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# **Speech and Language Therapy Guide**

**Step-By-Step Speech Therapy  
Activities to Teach Speech and  
Language Skills At Home or  
In Therapy**

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## Important! Please Read!!

### Copyright Notice

Thank you so much for purchasing this e-book! I have worked very hard for the last year creating this resource and I hope you find it incredibly helpful.

Please keep in mind when sharing this resource that this e-book is a major source of income for me. Being able to sell this resource helps to put food on the table for me and my family as well as allows me to continue creating great resources for families and SLPs on my website, many of which I am able to offer for free due to income from paid products like this.

In order to keep prices low for others and to allow me to continue to run my website and create materials, I ask that you do not freely give this book away to others who have not paid for it. Here are some general guidelines of how you may use and share this book:

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Disclaimer: The advice and strategies in this book are not guaranteed to work for every child. The advice in this book should also not be used in place of going to see a licensed speech-language pathologist. If you are concerned about your child's speech or language skills, you should always seek professional help. This books is meant to supplement the advice of a licensed professional.

## Table Of Contents

Introduction for Parents and Caregivers.....	6
Introduction for Speech-Language Pathologists and Educators.....	7
How to Create a Speech Homework Notebook.....	8
<b>Assessment</b>	
How to Choose What Skills to Start With (Parents).....	9
Using Informal and Dynamic Assessment to Determine Appropriate Skills (SLPs).....	10
Developmental Checklists for Speech and Language Skills.....	11
<b>Data Collection</b>	
How to Use the Data Collection Boxes.....	18
Sample Data Collection Form.....	19
Blank Data Collection Form.....	20
<b>Having Trouble?</b>	
Troubleshooting Tips.....	21
<b>Step-By-Step Guides</b>	
<b>Early Communication Skills</b>	
How to engage a baby to promote good language skills.....	24
How to get a child to respond to sound/voice.....	35
How to get a child to imitate actions.....	43
How to get a child to respond to his name.....	50
<b>Vocabulary Guides</b>	
How to teach a child a new word.....	58
How to jump start a late talker.....	65
How to use sign language with a late talker.....	75
How to use a word web to expand a child's vocabulary.....	92
How to teach a child a spatial concept.....	98
How to teach a child descriptors.....	112
How to improve a child's word retrieval skills.....	122

## Table Of Contents, cont.

### Step-By-Step Guides, cont.

#### Grammar Guides

How to teach a child to use the possessive ‘s.....	136
How to teach a child to use the plural –s.....	144
How to teach a child to use irregular plurals.....	153
How to teach a child to use the present progressive “-ing”.....	162
How to teach a child to use the pronouns “he” and “she”.....	169
How to teach a child to use the past tense verbs.....	180
How to teach a child to use articles.....	190
How to teach a child to use the conjunction “and”.....	199
How to increase a child’s length of utterance.....	206

#### Question Guides

How to teach a child to answer yes/no questions.....	213
How to teach a child to answer “what” questions.....	222
How to teach a child to answer “where” questions.....	231
How to teach a child to answer “who” questions.....	242
How to teach a child to answer “when” questions.....	253
How to teach a child to answer “why” questions.....	262
How to teach a child to answer “how” questions.....	269
How to teach a child to ask a question with good word order.....	278

#### Speech Sound Guides

How to teach a child a single sound.....	283
How to teach a child the /r/ sound.....	296
How to teach a child a class of sounds.....	306
How to teach a child not to mumble.....	312
How to fix final consonant deletion.....	318

## Table Of Contents, cont.

### **Step-By-Step Guides, cont.**

#### **Social Skill Guides**

How to teach a child to understand and follow directions.....	327
How to teach a child to do pretend play.....	336
How to teach a child to take turns with others.....	341
How to teach a child to self-calm from a meltdown.....	349
How to teach a child to stay on topic.....	358
How to use a social story to help a child with a language delay.....	364

### **Appendices**

Index.....	369
References.....	372

## Introduction-For Parents and Caregivers

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Thank you so much for purchasing this e-book! Your child is already at an advantage because you have taken this step toward helping your child improve his/her speech and language skills. Thank you for doing this for your child! I have created the guides in this book specifically for you, the parent. Each skill is broken down into manageable pieces and the instructions will walk you through exactly how to teach each part. If you have purchased the expanded version, then the worksheets and visuals that you will need to teach these skills have already been created for you, making it even easier to teach your little one the skills. It may seem overwhelming at first, but we start with one piece of one skill and take baby steps from there. You can do this and your child *will* benefit from it!

I recommend you tackle this book in the following manner:

1. Go to page 8 to create a speech notebook for your child.
2. Follow the process on page 9 to select an appropriate skill to work on with your child.
3. Read page 18 for how to use the data collection boxes.
4. Glance over the trouble-shooting page on page 21 so you know which problems are addressed in case you have any of those.
5. Go to the appropriate page number for the skill you decided to start with (from page 9) and start with the first step. Follow the directions for each step of that skill until your child has mastered it or you feel like you're not making progress and your child needs a break.
6. Go back to page 9 and choose a new skill to work on.

\*\*You can keep following this procedure and teaching your child more and more speech and language skills until you feel comfortable with their skill level. Feel free to take breaks for a while (such as over holidays or between skills) to allow your child time to generalize the skills and to keep you and your child from getting burnt out.

Keep in mind that this guide should not replace the advice from a licensed speech-language pathologist (SLP). Only an SLP will know if these techniques are the most appropriate methods for your child and will know what to do if one of them isn't working. Use this book in conjunction with the advice from a licensed SLP.

