

General Suggestions for Improving Oral and Written Language Skills

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General Suggestions For Improving Memory and Comprehension

- ✓ Keep your sentences simple and give instructions in short sentences one at a time.
- ✓ If you get no response or an incorrect response, repeat exactly what you said again **OR** if you get no response or a strange response, change how you said it or say something else that adds information. Pay close attention to what you said that may have been confusing so you can figure out where the error is coming from and make adjustments. Be sure you do not overload with too much verbiage.
- ✓ Make sure they are attending. Watch the student for signs of inattention and observe what may be distracting them.
- ✓ Prompt for evidence that you have been understood. Ask for a repeat of what you said or a paraphrase. If the student makes an error, explain it to them.
- ✓ Exaggerate your natural stress and pausing pattern. This is a very effective strategy because it makes the natural chunks of information obvious and assists natural comprehension strategies.
- ✓ When using figurative language, follow with a clear statement of what you meant.
 - **For example:** *"I know the number off the top of my head."*
" I mean that I have the number memorized so get a paper and pencil and I will tell it to you."
- ✓ Give the student time to respond. You may even teach the strategy of delay since this is frequently an effective method for getting the student to process more deeply what has been said before responding impulsively.
- ✓ Give much repetition and drill with examples. It seems that children with weak language skills need more examples of, and more practice with everything before the underlying principles can be abstracted.
- ✓ Encourage the use of helping strategies. For example:
 - a. *Reauditorizing*
 - b. *Attention to relevant words or features of the environment being coded*
 - c. *Writing down key words, etc.*
- ✓ When the student will necessarily be in situations where the skills of auditory memory and comprehension will be stressed, use every compensation possible, e.g., note takers for class, assignments given in written form, etc.

General Suggestions for Improving Use of Language in the School-Age Child

- ✧ A child develops language best when he successfully understands others or expresses himself. The importance of as natural a setting as possible for language learning activities cannot be over-emphasized. Plans should be made to allow the student to hear and use language to the greatest possible extent at home, in play, or in other social and educational situations.

At School and Play

Language treatment will help. As the student learns more, he will use more. What he needs is the opportunity to put these newly learned language skills into his everyday communicative life.

Helping:

DO:

- ☑ Describe experiences that you have had; movies, TV programs, books you have seen or read; and stories and experience others have shared with you.
- ☑ Enter into conversations at any opportunity. Share as much of yourself as possible -- your opinions, hopes, wishes, fears, dreams, etc. Share experiences you had as a child.
- ☑ Try to interpret what the child says to you, although it may be grammatically incorrect or confused. Help them along with guiding questions (e.g., "Who was there on Saturday?" "What stuff did you have in your hands?") and paraphrases of what you thought the child meant (e.g., "Do you mean that your teacher was being unfair?", "Oh, so you just felt that you would be a good arbitrator -- that you could help explain how each person felt.")

DO NOT:

- ☒ Correct errors by directly telling the child "No, that's wrong" and telling him what he did wrong. Be gentle in your corrections. (See suggestions below)
- ☒ Discuss the speech problem of the child in the presence of others.
- ☒ Show frustration or anger at his incorrect speech attempts or make him feel that because he does not speak well he is less acceptable to you.
- ☒ Place the child in a communication situation that is beyond his capabilities and may punish his speaking attempts. You may even "coach" the child for difficult situations you know are coming up.

Natural Language Intervention Techniques

Correction through Modelling:

Child: You know we was saved by the sting of a wasp cause we ran.

Parent/Teacher: You were saved from the sting of a wasp. It's a good thing all of you were fast runners.

Expansion:

Child: They're looking in here. Bunch of Janitors just walked.

Parent/Teacher: A bunch of janitors just walked by and looked in?

Example of Modeling and Expansion together:

Child: We were jogging for the minutes and I was talking to him as I go 'round.

Parent/Teacher: So you were jogging for 5 minutes and you were talking to him as you went around the track.

Expatiation:

Child: Jim gave me this stuff for Biology.

Parent/Teacher: Jim gave you his book and notes. They must have helped you study because your marks were good.

