



Bérard Auditory Integration Training (AIT)

1. What is Bérard AIT?

Dr. Guy Bérard, an ear, nose, and throat doctor from France, developed an auditory training system called Bérard Auditory Integration Training. Bérard AIT was developed to address auditory hypersensitivity, distortions, and delays in hearing that negatively impact auditory processing. The system uses music, fed through headphones to an individual, to train the middle and inner ear to better process auditory information. This educational training system has been shown to be effective for improving attention and focus, sensory processing, communication, confidence and school related skills of reading, spelling and writing.

2. What is hearing vs listening?

“Hearing is through ears, but listening is through the mind.” The two activities hearing and listening involve the use of ears, but they are different. Hearing is the act of perceiving sound and receiving sound waves or vibrations through your ear. Hearing is one of the five senses and it just happens all the time unless you have a hearing problem. Listening is the act of hearing a sound and understanding what you hear. It requires concentration so that your brain processes meaning from words and sentences and you are consciously choosing what you want to hear.

Comparison Chart

	Hearing	Listening
Meaning	Hearing refers to one's ability to perceive sounds, by receiving vibrations through ears.	Listening is something done consciously, that involve the analysis and understanding of the sounds you hear.
What is it?	An ability	A skill
Involves	Receipt of message through ears.	Interpretation of the message received by ears.
Act	Physiological	Psychological
Use of senses	Only one	More than one
Concentration	Not required	Required
Occurs at	Subconscious level	Conscious level



3. What is Optimal Listening?

Optimal hearing is the ability to perceive all frequencies of sound comfortably, and equally between the ears. When hearing is at an optimal level, optimal listening is possible, and meaning can be more easily derived and processed from the sounds.

4. What interferes with Optimal Listening?

Hypersensitivity, hyposensitivity, distortions or delays in hearing, unequal processing of frequencies, and inconsistencies or lack of coordination between ears all have the potential to interfere with optimal listening. One or more of these conditions can be present at the same time, causing further interference to hearing and auditory processing for individuals.

5. How do you know when listening is not at an optimal level?

Individuals who do not hear at an optimal level may have difficulty with attention and focus, may be hyper or hyposensitive to sounds, may be easily distracted, may be delayed in thinking or reaction time due to processing delays, may have difficulty integrating auditory information with other sensory information, may have difficulty planning or sequencing, may have difficulty with school tasks (writing, reading and spelling) and may be easily overwhelmed, or prone to tantrums.

6. How does Bérard AIT address these issues?

Bérard AIT provides the individual with the opportunity to listen to music that has been specifically filtered for their comfort and modulated for training of the inner and middle ear. This program aids in the reorganizing of the brain its own ability to modify response, a feature called neuroplasticity. Through personalized auditory stimulation, the reorganization of the brain can reduce delays in processing, sensitivity, and other problems with hearing and communication.

7. What to expect from Bérard AIT?

Bérard Auditory Integration Training involves twenty 30---minute listening sessions over ten to twelve days. The listening sessions involve the individual listening to specialized music, through headphones. Targeted skills and behavioural changes are facilitated by the training of the inner and middle ear, which allow for effective processing of sound and meaning in the auditory cortex. Neuroplasticity, the changing of connections in the brain, can enable alternative performance and skill and requires both frequent repetition and attention. Dr. Bérard, the founding father of Bérard AIT, described ten hours of sequential training as 'the catalyst for change in an individual's auditory system.' Bérard AIT is guided, when possible, by auditory test results, which occur before the training, halfway through the training, and after the training. The auditory training can be modified after the mid---point audiology test to reflect the advancement of the individual. Those who are not able to



complete an audio test can still be eligible for AIT, please speak to your practitioner for more information. A device called the *Earducator*™ specifically modifies and modulates the music played during training, and can filter out specific frequencies in order to train the individual's auditory system. This can enable structural changes to occur in the auditory processing areas of the brain. The following observations have been reported following Bérard AIT:

- *Reduction of tantrums*
- *Decreased sensitivity to auditory stimuli*
- *Reduction in hyperactivity, increased attention*
- *Increased focus and ability to follow directions*
- *Increased confidence, socialization, and communication skills*
- *Improved reading, spelling and writing*
- *Improved sensory processing, and decreased sensory overload*
- *Improved spatial understanding*

8. Who is a good candidate for Bérard AIT?

- the listener must accept wearing the headphones
- 3 years of age or older
- Difficulties with attention, sensory sensitivities (auditory, tactile), reading, poor balance and motor coordination skills, delays in speech and language development, etc
- Time commitment is two 30min sessions per day for 10-12 consecutive days (10 hours).

9. How do we know that Bérard AIT works?

Much research has been done regarding the success of Bérard AIT for the above claims. At the following links, you can explore some of the studies conducted:

<http://www.berardaitwebsite.com/study---results/>

Berard AIT Channel on YouTube: Many short videos that explain various aspects of Berard AIT.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQLpgptd4zwm0gmvk-jZO2Q>