If at any point you feel lost about what to do, where to start, how to help your child, or what to teach next, I am here for you! You can purchase a single online speech-language therapy session on my website and I will personally get on a skype call with you and your child and help get you started or keep you moving forward. A single session costs \$75 but I will have to make sure that I am licensed in your state before we can have our online session. If you would like more information about this service or to see if I am licensed in your state, please email me at [SpeechAndLanguageKids@gmail.com](mailto:SpeechAndLanguageKids@gmail.com). Thank you and good luck!

Carrie Clark, CCC-SLP

### Introduction-For Speech-Language Pathologists and Educators

Dear SLP or Educator,

Thank you so much for purchasing this e-book! I have poured years of experience, education, and feedback into this product and I hope you find it incredibly valuable. The basic guides will walk you through how I teach specific skills and the worksheets and visual aids (in the expanded version) will provide you with easy activities and handouts to use during therapy or to give to parents for homework. Research shows that children who engage in meaningful homework programs make faster progress in speech therapy, which means happier clients and families and lighter caseloads! I know that my methods are not the only way to teach these skills so feel free to modify or adapt them as you see necessary for your specific child. Use this resource to supplement your current practices and to add to your repertoire of techniques to try when a child is struggling with a particular concept.

I recommend you tackle this book in the following manner:

1. Go to page 8 to create a homework notebook for each child. Or, skip straight to the content if you don't have the resources to create notebooks!
2. Follow the process on page 10 to select appropriate skills to work on with each child.
3. Read page 18 for how to use the data collection boxes.
4. Check out page 19 for some blank data collection forms if you need them.
5. Glance over the trouble-shooting page on page 21 so you know which problems are addressed in case you have any of those.
6. Go to the appropriate page number for the skill you decided to start with (from page 10) and start with the first step. Follow the directions for each step of that skill until the child has mastered it or you feel like you're not making progress and the child needs a break.
7. Go back to page 10 and choose a new skill to work on.

Feel free also to simply pick and choose which resources and references that will benefit you in your practice. You can also send sections of this book home as "home programs" for children who do not qualify for your services but would benefit from some work at home. All guides in this book are written for parents so that you don't have to worry about translating any SLP lingo before sharing with families.

You are also welcome to use the provided sample IEP goals when writing IEPs or long-term goals.

If you have any questions about the e-book or the methods within, please don't hesitate to contact me at [SpeechAndLanguageKids@gmail.com](mailto:SpeechAndLanguageKids@gmail.com). Thank you and good luck!

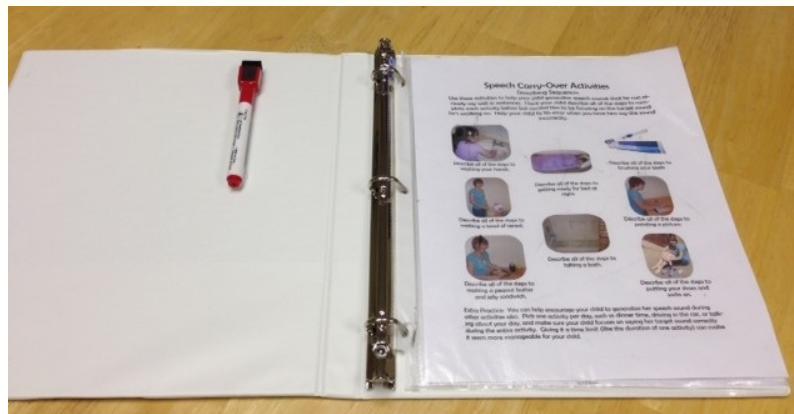
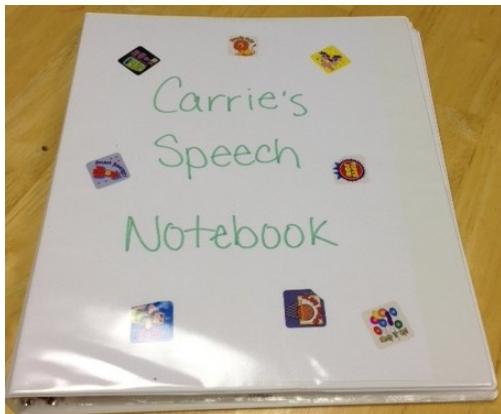
Carrie Clark, CCC-SLP

## How to Create A Speech Homework Notebook

Whether you are a parent working on speech with your child or a speech-language pathologist working on speech and language skills at school, a speech homework notebook can be a great resource. I create one of these for each kid on my caseload. I put in any worksheets or handouts we're working on along with a piece of paper for me to jot a note about what the homework is for the week. This keeps all of the speech papers organized and helps us keep track of everything.

I also recommend putting worksheets and handouts into plastic page protectors. Then, you can complete the worksheet with a dry erase marker so that they can be erased and re-used. This gives the child many more opportunities to practice the skill.

Here are the steps I recommend for creating a speech homework notebook for your child or the children on your caseload:



1. Get a three-ring binder or a folder with 3-brads in it.
2. Put some sheet protectors inside the notebook along with a blank piece of paper for writing down homework assignments.
3. Have your child decorate the front of the notebook or decorate a piece of paper that you slide into the front cover.
4. Find a dry erase marker and use adhesive Velcro to attach it to the inside of the notebook.
5. Slide worksheets or word lists into the page protectors and write down the child's homework on the piece of paper.