Revision to a more complex, better-formed or clearer utterance:

Child: This guy what lost his mitts thought someone stole them.

Parent/Teacher: The guy who lost his mitts thought they were stolen.

Child: They have this new thing at school, uh it's for Valentines Day. It's a computer thing where you ... they pick the ten most ... you know.

Parent/Teacher: You have a computer dating service. You tell the computer about yourself and it picks out ten girls that match your tastes.

Child: The day was a long time coming?

Parent/Teacher: I'm not sure what you mean. Can you tell me more?

Child: It's dark for a long time when I get up.

Parent/Teacher: Oh, you mean the days are shorter now that it's winter. You have less daylight. So it is dark when you get up and it takes longer for the sun to come up. Did you notice that it gets dark sooner in the evening?

- ⇒ These techniques can be used with the teacher/parent saying full sentences or parts of sentences. This way of interacting helps you to use the productions of the student and expand them into utterances that have more complexity and clarity. Do not interject whatever you say in a "teaching" or "correcting" tone of voice.
- ⇒ You may notice that over time the student will begin to repeat your models or parts of models spontaneously. This is good because it gives correct practice but you should not insist that the student repeat your models.

General Suggestions for Vocabulary Development and Development of Meaning Associations

[Home]

- We learn and refine the meanings of words throughout our lives. Children need to **understand the sound structure** of words and to **know the meaning of many different words**, as well as **how to figure out word meaning** from the context in which a word is used. Word skills are important as the **foundation** for learning to **read**.
- Words have **multiple meanings**. There are **central** meaning (most common) and **peripheral** meanings (less common). There are also **figurative** meanings ('hit the sack'). Take the word 'ear', for example. The most central meaning is the listening device on the side of your head. A less common meaning would be as in an 'ear of corn'. Figurative meanings of ear may include, 'I have an ear for music.' or 'I'm all ears!' **Figures of speech** are important because they are **very common** in everyday speech and yet quite **confusing** to those who are trying to learn a language.

Children need to develop some understanding of the sound system of words.

- Parents may play **rhyming games**.
 - ✧ **For example:** "Listen, I can change the word 'saw', a thing I use to cut wood to 'paw', a dog's foot. Reading books with word play, like Dr. Seuss, provide valuable experience.
- Parents can point out **similarities in the sounds** of words.
 - ✧ **For example:** the word "McDonalds has Don's name in it. Listen, Mc-Donalds".
- Parents can play **blending games and analysis games**.
 - ✧ For blending games, children can be asked to combine 2 words, such as 'cow & boy' into one word or if analyzing, tell which 2 words make up the 'word cowboy'.
 - ✧ For older children, this can be done with sounds. For example, "d-i-n-n-e-r" ask the child to say what the word is.
- For older children, parents can show **how words change with small additions**.
 - ✧ For example: "I really like your shoes ---NOT" or "He is cheerless" or "She is unconscious"

- Parents may emphasize **word meaning and sound structure** with older children by engaging in **casual word play**.
 - ✧ You may play a running game of '*fictionary*' where each person tries to bring home a "stump the family" word, or you may make up words for events that have no words (Example: The cart at the grocery store with a wobbly wheel may be called "*cartiswabis*").
 - ✧ Parents may reward children for recognizing unfamiliar words and asking what they mean (Example: "You are so recalcitrant.") or may reward them for recognizing words used in the wrong context that sound almost like the intended word (Example: "Here, let me give you some destruction on how to do that.")

Children need to develop an understanding of the concept of a 'word' and meanings in different situations.

