Dichotic skills are a fancy way of saying, the auditory brain can use information from both ears relatively equally. This skill requires functional pathways to each cortical hemisphere of the brain and the communicating pathway between each hemisphere (auditory portion of the corpus callosum). **These pathways and skills are required for a number of other audiological abilities such as focused attention, alternating focus to different sounds from either side of the listener, following a speaker in competing noise (e.g., classrooms).**

Difficulties here can lead to symptoms such as distractibility in a classroom, difficulty understanding lessons when another sound is present, under-utilization of other auditory skills which aid in following the teacher in an educational setting, which in turn can have significant impacts on learning and can also affect reading and language development.



- Barker, M.D., & Bourland-Hicks, C. (2020). Treating auditory processing deficits. *Journal of Speech Language Hearing Services in Schools*. 1 (1).
- Barker, M.D., & Bellis, T.J. (2018) Effectiveness of a novel computer/tablet-based auditory training program in improving dichotic listening skills in children. *Journal of Speech Pathology and Therapy*. 3(1).
- Bellis, T. J., Barker, M. D., & Martin, M. J. (2015) Training CAPD: The what, who, how, and why of Dichotic Listening Training. Presentation at ASHA conference, Denver. CO. November.