**\*\*If you are a parent working on speech and language at home, you may want to set a schedule of when you will get the notebook out to work. This will help your child understand when it's time to work on speech and when he has a break. I find that shorter, more frequent sessions work better than longer sessions so shoot for doing a little bit each day.**

## Choosing Skills to Work on At Home with Your Child

Choosing which skills to work on first with your child can be one of the most challenging parts of working on speech and language skills at home. I have plenty of parents tell me that they would love to help their child but they don't know where to start. I have attempted to simplify this process so that you will clearly know where to start with your child. Here's what to do:

1. Turn to page 11 in this book labeled "Developmental Checklists for Speech and Language Development". Start with the very first section, labeled 6 months. If you are looking at the e-book version, you may want to print out these pages so you can make checkmarks as you go along.
2. Go through each skill and mark whether your child is not demonstrating the skill, demonstrates the skill sometimes, or demonstrates the skill most of the time (consistently). If it is an early skill that your child is already past in terms of development (such as cooing and laughing), go ahead and mark it as "demonstrates most of the time" because your child has surpassed that skill.
3. Keep going through the skills in this way until you reach the end of the section which best represents your child's age right now. I recommend printing this out and saving it so you can compare your results later.
4. Go back to the beginning of the checklists and find the earliest skill that your child is not yet demonstrating or that your child is not demonstrating all of the time. If you feel like this skill is something that you would like your child to be able to do at home, go ahead and pick that skill to start with. If not, keep working your way down the list until you find something that you would like to work on. It's just important to work on younger skills before you try to tackle more challenging older skills.
5. Work on this one skill until your child has mastered it or until your child stops making progress and you feel like he could use a break from it. Then, choose another skill on the list that is one of the earliest skills that he hasn't mastered yet.

## Using Informal and Dynamic Assessment to Determine Appropriate Skills

If you have used a standardized assessment to determine which skills a client/student needs to work on, then you probably already have a pretty good idea of where to start. However, if you're still struggling to determine some appropriate goals, you can try using informal and dynamic assessment to guide your decision. Here's what to do:

1. Go through the developmental checklists on page 11 and start from the top (at 6 months). Check the child's level of mastery for each skill. If the child has already surpassed this skill and is working on more difficult skills, you can mark the easier one as "demonstrates consistently".
2. If you get to a skill that you're not sure about, turn to that section in the book and have the child attempt some of the worksheets or activities for that section. First, see how the child does on them without any additional support.
3. If the child cannot do the skill, try some dynamic assessment by providing the child with some prompts or briefly teaching the child how to do the skill. If the child is able to do it with those minimal cues, then you can determine that the child's grasp of that skill is developing or emerging. Make note of that on the development checklist.
4. Once you have gone up through the skills in that child's age, you can go back and look at some of the earliest developing skill. If the child is demonstrating the skill some of the time but not consistently, you may not need to directly address that skill in therapy, but rather just continue to monitor it as it may develop fully on its own. Your time will most likely be better spent on the skills that the child should be demonstrating but isn't able to do at all, even with some dynamic assessment and cueing. Choose a few of these goals to target during your therapy sessions and in home practice.

## Developmental Checklists for Speech and Language Skills

Go through and mark how well the child is able to perform these skills. The page numbers to the right of each skill will tell you where to start to teach that skill. If there are two numbers listed, there are multiple guides that will address this skill. Choose the one that fits best.

### **6 Months:**

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start on
Coos and Laughs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Makes some sounds that are similar to speech sounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Responds to voices and faces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Makes eye contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Makes noises to get attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Turns head toward sound source when hears noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	35
Watches a speaker's face when	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	35

### **1 Year:**

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Combines some vowels and consonants together like "bah" or "mo"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
Imitates simple actions of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	43
Responds to Name	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	50
Has said first word and/or tries to use gestures to communicate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24, 58, 65, 75, 206

## Developmental Checklists Continued

### **1 Year, 6 Months:**

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Able to say 50 different words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	58, 65, 206
Does some pretend play on self (like drinking from a cup)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	336

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Imitates adult's actions in play (like driving a car or feeding a baby)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	43
Has a vocabulary of 200-300 words (that he can say)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	58, 65, 75
Is combining some words together to make two-word sentences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	206
Knows spatial concepts: in, on	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	98
Knows descriptors like up and down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	112
Answers basic yes/no questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	213
Answers "what's this" questions about basic vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	222
Answers "where" questions by pointing, like "where's Mommy?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	231
Follows some simple one-step directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	327
Does pretend play on someone/something else, like feeding a baby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	336
Acts out daily routines in play like playing house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	336

### **2 Years**

## Developmental Checklists Continued

## 3 Years

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Has a vocabulary of about 1,000 different words he can say	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	58, 65, 75
Knows spatial concepts like off, out of, away, and together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	98
Knows descriptors like one/many and sizes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	112
Uses the present progressive “-ing” like “he is jumping”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	162
Uses the pronouns “he” and “she”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	169
Has an average sentence/utterance length of around 3 words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	206
Answers more complex “what” questions like “what do you eat?”, “what do you wear on your head?”, and “what is she doing?”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	222
Verbally answers basic “where” questions, like “where are your shoes?”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	231
Verbally answers basic “who” questions like “who is...”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	242
Consistently says the sounds: p, b, h, n, w	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283
Is understood by a stranger at least 75% of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283, 312
Produces final consonants at the ends of words, not dropping them off, but it's ok if they're not always the right sound.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	318