- Parents can **talk about words** and **what they mean** in any everyday situation. Once you have a child attending to a word, **use it in various sentences** and fit it into the present context if possible. **Extend** to other meanings or words with similar meanings.
 - ✧ **Example**: Suppose the word is "shimmering" and you are watching the moonlight shimmering on the lake. Show and talk about your earring shimmering in the moonlight or a wet rock. You may extend on to talk about the rock 'glistening' or 'shining' in the moonlight.
 - ✧ **Example**: Suppose you are talking about a child who is being described as 'bad'. You could refine your child's understanding of bad and extend to other words by saying, "Well, she is not malicious. Malicious is when you mean to hurt others. I do not believe she wants to hurt others. It is difficult for her to stop herself when she wants to do something." That is called being petulant.
- Parents can show how **words that look and sound the same** but can have different meanings.
 - ✧ **For example**: The word 'pedal' can be on a flower or a bike.
- Parents can show children how **words help you guess what is going to happen**.
 - ✧ **For example**: If you are reading a story and the first line of a paragraph is "Two mischievous boys came into the room." The parent can talk about what this word means and what it tells you is going to happen.

*Children need to be taught to **use context to discover the meaning** of words or **multiple meanings** or differences in shades of meaning. Parents can help by highlighting these features to children.*

- Parents can **replace the occasional word** in a familiar story with a more complex word and see if the child can figure out what it means.
- Parents can help children to **use context** to figure out what a word means in everyday situations.
 - ✧ **For example:** the parent can say, "She must be in a hurry. She is walking briskly. Can you figure out what briskly means?"
- Parents can teach **alternate meanings of words** through word games in which you try to come up with as many meanings as possible for words.
 - ✧ **For example:** the word 'rock' can mean to 'rock in a chair', 'rock music', 'rock that you throw', or 'rock hard'.
- Parents may capitalize on children's **humor for teaching multiple meanings**. Joke and riddle books may be used. Some books are humorous because meaning rules are violated and include books with pictures of absurd meanings
 - ✧ **Example:** 'After dinner, Sara toasted Dad'
 - Shows Dad in a giant toaster
 - ✧ **Example:** Amelia Bedelia, the maid who interprets her instructions wrong
 - Amelia is told to draw the drapes and she draws a picture of them.
- For older children, parents can also talk about **shades of difference in meaning** for groups of words that share enough meaning to be considered synonyms but have small differences.
 - ✧ **For example:** discuss the small but important differences in meaning for the following words: arbitrator, middleman, liaison.
- Parents can play a casual game with children by saying **sentences where meaning keeps changing**.
 - ✧ **For example:** The alien (pause) was upset because she could not find her green card (pause) and she needed it to re-board her spaceship.

*Children need to develop an understanding of **how words fit together into larger networks based on meaning.***

- Parents can play word games **listing super-ordinate and subordinate categories**.
 - ✧ **For example:** You could try to name all of the toys you can in one minute. You could also say words and have the child try to name an **opposite** (antonyms) or a word that means the **same thing** (synonym).
 - ✧ Parents could also use a picture sorting game. **Pictures** of animals can be **categorized** into jungle, farm, forest, domestic, etc. A new category of "bird" may also be made by **resorting** the parrot from the jungle, the owl from the forest, the lovebird from the domestic category, the chicken from the farm, etc. into a new category.

- Older children could be shown how words can have **different specialized meanings** in particular subject areas.
 - ✧ For example, the word 'legend' means something different in accounting than it does in a storybook.
 - ✧ A game of "Does this make sense?" may also be used. Example: "The chair ate her lunch." does not make sense unless you said, "The meeting was over so the chair ate her lunch." Along these same lines, parents may also talk about the politically correct movement and the power words have to show or induce bias.

**General Suggestions for Vocabulary Development and Development of
Meaning Associations**
[School]

Use basal readers or listings of the most frequent words to choose words at the student's grade or linguistic level.

