

Speech-Language Resources for Home

Articulation

1. If your child is working on a specific sound, help him/her to become aware of that sound by pointing out things in the environment that contain the sound. You can do this in a number of ways:
 - a. Go on a "Sound Walk". Hunt for things in or outside of the house that have the child's speech sound.
 - b. Look through magazines for pictures or words that have his/her speech sound.
 - c. When driving, look for things with the child's sound.
 - d. Play 20 questions. Think of a word or object that has the child's speech sound. Have the child ask questions to figure out what the object is. If that is too difficult, give the child clues and have him/her guess.
2. Once your child can say the sound correctly in words, have him/her practice saying some of those words for you. When that becomes easy, have him/her say them in sentences.
 - a. Spelling Search - Have the child search his/her spelling list for words that have his/her sound. Say aloud.
 - b. Silly Sentences - See who can make up the silliest sentence using one of your child's speech words.
 - c. Challenge Sentences - See who can make up the sentence using the most words containing the speech sound.
 - d. Tongue Twisters - Do you know a tongue twister that has your child's speech sound? Can you and your child make some up?
3. When your child is able to say his/her speech sound in words and sentences, have him/her begin to practice reading aloud using the sound correctly. For beginning readers, have the child read from his/her reading book or from story books. Try using poems, the Sunday Funnies, Comic Books, cereal boxes, signs, TV guide, video or board game instructions, or anything your child enjoys reading.
4. Begin to encourage your child to use the sound correctly for short periods of time during the day. This is called "carryover". Can your child carryover good speech every time he/she says his/her sibling's name? His/her pet's name? His/her favorite food?
5. Once your child is able to use good speech for longer periods of time, try these conversational activities.
 - a. Make a phone call using good speech.
 - b. Use good speech all during supper.
 - c. Use good speech in the car on the way to practice, lessons, or school.
 - d. Use good speech while going over homework.

Language

Games, Ideas, and Books to Encourage Language Skills

Enrich vocabulary with language-based games such as I spy, Guess Who, 20 Questions, Memory, and Apples to Apples.

Books

1. Read to and with your child at least twenty minutes per day.
 - a. Read a variety of books.
 - b. Label or point to pictures on the page.
 - c. Have your child describe what is happening on each page.
 - d. Ask various WH questions (who, what, when, where, why, how do you know) about what is happening on the picture page and what may happen next.
 - e. Sequence or retell the story with beginning, middle, and end.

Have fun conversations! For example, at dinner, discuss everything from daily events to what is in each room of the house. Conversational skills, such as continuation of the topic and turn taking are essential parts of speech and language.

Know your child's learning strengths and weaknesses. There are many forms of intelligence, including linguistic, kinesthetic [body], musical, artistic, logical, emotional, and social. Use your child's strong areas to help speech and language develop. For example, if your child is gifted musically, let him/her sing a song to practice speech sounds.

Play Games

1. Play verbal games
 - a. Guess What (Guess what has sharp teeth and orange/black stripes?)
 - b. Yes or No ("Dogs have 2 feet", child says "no")
 - c. Which One Doesn't Belong and Why? ("apple, milk, banana")
 - d. Categories: "sock, shirt, pants" (child says "clothes")
 - e. Categories: Parent says "clothes", child says "socks, pants, shirts".
 - f. "Hotter/Colder": hide something and guide with clues.
 - g. I Spy
 - h. Play "Simon Says". Start out by being "Simon", giving directions like "touch your nose", "touch the floor", "clap your hands", "walk to the door" and work up to harder ones like "touch your knees and clap your hands", "put a jelly bean under the napkin," etc. Next, have your child be "Simon" and help him to give the directions if needed.

Early Elementary Grades K-2

1. Talk with your child frequently.
2. Read a variety of books; read often and talk with your child about the story.
3. Help your child focus on sound patterns of words such as those found in rhyming games.
4. Have your child retell stories and talk about events of the day.
5. Talk with your child during daily activities; give directions for your child to follow (e.g., making cookies).
6. Talk about how things are alike and different.
7. Give your child reasons and opportunities to write.

Later Elementary grades 3-5

1. Continue to encourage reading; find reading material that is of interest to your child.
2. Encourage your child to form opinions about what he/she hears or reads and relate to experiences.
3. Help your child make connections between what is read and heard at school, at home, and in other activities.
4. Talk aloud as you help your child understand and solve problems encountered in reading material.
5. Help your child recognize spelling patterns, such as beginnings and endings of words (e.g., *pre-* or *-ment*).
6. Encourage your child to write letters, keep a diary, or write stories.

Listening Skills

(From: *What is Auditory Processing?* By Susan Bell and *The Source for Processing Disorders* by Gail J. Richard, PhD (2001))

1. Use family trips and errands as a way for children to listen and learn. For example, on a trip to the supermarket, tell your child 3 or 4 items you need, then ask for them to be repeated or brought to you.
2. To help with memory, break information into shorter "chunks" or segments, and pause between each segment. For example, "Put on your pajamas (pause), and wash your face (pause). Chunking spoken messages allows children more time to process or absorb the entire message.
3. Get children's attention before you speak to them. Cue them to "tune in" by saying, "Susie, this is important..." or "Ryan, listen carefully, I'm going to tell you what to do." Vary the attention-getting phrases so the child does not begin to tune them out as well.
4. Supplement what you say with something she/he can see, when this is possible. If you are asking him/her to go to the table and get the backpack, you can also point to the backpack.
5. Allow your child "thinking time" before you expect an answer to a question. The typical amount of time we expect between a question and an answer is 2-4 seconds. A rule of thumb is to count to 10 before you help answer a question. This is hard to do, but it is probably the single most important strategy you can use.
6. Feel free to repeat, rephrase or further explain what you have said to your child if you think it will help him/her understand (you should still give him plenty of time to respond).

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Adapted from Speech and Language Services website, Pottstown School District, Pottstown, PA