## Developmental Checklists Continued

### 4 Years

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Knows spatial concepts like next to, beside, behind, in front, around, and between	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	98
Knows descriptors like colors and “different”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	112
Uses the possessive ‘s like “Jimmy’s boot”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	136
Uses the plural –s like “balls”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	144
Uses past tense verbs like “jumped” and “ran”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	180
Uses articles like “a” and “the”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	190
Uses conjunctions like “and”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	199
Has an average sentence length of above 4 words per utterance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	206
Answers basic “what” function questions like “what do you do with a fork?”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	222
Answers more complex “where” questions like “where does a cow live?”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	231
Answers more complex “who” questions like “who brings the mail?”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	242
Answers basic “when” questions but may get some time concepts mixed up, like tomorrow and yesterday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	253
Answers basic “how” questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	269
Answers basic “why” questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	262

## Developmental Checklists Continued

### 4 Years, cont.

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Asks a variety of questions using “wh-” words and correct word order	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	278
Consistently says the sounds: b, k, g, d, f, y	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283
Says some fricatives (long sounds like /f/, /s/, /z/, sh) even if they don’t always get the right one. Should not still be replacing all of these with short sounds like /t/, /d/, /p/	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	306
Is understood by a stranger at least 80% of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283, 312
Follows two-step related directions, like find get your shoes and bring them here.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	327
Can take turns in games and play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	341



## Developmental Checklists Continued

**5 Years**

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Does Not Demonstrate</b>	<b>Demonstrates Sometimes</b>	<b>Demonstrates Consistently</b>	<b>Page to Start On</b>
Has a vocabulary of about 2,200-2,500 different words he can say	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	58, 92
Knows spatial concepts like nearest and through	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	98
Knows descriptors like superlatives (bigger, biggest), time concepts, thin, whole, fist, middle, last	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	112
Uses irregular plurals like "feet" and "children"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	153
Consistently says the sound: /t/	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283
Says consonant blends like /sp/, /tw/ even if she don't always get both sounds correct. There should at least be two sounds present when she tries to say these.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	306
Is understood by a stranger at least 90% of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283, 312
Is able to follow three-step directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	327
Stays on topic during a logical conver-	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	358

**6 Years**

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Does Not Demonstrate</b>	<b>Demonstrates Sometimes</b>	<b>Demonstrates Consistently</b>	<b>Page to Start On</b>
Knows spatial concepts like left/right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	98
Knows descriptors like opposites and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	112
Consistently says the sounds: /r/	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283, 296
Is understood by a stranger almost all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283, 312



## Developmental Checklists Continued

**7 Years**

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Consistently says the sounds: sh, ch,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283
Integrates new words into his vocabulary regularly and easily, like school vocabulary words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	92
Recalls words to use when talking flu-	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	122

**8 Years**

Skill	Does Not Demonstrate	Demonstrates Sometimes	Demonstrates Consistently	Page to Start On
Consistently says the sounds: s, z, v,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	283
Integrates new words into his vocabulary regularly and easily, like school vocabulary words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	92

## How to Use the Data Collection Boxes

This page will show you how to use the data collection boxes that are located at the bottom of most guides. Feel free to use them if you find them helpful or use your own system if you'd rather collect data in a different way.

It is important to collect data on how well your child is doing with each step so you know when it's time to move on to the next step. This will also allow you to see when your child stops making progress, indicating that you may need to take a break or try to approach the skill in a different way. You can use the data collection boxes as described below:

Example of a data collection box:

Each time you practice the skill (or every other time if you're practicing often), you will want to write the date in one of these boxes. You will collect your data for that day in the box below

	Date: 3/18	Date: 3/21	Date: 3/24	Date:	Date:
<b>Responds to sound and commotion in his line of Vision</b>	+O++OOO+O O+OOO+OO+  7/18= 38%	+O++OOO+O O+++O+++OO  10/19= 52%	++O++OOO+O +O+++O++O  11/19= 57%		

This will tell you what you are measuring. If unsure, look at the description on the guide.

In each box below the date, take data on each time you attempt the skill. I like to make a “+” if the child did it correctly and a “o” if the child did not demonstrate the skill. You can also use other symbols like “p” if you needed to prompt your child or “v” if you needed to use a visual cue to remind him. Make up your own symbols that make sense to you based on what the goal and expectation is. You can also jot a note to the side that says what each symbol represents.

At the bottom of each box, write the number correct divided by the total number of opportunities. Divide them out and multiply by 100 to get the percentage:

Example:

11 correct, 19 total

11 divided by 19 = .57

.57 multiplied by 100 = 57%

## Sample Data Collection Sheet

Here's a good data collection sheet if you are a speech-language pathologist working with many children all of whom have several goals. You can track each goal along the side and only fill in data when you work on that skill. Then, you can easily see which skills you've worked on and which ones need more work as well as if the child is making progress. Use this page as a reference. There is a blank form on the next page.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Review By Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Goal/Skill</b> Write one goal/skill per box below	<b>Data Collection:</b> Write the date in the left-most box beside each goal when you work on that skill. Then, take your data in the box.				
Label action words in pictures.	Date: <b>2/24</b> <b>+0++000+00+</b> <b>000+00+</b>  <b>7/18= 38%</b>	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
Produce /k/ and /g/ in single words  <b>60% accuracy</b>	Date: <b>2/24</b> <b>+0++000+00+</b> <b>000+00+</b>  <b>7/18= 38%</b>	Date: <b>3/03</b> <b>+0++000+00+</b> <b>++0+++00</b>  <b>10/19= 52%</b>	Date:	Date:	Date:
Follow two-step directions  <b>80% accuracy with one repetition</b>	Date: <b>3/03</b> <b>++0++000+0+</b> <b>0+++0++0</b>  <b>11/19= 57%</b>	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Review By Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Goal/Skill</b> Write one goal/ skill per box be- low	<b>Data Collection:</b>				
	Write the date in the left-most box beside each goal when you work on that skill. Then, take your data in the box.				
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:

## Troubleshooting Difficulties During the Process

If you are having trouble with any of these guides, please try some of the following troubleshooting techniques:

### **My Child Seems to Be Stuck On a Step:**

If your child is not making progress on a particular step of a guide, here are a few things you can try to get him unstuck:

- Go back to the last step and practice that one again for a while before trying the next step again.
- Go on to the next step and see if your child could bypass the current step.
- Take a break for a while, stop working on that particular skill to give your child time to process it. Come back to it later.
- Try teaching or explaining the skill in a different way. Your child will benefit from having it presented many different ways.
- Try to make it more real. Use the skill functionally or find real life examples of the skill. For example, if you're trying to teach action words and he isn't understanding, try acting out the actions with your child instead of looking at pictures of other people doing them.
- Have your child use his whole body to practice and demonstrate the skill. If it's not something that lends itself easily to whole body movements (like practicing a speech sound), make up an action that your child must do while he's practicing, such as hopping on one foot or taking giant steps across the room.

### **I don't know what skill to work on next with my child:**

Complete the developmental checklist again (pg 11) and choose one of the youngest skills that your child is still having trouble with.

### **My child doesn't want to do the speech/language work:**

- Set a specific schedule so your child always knows when it's coming and don't give in if your child doesn't want to do it.
- Try to shorten the sessions at first, even down to 30 seconds if that's what it takes, so your child understands it's not some horrible thing that will go on forever.
- Practice the skill while taking turns with your child's favorite game or toy.
- Bring in siblings and friends to make it more fun.
- Turn the skill practice into a game.
- Track your child's progress on a graph or chart so he can see his improvement, work toward a goal and a reward, like one-on-one time with Daddy or your child's choice of restaurants when you go out to eat.

# Step-By-Step Guides for Teaching Speech and Language Skills

# Early Communication Skills

## How to Engage a Baby to Promote Good Communication Skills

### Rationale:

Congratulations! Your little bundle of joy is here!! Keep in mind that it's never too early to start promoting the development of good communication skills. This is especially true if your child was born with a condition that makes him more likely to develop communication problems. Things like hearing loss, pregnancy or birth complications, Down Syndrome, genetic abnormalities, or neurological problems can put your child at risk for speech and language problems down the road. Here are some easy steps you can take now to promote good communication skill development in your baby, whether he has these risk factors or not.

### Age of Mastery:

Your baby should start cooing and laughing around 4 months of age. You should start hearing some speech sound-like productions around 6 months, and some consonant-vowel combinations around 10 months. First words are usually heard around one year. A 6-month-old should also be responding to voices and faces, making eye contact, and using babbling to get attention.

### Learning Steps:

Keep in mind that the steps to this guide are not sequential. You do not need to complete them in order and you don't need to finish one step before moving on to the next. These are simply things that you can work into your normal routine that will give your baby the best chance to develop great speech and language skills.

1. Read to Your Baby
2. Tummy To Tummy Time
3. Sing Songs
4. Play Social Games
5. Talk to Your Baby

## Engaging Babies Step One:

### Read To Your Baby

#### Description:

Reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do to promote good speech and language development but you don't have to wait until she's old enough to hold the book! Research shows that the children who were read to earliest in life tend to be those with the highest language skills when they get older. How powerful is that? It is such a simple thing that you can do for your child that could make a huge difference later in life.

#### Activities:

It is never too early to start reading to your child! In fact, you can even read to your baby while she is still in the womb! Your baby can hear early in the pregnancy so reading books aloud to your baby can get her used to your voice or the voice of your partner. Once your baby is born, you can start reading to her as soon as you want. If you haven't started yet, don't worry, you haven't done any harm, just start now! When your baby is very little, she won't be paying much attention to the book so feel free to read any book to her, including whatever you got from the local library for yourself. She will be focusing on the tone of your voice and the sounds that you are making. This is how she will learn which speech sounds are used in your native language. She isn't making sense of the words yet. You should also expose her to baby books. Buy durable books like board or cloth books and let her chew on them, bang them, toss them around, whatever she wants. Then, when you read to her, hold the books so she can see the pictures, read to her, point to pictures as you name them, turn the pages, etc. This will help her learn about books and how they're used.

#### When to Move On:

Reading books to your child is something that you should do every day. Choose a time in your routine when you will read to your child (most parents choose bedtime). Try to read at this time every day for a week to start getting into the habit.

#### Data Collection (Mark the days you read to your child this week):

	Date:						
<b>Days I read to my child</b>							

Promoting Language Development In Babies Tip #1:

## **Read To Your Baby Every Day!**

- Read something out loud to your baby every day, it doesn't matter what it is.
- Let your baby play with durable books like board books and bath books.
- Read a children's book to your child every day and show your child the pictures. Point out and talk about things you see in the pictures. If the text is too long for your child, feel free to change the words.
- Teach your baby how to turn the pages in a book.