- Teach the vocabulary within a story or unit approach rather than out of context in listings. Retention is low when the words are taught in random groupings. If the words are taught within stories the student may be asked to "make-up" a definition for the words and to use them in more than one context or sense.
 - ✧ **For Example:** Suppose the word is "shimmering" and the sentence in the story is "*The moonlight was shimmering on the lake.*" The teacher may discuss other uses of the word, such as "The lady's earring was shimmering in the sunlight."
- Multiple meanings should be discussed and words used in their many senses.
 - ✧ **For Example:** Suppose the word is "*ease*".
Multiple meanings: "I did it with *ease*."
"I *eased* into the water."
"This should *ease* the pain."
- Include idiomatic or metaphorical meanings also.
 - ✧ **For Example:** Suppose the word is "*ear*".
An *ear* may refer to the "*ear* on the side of your head" or an "*ear* of corn" but can also be used in figurative senses, such as "He has an *ear* for music" or "I'm all *ears*".
- If the words are taught within a unit approach or thematic units, a number of units may be taught and then connections between these specified.
 - ✧ **For Example:** Farm vocabulary with a unit on growing food may be taught. This can be followed by a unit on grocery stores and then one on home management for foods. Then the connections between all of these may be taught. In this way, you are teaching a semantic network within each unit and the larger one "food" (the subordinate). These procedures are also useful for developing general knowledge.
 - ✧ Commercially available materials such as People, Places, and Things and Life Skill programs, such as Knowing How to Shop, Using Money, and Getting Around, etc. are useful.

Students should also be taught to use context to discover the meaning of words, multiple meanings, or differences in shades of meaning.

✧ **For Example:** Suppose the word "*cat*" is being used in different senses.

"I have a *cat* at home." (One thinks of a domestic cat.)

"It was a ferocious *cat*." (One thinks of a jungle cat or wildcat.)

"He was a cool *cat*." (One thinks of the figurative sense and thinks of a man who is coy and has low affect.)

- The meaning of a word and indeed a whole sentence may be changed as the result of further context processing.
 - ✧ **For Example:** "All's terrible punch has brought many a big man to his knees; therefore, I will never drink that awful liquor again."
- You may also use the "communication game" where the student describes everything he can about an object, picture, or word without the teacher being able to see the object or picture or know the word. This will increase full meaning of words.
- Work with teaching super-ordinate and subordinate classification will also be useful.
 - ✧ **For Example:** Pictures of animals can be categorized into jungle, farm, forest, domestic, etc. A new category of "bird" may also be made by resorting the parrot from the jungle, the owl from the forest, the lovebird from the domestic category, the chicken from the farm, etc. into a new category.
- Work with opposites (antonyms) and words that mean the same (synonyms) may be useful.
- Multiple and figurative meanings may be taught by using a thesaurus (including computer word processing programs), joke books, riddle books, and materials used for Language Arts Programs or Language Intervention

Cues to Facilitate Word Retrieval

Adapted from: Wiig & Semel. *Language Assessment & Intervention for the Learning Disabled*. 1984

After a child or adult has tried unsuccessfully to find a word without cues, presenting a specific retrieval cue may help. The following types of cues may be used to facilitate recall and retrieval from long-term memory.

Phonetic Cues

- ✓ Say the beginning sound of the intended word,
⇒ as in saying m- to elicit the word "man".
- ✓ Say a word fragment containing one or more of the beginning syllables of an intended polysyllabic word,
⇒ as in saying "hippo" to elicit the word "hippopotamus".
- ✓ Give a rhyming word cue,
⇒ such as reciting "sing" or "wing" to facilitate the recall of an intended word such as "ring".
- ✓ Use phonetic placement; that is, show the posture and position of the articulators of the beginning sound of the intended word,
⇒ as in pursing the lips for the *sh*- sound to elicit the word "shoe".

Associative-Semantic Class Cues

- ✓ Use of antonyms to facilitate the recall and retrieval of the direct opposites,
⇒ as in saying "The opposite of day is ___" to elicit "night".
- ✓ Use synonyms as cue words,
⇒ as in saying "Another word for lady is ___" to elicit the word "woman".
- ✓ Use an associated word which belongs to the same semantic class as a cue,
⇒ as in saying "Bread and ___" to elicit the word "butter".
- ✓ Use the name of a semantic (conceptual) category to elicit the name of a member of the group,
⇒ as in saying, "It's a building", "It's a fruit", "It's an insect", or "You can drink it", "You can eat it for dinner", and "You can use it to fix things".
- ✓ Use serial cueing,
⇒ as in reciting part of a well established series such as "Tuesday, Wednesday, ___" to elicit "Thursday".

Sentence Completion

- ✓ Use sentence completion, with a well known and established sentence pattern
 - ⇒ such as "We decorated the ___" to elicit target words such as "cake", "tree", "package", "present", "table", or "room"; "We set the ___" to elicit the word "table"; or "We gave her a birthday ___" to elicit the word "present".
- ✓ Give a nursery rhyme completion, using well established nursery rhymes
 - ⇒ such as "Jack and Jill went up the ___" to elicit the word "hill".
- ✓ Use cueing by analogy; present a metaphor or a simile
 - ⇒ such as "as white as ___" to elicit words such as "snow", "a cloud", "a sheet", or "a swan", or "It was like music to my ___" to elicit the intended word "ears".
- ✓ Use proverb cueing,
 - ⇒ as in saying, "all that glitters is not ___" to elicit "gold".

Melodic-Stress Cueing

- ✓ Use melodic cueing;
 - ⇒ sing a well-known tune to elicit a specific word, number, or letter or hum a part of the alphabet song to elicit the letter "g".
- ✓ Use cueing by tapping the syllabic stress pattern of a polysyllabic word,
 - ⇒ using a rhythmic pattern such as _ _ _ _ _ to elicit the word "hippopotamus".

Multiple-Choice Cueing

- ✓ Provide multiple choices for cueing,
 - ⇒ as in saying, "Is it a house, a tree, or a chair?" to elicit the word "tree".

Imagery

- ✓ Visualize the meaning of the word. Think of where the object is usually found and who uses it.

General Suggestions for Improving Organization and Completeness (Discourse Planning)

- ✧ Assisting a child in relating experiences with all the facts in order (all relevant facts included and irrelevant facts excluded) takes patience and practice.
- ✧ For the child who is patient with the listener, you may tell him/her to give you the **5 W's first, "who, what, when, where and why or how."** You may ask for clarification of vague words used, for example, "he gave this *stuff* to her."
- ✧ For the child who is frustrated by these interruptions, you may listen through the story and then retell it. As you make mistakes, the child can 'correct' you and then the errors seem to be yours not his/hers.

Example 1:

Child: Me play with her. Her hit me. Me wanted my new thing. Now it broken.

Adult: Were you playing with Judy?

Child: No, Pam.

Adult: Did Pam take your new Sweet Secret?

Child: Yes.

Adult: You tried to take your Sweet Secret back and Pam hit you?

Child: Yes and it broke.

Adult: So you and Pam were playing. Pam took your Sweet Secret. When you wanted the Sweet Secret back, she hit you. You grabbed the Sweet Secret and it broke.



Example 2:

Child: We were playing. You know it was dead and it didn't have a head so it couldn't slither anywhere. And we was scared but we poked it with a stick.

Adult: You and Frankie were on the playground when this happened?

Child: No, it was Adam and me. We was in the yard.

Adult: You and Adam were in your yard?

Child: No, we was at Adam's.

Adult: So you and Adam were in his yard and you found a dead frog.

Child: No, it was a snake.

Adult: So you found a snake with its head gone.

Child: Yea.

Adult: Wow! So when you and Adam were in his yard, you found a snake without its head. You must have been scared so you poked it with a stick to see if it was alive. What did you do with the dead snake?

- ✓ You have helped the child get their message across without criticizing and also provided a good model of how the information should have been relayed.
- ✧ You may also prompt relaying experiences by watching TV shows together and after leaving for a minute or two, have the child "fill you in" on the events while you were away. You can recast a poor retelling of events, which will also serve as a model.
- ✧ You may also "practice" retelling stories.
 - For example you and your child may have an experience that you can tell someone else. You can help the child formulate the experience before they tell the other person.
 - These can and should be simple experiences (for example, finding something that was lost), not too long and involved (for example, telling what you did on your summer holiday).
- ✧ Reading picture books and retelling the story can be helpful. Since the main events are seen in the pictures this will help the child learn how to "cut up" the story into relevant facts and tell them in order.
 - Telling about a sequence of pictures may be a useful first experience before trying to tell more continuous and remote experiences.
- ✧ These procedures can be expanded to include other types of descriptions, such as how to get to the bathroom in your house. These should begin as simple and move to more complex descriptions, such as how to play a game.