## Engaging Babies Step Two: Tummy to Tummy Time

### Description:

You may have heard about “tummy time” and how important it is for your child’s development. Occupational and physical therapists encourage parents to help babies spend time on their tummies to promote good gross and fine motor development. However, many babies don’t enjoy spending much time on their tummies. You can use “tummy to tummy time” to work your baby toward tolerating tummy time better while getting some in good interactions with your baby.

### Activities:

Sit down in a slightly reclined position with your baby. Lay your baby on your stomach and chest so his face is pointing toward yours. You’re now doing “tummy to tummy time”. Not too hard, right? For babies that are very resistant to being on their tummies, you can start in a mostly upright position. Then, each time you do this, lean back just a little more. Eventually you should get it to the point where you are laying on your back and Baby is on your tummy/chest, essentially laying on his tummy. Then, you can transition to him laying on his tummy by himself. Here are some ways you can promote good communication while in the tummy-to-tummy position:

- **Play with Sounds:** While your baby is watching you, make a bunch of different speech sounds for your baby to hear. Go through the alphabet and repeat each sound (such as “ah ah ah, buh buh buh, cuh cuh cuh, etc.”). See what other silly sounds you can make too. Babies love blowing raspberries so you can throw that one in as well (blowing air through your lips). If your baby makes any sounds of his own, repeat those sounds back to him.
- **Talk to your Baby:** We will go more into talking to your baby later, but it’s never too early to expose your baby to as many different words as possible. It doesn’t even matter what you say, you can talk about work, sports, or anything else that’s on your mind. Just talk.

### When to Move On:

Try to work tummy time into your child’s day every day, or at least every other day. Try it for a week to get into the habit.

### Data Collection (Mark the days you did this activity):

	Date:						
<b>Days we did Tummy time</b>							

## Promoting Language Development in Babies Tip #2:

### **Tummy to Tummy Time**



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- Sit in a slightly reclined position and lay your baby on your stomach with his face pointing toward yours.
- Lean back as far as your baby is comfortable.
- Talk to your baby. It doesn't matter what you say, just talk.
- Play with sounds. Make different sounds while your baby watches your face.
- Imitate any sounds that your baby makes.

## Engaging Babies Step Three: Sing Songs

### Description:

Singing to your child is another great way to promote good language skills because music actually activates different parts of the brain than talking to your baby does. The music centers of the brain are located on the right half of the brain and the language centers are located on the left half. If you are singing songs with words to your child, he must use both the left and right parts of the brain together. This is a great way to activate your baby's brain.

### Activities:

This one is easy, just sing! It doesn't matter to your baby if you can't sing well or if you can't hold a tune. Your baby will benefit from your singing all the same. You can sing any song you know; when your child is a baby, it doesn't matter. You can sing in the car, while rocking your baby to sleep, while cleaning or making dinner, or while doing tummy-to-tummy time. Just sing!

Many parents ask me if they can just play a tape of someone else singing instead. While playing music for your baby can also be helpful for brain development (especially classical music), it won't be quite as effective at building good communication skills because you are taking the human connection piece of the puzzle out. Face-to-face human contact is incredibly important to young children. This is why it is so important to turn off the electronics and interact directly with your child. Yes, your child can learn things from screens and recordings, but your child will learn that same lesson more quickly with human-to-human contact *and* she will learn the important aspects of human communication that will be necessary for social interactions for the rest of her life. So yes, you can play music for your child, but make sure you are singing to your child as well!

### When to Move On:

Try to sing to your child every day or at least every other day. Write down the days you do this for one week to get into the habit.

### Data Collection (Mark the days you do this activity):

	Date:						
<b>Days I sang to my child</b>							

## Promoting Language Development in Babies Tip #3:

### **Sing Songs**



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- You don't need a musical instrument or a recording, just sing to your baby.
- It doesn't matter what songs you sing.
- It doesn't matter how well you sing.
- Try some kids songs like "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" or The ABC Song.
- If kids songs drive you nuts, sing the songs that you like to your baby.
- Playing recordings of music is good, too, but it is important to sing to your child as well.

## Engaging Babies Step Four: Play Social Games

### Description:

Cute little social games like peek-a-boo tend to be second nature for parents of young children, but did you know that they can help promote communication skills as well??

### Activities:

Games like “peek-a-boo” and “so big” can help your child in a number of ways. If you do these games enough, your child will learn to predict what will come next which can help him make sense of that social interaction. This teaches him that he can learn to predict outcomes of other social interactions as well. These games also give your child an opportunity to let you know that he wants more of what you’re doing without needing to use words. Children will initiate these games by holding their arms up or pulling the blanket on or off their heads. This is a great way for children to interact with you before they have words to express what they want. Finally, these types of games can help babies who are reluctant to interact with others by rewarding their participation with physical enjoyment, such as tickles, hugs, smiles, and laughs. Here are descriptions of the most popular social baby games:

**Peek-a-Boo!** Pull a blanket up over your baby’s face and say “Where’s Baby?” (or use Baby’s name). Then, pull off the blanket and say “peek-a-boo!”

**So Big:** Hold up baby’s arms and say “How big is Baby? Sooooo big! Someone’s gonna get you, here comes a pig!” and then make oinking sounds on your baby’s tummy.

**Ride a Little Pony:** Bounce Baby on your knee and say “Ride a little pony down to town. Better be careful so you don’t fall down” then pretend to let your baby fall for just a split second before you catch him.

### When to Move On:

Do some of these social games or make up your own games every day or every other day. Write down when you do them for a week to get into the habit.

### Data Collection (Mark the days you did this activity):

	Date:						
<b>Days I played social games</b>							

## Promoting Language Development in Babies Tip #4:

### **Play Social Games**



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Try one of these social games every day with your baby to improve interaction skills.