General Suggestions for Improving Use of Conversational Rules (Pragmatics)

- ✧ Generally when a child breaks a conversational rule you may have to tell them what they have done and model an appropriate way to converse.

Example:

You are talking to someone else and the child interrupts. Use a hand signal, like raising your hand, to tell the child to wait. Then say, "Now I'm through and this is the time to talk to me. You were interrupting."

If you ignore the child, he/she may never know that they were talking out of turn.

Example:

You are talking to a child about math homework and they suddenly say, "Paul hit a home run." You say, "We aren't talking about that right now. Let's finish talking about math and then I will show you how and when to talk about Paul's homerun."

When you are finished talking about math say, "Now we're through talking about math." And you could say, "Paul and I were playing baseball at recess and Paul hit a homerun" If you ignore the child's intrusion they will not learn how and when to bring up a topic that is important to them.



✧ Talking off topic is a problem for many children.

- A very effective and powerful procedure that may be used at home and school is called "**redirecting**" (Lucas 1978). Instead of following the child's drifting and inappropriate shifts in conversation, the competent partner redirects inappropriate shifts.

Example:

Teacher: "Did you come to school on the bus?"

Child: "My mother has a new car."

Teacher: "Oh your mother bought a new car?"

Child: "Yes."

Teacher: "Now I think I understand. Let me ask you the question again. Did you come to school on the bus today? You say no, I came in my mother's new car."

Example:

Mom: "You look tired."

Child: "I went to K-mart."

Mom: "You confuse me. What does K-mart have to do with being tired."

Child: "Dad took me to K-mart last night while you were away and we bought "Hungry Hippos."

Mom: "Did you stay up late playing HH?"

Child: "Yes."

Mom: "So you could have said that you are tired. You and Dad went to K-mart and bought HH. You got to bed late because you played the new game."

✧ The modeling of appropriate response may be gradually faded as the child becomes familiar with the redirecting procedure.

- ✧ If the problem is one of intermittent attention or lack of comprehension, redirecting will help.

Example:

Teacher: "Did you enjoy riding horses on your school trip to the farm?"

Child: "I saw chickens on the farm."

(Response suggests the child only processed main words such as "horses, school, trip, and farm")

Teacher: "I'm not sure you understood. Let me ask again. Did you enjoy riding horses on your school trip to the farm?"

- ✧ You may show the child how to open and close a conversation, when to take a turn and even what settings and tactics are appropriate for different topics and tasks.
- **For example:** you may have to tell a child that talking about the fight you had last night at home is not a good topic for conversation in church.
 - As another example you may also have to tell the child that talking to Dad about raising his/her allowance just after Dad comes home from a hard day at work will not accomplish the task.
- ✧ You may need to instruct the child about how to stay in a conversation. You may do this through models.

Example:

Mom: "I really like pizza."

Child: *No response.*

Mom: "I said, I really like pizza. You tell me that you like it."

Child: "I like pizza too."

Mom: "I like double cheese on my pizza."

Child: *No response.*

Mom: "Tell me what you like on your pizza."

- ✓ You may have to explicitly tell the child to say something on topic and to do this by **asking** or **telling**.

Example:

Teacher: "Have you always lived in London?"

Child: "Yes."

Teacher: "I was not born in London."

Child: *No response.*

Teacher: "You should ask me where I was born. Say, where were you born?"

- ✓ The child's conversational partners are helping him/her "on the spot", which is very instructive. Learning to converse in a socially appropriate fashion takes many years



Real World Ideas for Social Skill Facilitation

In Class or in General:

- ✓ When the child is negative, e.g., does not say good morning or makes ugly comments, tell the child how that makes you feel or how that makes others feel and model what they should have done.
 - ⇒ If you can track the negative behaviour back to the source, e.g. another child has said something that has been taken seriously by your target child, see if you can track back to what set your target child off and talk the situation through with the child.

- ✓ Increase the potential solutions to problem situations using problem-solving steps: What is the problem? What are the alternatives or choices? What is the best solution based on the consequences? Try a solution and see how it works (Do it and learn).
 - ⇒ Be sure to accept any alternatives (e.g. I would hit the kid and take the toy back), but talk through the consequences and the fact that this action will not have the best chance of success in the long run.

- ✓ Practice conversational skills with adults using openers/introducers and closers, and “ask” and “tell” routines that keep you in a conversation.
 - ⇒ **For example:** you may have a target child who says that they can say hello but do not know what to say after they are in a conversation. You can practice asking (when you do not know much about the topic) and telling (when you have something to add to the topic). This will be awkward but will develop into a real conversation if you persist.

- ✓ Use a confederate/helper within the class. A confederate who is tolerant and naturally caring will be the best initial choice.
 - ⇒ The confederate will need to be given a specific task, e.g., accept when the target child asks to do a puzzle together or include the target child in a planned activity.

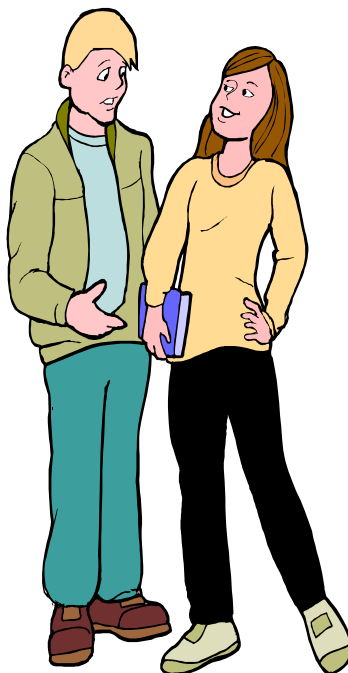
- ✓ Do small group activities that the target child may have an edge on because you have pre-taught or you know the child has an interest and knowledge base already.

- ✓ Nudge the target child on the playground,
 - ⇒ For example: Have the target child find someone who is standing alone and not doing anything, then have him/her practice what to say to the child. For example, Go up to the child and say "Hi" and then say, "Let's go for a slide."

- ✓ Do small group activities with an adult to oversee. Make the task very structured and short to begin with and model what the target child should do and not do as the interaction goes on between the target child and other children. The activity can vary from cleaning blackboards to making decorations to doing a small project for the class.
- ✓ Include the target child in activities that will raise class opinion of their competence.
 - ⇒ For example, make a target child, who is a good speller, the class speller and tell the other children to go to the class speller before going to the teacher, or have the target child be the leader for a project on something they already know well, e.g. horses.
- ✓ Practice the use of "lines" that can be used in difficult situations.
 - ⇒ For example, the target child is taught typical phrases to use if he is teased such as "You seem to have the problem, not me", "That hurts my feelings", "Why do you want to hurt me?", "Same to you and more of it.", "I know you are but what am I?", "The teacher would like to know that you said that to me." etc.
- ✓ You may have to show the target child how to "keep cool".
 - ⇒ This may require you to initially touch the child and talk right into his/her ear. As you see the signs of an impending spin-out, you may intervene, helping the child to get control by using a simple cue such as a hand signal once the child has learned to respond by cooling off.

At Home

- ✓ Import children for a structured activity in which an adult is involved. The adult may be a parent or a hired helper, such as a neighbourhood teenager if the parent is busy or the child behaves better for someone other than the parent. (By the way this is common as children may respond better with someone other than the parent).
 - ⇒ The activity should be structured (e.g., baking for the school or seeing a movie) and short in the beginning. The adult may instruct (e.g., ask nicely for the flour), model (e.g., I used to feel that way when I was a kid so I tried to stay away from bullies) and prompt (e.g., You used to have one of those. Tell Beth about it).
- ✓ Others in the family may practice telling about events that have happened which would be passed on to others later. This practice will show the target child how to tell about things that happened to them.
- ✓ Practice using “ask” and “tell” to keep a conversation going.
- ✓ Play games that instead of being competitive require cooperation between partners to achieve a goal. Practice the game with the target child so they have an edge going into the game.