- **Peek-a-Boo!** Pull a blanket up over your baby's face and say "Where's Baby?" (or use Baby's name). Then, pull off the blanket and say "peek-a-boo!"
- **So Big:** Hold up baby's arms and say "How big is Baby? Sooooo big! Someone's gonna get you, here comes a pig!" and then make oinking sounds on your baby's tummy.
- **Ride a Little Pony:** Bounce Baby on your knee and say "Ride a little pony down to town. Better be careful so you don't fall down" then pretend to let your baby fall for just a split second before you catch him.

## Engaging Babies Step Five:

### Talk To Your Baby

#### Description:

Sounds simple enough, doesn't it? A research study showed that children from families that talked to their children more had larger vocabularies later in life. Children from professional families heard an average of 2153 words per hour where children from welfare families only heard 616 words per hour. By age three, the children who heard 2153 words per hour had an average vocabulary of 1100 words and children from welfare families had an average vocabulary of 500 words. How amazing that simply by talking to your baby more, you can increase her vocabulary!

#### Activities:

This activity is simple, too. Talk to your baby all the time. Talk about what you're doing. Talk about what your baby is doing. Talk about what people around you are doing, or what you did at work, or where you would like to travel to someday. It doesn't matter what you say, just start talking more to your children.

The most important part of this step is to **TURN OFF THE SCREENS!!** Sorry for yelling there but this is a point that is so important to get across. Children who spend all of their time in front of a phone, tablet, computer, or TV screen may develop great technology skills or learn to read at a ridiculously early age, but they are missing out on critical time to develop human-to-human social interaction skills. You should limit the amount of time that your young child spends in front of a screen as much as possible. When you're riding in the car, turn off the radio and DVD player and talk to your child. When you're at a restaurant, put away your phone or tablet and talk to your child. When you're having down time at home, turn off the TV and talk to your child. See the theme? Your child needs to learn words, language, and communication styles from real people, not screens.

#### When to Move On:

You should be talking to your child every day and quite a bit at that. Try to limit any screen time and make sure you spend time just devoted to talking to your child.

#### Data Collection (Mark the days you spend a good amount of time talking to your child):

	Date:						
<b>Days I talked my child</b>							

## Promoting Language Development in Babies Tip #5:

### **Talk To Your Baby**



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- Talk to your baby all the time.
- Talk about what you're doing, where you're going, what your baby is doing, etc.
- Turn off the screens! Your baby needs face to face time, not face to screen time.
- Talk to your baby while driving in the car.
- Talk to your baby while eating at a restaurant.

## How to Get a Child to Respond to Sound/Voice

### Rationale:

One of the earliest pre-requisites for developing communication skills is for the baby to respond to sound and/or voice. For most children, this skill develops naturally and no formal training is required. However, children with severe disabilities may need someone to encourage them to respond to sounds and voices before they start doing it on their own.

### Age of Mastery:

By 6 months, a child should be able to turn his head toward a sound source. He should also be watching a speaker's face when someone is talking to him.

### Learning Steps:

1. Check Hearing
2. Help your Child Respond to Loud Sounds in his Line of Vision
3. Help your Child Respond to Loud Sounds Outside her Line of Vision
4. Help your Child Respond to Voices

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will direct his gaze toward a loud, close sound on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will turn his head toward the direction of a voice that is out of view on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Respond to Sound Step One:

### Check Hearing

#### Description:

One of the first things you need to do when your child isn't responding to sound is to have her hearing checked.

#### Activities:

This step is not one that you can do at home, you will need to take your child to a professional. Your child's pediatrician may be able to check her hearing in the office but if your child doesn't respond well, then they will probably refer you on to an audiologist for more formal testing. An audiologist is a medical provider who specializes in ears and hearing. If your child is not able to participate in a hearing test (by indicating when she hears the sound), they have special equipment that can monitor your child's brain-stem response to sounds to see if your child is registering those sounds. This is non-invasive and only involves placing electrode stickers on your child's skin. It is not harmful at all. In fact, your child won't even know that the test is going on aside from feeling the stickers on her skin and hearing some beeps in her ear. It is not painful at all. The audiologist may also want to take your child into a sound-proof booth and play sounds behind your child to see if she turns toward the sound. However, if you're reading this page then your child probably isn't responding to sounds in that way.

While you're waiting for your appointment to have your child's hearing tested, you can try a few informal tests at home that will provide the audiologist a little more information about how she's hearing at home. Try making a noise behind your child when she doesn't expect it and see if she responds. You can play a loud noise to see if she startles or play a quiet sound that represents something she loves to see if she looks around for it. For example, if your child loves a particular toy that makes noise, activate the toy behind your child's back when she can't see it. Or, if you typically warm your child's bottles in the microwave, face your child away from the microwave and then turn it on. When it beeps does your child start looking around for her bottle? Write down what you find and bring it to your appointment.

#### When to Move On:

If your child passes a hearing test with a doctor, you can move on to the next steps.

#### Data Collection:

Results of Hearing Test	Date:	Results:
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## Respond to Sound Step Two:

### Help Your Child Respond to Loud Sounds in His Line of Vision

#### Description:

If the audiologist finds that your child's hearing is normal, then his lack of response to sounds is based on the fact that he doesn't know he should be attending to that stimulus. In other words, he doesn't know that sound is important. You can teach him by rewarding his efforts to respond.