Dovetailing Language and Reading Instruction

- ✓ Use the same reader the student is using in class but stay one story ahead of the class OR use a companion reader or one of a different type if the student is already a reasonably proficient reader.
 1. Teach the vocabulary to be used in the stories. You may teach it within the story. They may be asked to use the words in different sentences and senses.
 2. Use syntactic slot-fillers with sentences from stories in the readers. Cut sentences up along phrase lines and discuss parts of sentences and messages present in each sentence.

Use cloze procedures with individual words, phrases, or "what will happen next?"

3. Teach the basic parts of the story. You may use "*the 5 W's*" (who, what, where, when, why or how). Show the student that there are characters, setting and theme. Break the story down into:

Introduction: (answers the W5)

Body: Events in chronological order, descriptions from most prominent to least, up to down, left to right. All events and descriptions are relevant and sentences flow one from another. Show them bridging assumptions and how more and more information about the characters and what they are doing is being built from sentence to sentence.

Conclusion: Final outcome, moral, etc.

4. Have the student retell the story and you write it for them. Ask for paraphrases of sentences and what has happened.
5. Throughout the story follow the characters (right through the pronoun references), settings, and themes as they change and show the student how this is done.
6. Practice predicting and anticipating what will happen next and why.
7. Talk through cause and effects. Talk through humorous situations, feelings and behaviours of the characters. Talk about things not explicitly stated but implied.

Then **READ** the story.

You may encourage them to "guess" and then look at the word again. Determine if the guess was a good one based on the context or a bad one.

Example:

Student (reads): Father cut the lawn

Teacher: That was a good guess. Look at the word at the end of the sentence and see if you can get the actual word.

Student: Oh, grass; there is an /r/.

- ✓ You are teaching on an oral level all of the information needed to read and UNDERSTAND what is read. You may decrease the amount of "pre-reading" teaching as you go.
- ✓ They may also need some explicit teaching of metalinguistics (e.g., What is a word, sentence, letter sound etc.)



General Suggestions for Improving Writing

Write in Stages:

A. Pre-writing stage:

Take time to think and/or discuss the topic with others who will be writing or evaluating the text. Collect information on the subject, read it and allow it to gel.

B. Writing stage:

Organize your thoughts by:

Generating a specific set questions to be answered by the text. Answer these questions as you write. Use these questions as headings throughout all parts of the text including the introduction, body and conclusions/summary.

OR

Putting facts down in categories. Add to categories, combine categories, or separate categories as you put facts down. Order facts within categories in chronological order, from general to specific, or from central to peripheral.

Keep a random facts/thoughts sheet to be integrated into the base structure. Produce diagrams/figures/tables where possible to organize data.

OR

Using diary writing. Put down random thoughts. You are waiting for a structure to suggest itself. Put the random thoughts into clusters that seem to make some sense based on the relationship between the thoughts, such as a time sequence or natural characteristics. Then begin to flesh out sentences.

OR

Talking your thoughts onto a tape recorder for later transcription or dictate your thoughts and have another person write for you or enter your thoughts onto a word processor using a voice recognition program that will type what is said.

The teacher or fellow students may be very helpful in the organization process.

Now write a first draft! Get it down. If the student cannot think of the right word, use any word or leave a blank. If the student is not sure of the wording, write it in any form. Leave lots of space for editing.

C. Post-writing stage:

Spend at least as much time editing and revising as it took to generate the first draft.

Begin by working on the *organization* of the draft. Read it to another person, ask for comments, and then revise it.

Examine the overall order of the facts of the entire passage from paragraph to paragraph. Examine *paragraph structure*. Do all of the facts in each paragraph belong together? Is there a head sentence for each paragraph? Combine, separate and/or move paragraphs.

Then work on *sentence structure*. Do sentences need to be separated or can sentences be combined? Practice different sentence constructions. Use a grammar checker.

Now work on *word choice*. Use a Synonym Finder or Thesaurus.

Finally work on *spelling and punctuation*. Use a spell checker and a cheat sheet for punctuation.

⇒ Once again the teacher or fellow students may assist in any or all of the revising steps above.

Now read the passage again and add in transitional sentences where needed. The student may even need a good beginning and ending to the passage at this late stage or change the title.