#### Activities:

Stand or sit where your child can see you. Make sure your child is awake and alert when you try this. Start making lots of noise. You can do this by clapping stomping, banging, shaking a rattle, talking loudly, etc. I also encourage you to call your child's name while you do this to promote his understanding of his name as well. Keep doing this until your child looks over at you. When he does, find a way to reward him. You will know best what reward your child responds to best. If your child responds to smiles, hugs, tickles, etc., go with that first. However, if your child doesn't enjoy that type of stimulation, try something more tangible like a favorite toy, a sip from the bottle, or a small piece of his favorite food. If your child doesn't look at you while you're making all this commotion, you can move yourself into his line of vision so that he accidentally looks at you. Then, reward him just as described. Wait a moment or two and move to a slightly different position that is still in your baby's line of sight. Then, start making all the commotion again. Once again, reward your baby for looking at you.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your baby looks toward your sound and commotion at least 80% of the time. This will probably take a while so be patient. I also recommend you practice this in shorter sessions more frequently. After you do this a few times in a row, the commotion will become more normal to your child and he will be less likely to respond to it.

#### Data Collection (Write if your child responded each time you made a commotion):

	Date:						
<b>Responds to sound and commotion in his line of vision</b>							

## Help Your Child Respond to Loud Sounds in His Line of Vision



1. Stand in front of your baby and make a lot of noise by clapping, banging, and calling your child's name.
2. Keep doing this until your child looks at you. When he does, reward him by talking to him, giving him hugs/tickles, etc.
3. If your child doesn't look at you, keep moving toward him as you make the noise until you step into his line of vision, then reinforce as in step two.
4. Wait a moment, then do this again in a slightly different position.

### Respond to Sound Step Three:

#### Help Your Child Respond to Loud Sounds Outside her Line of Vision

##### Description:

Now that your child is able to respond when you make a loud sound in her line of vision, we want her to start responding when she can't immediately see the source of the noise.

##### Activities:

You can start this activity just at the edge of your child's line of vision. Start in a position where she can probably just barely see you out of the corner of her eye. Make your noise and commotion and call her name just like you did in the last step. If she looks over, reward her just like the last step. If not, keep moving yourself farther into her line of vision until she does look at you and then reward her. Each time you do this and she is successful at looking at you, move slightly farther out of her line of vision. Once you are completely out of her line of vision, you will want to reward her when she turns her head to look for you. For example, if you are standing behind your baby and slightly to the right when you make your sound and she turns her head toward the right, immediately come around to the front of her again and reward her for turning. You can say things like "there's Mommy!" and "you found Mommy!" to reinforce her as well. Keep using the tangible rewards though if she needs them (like a toy, milk, or food). Make sure to practice this on both sides of your baby so she's not always turning toward the same side to find you.

##### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your baby looks toward your sound and commotion about 80% of the time. This one will also take some time so again, be patient. Just keep rewarding the behavior any time you see it.

##### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Responds to sound and commotion Outside her line of Vision</b>							

## Help Your Child Respond to Loud Sounds Slightly Outside Her Line of Vision



1. Stand to the side of your baby and make a lot of noise by clapping, banging, and calling your child's name.
2. Keep doing this until your child looks toward you. When she does, reward her by talking to her, giving her hugs/tickles, etc.
3. If your child doesn't look at you, keep moving in front of her as you make the noise until you step in front of where she's looking, then praise as before.
4. Wait a moment, then do this again on the other side.

## Respond to Sound Step Four: Help Your Child Respond to Voices

### Description:

Now that your child will respond when you make a big noise and commotion, we want your child to respond just as well to your voice.

### Activities:

Start off back in front of your child where he can see you. Call your child's name like you did before but this time don't clap, bang, or make any other noise, just use your voice. You can say things like "Look at Mommy", "Where's Mommy?", "Oh \_\_\_\_\_(child's name), where are you?". If your child looks at you, reward him just like in the other steps. If not, move into his line of vision until he accidentally looks at you and reward him again. Keep doing this until he is consistently looking toward your voice when you speak to him. Then, start moving farther and farther outside of his line of vision. Keep rewarding any time he turns toward your voice. You should also be rewarding him any time you see him turn toward your voice throughout the day. You don't have to be specifically working on it at the time.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to turn toward your voice and watch your face when you speak to him about 80% of the time, then he is able to respond to voices in an appropriate way. You won't need to keep working on this skill in such a direct manner but you should continue to keep giving him attention for looking at you.

### Data Collection (Take data on if he responds to your voice when you talk to him):

	Date:						
<b>Responds to voice in or Outside his line of Vision</b>							

## Help Your Child Respond to Voices



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1. Stand in front of or to the side of your child and start talking. You can say your child's name, say "Where's Mommy?", or anything else to get his attention.
2. Keep doing this until your child looks toward you. When he does, reward him by talking to him, giving him hugs/tickles, etc.
3. If your child doesn't look at you, keep moving closer to him as you continue to talk until you step in front of where he's looking, then praise as in step two.
4. Wait a moment, then do this again from a different position.

## How to Get a Child to Imitate Actions

### Rationale:

One very important aspect of teaching child new communication skills is having the child imitate what you say or do. However, some children have a very difficult time with imitation because they are not tuned in to what the other person is doing. This is especially true of children with autism but children without autism have trouble with this as well. If your child is not yet imitating words or speech, it may be easier to teach him to imitate actions first and then move to spoken language. Learning how to imitate actions may also make it easier for your child to learn how to follow directions and participate in familiar routines such as teeth-brushing and school routines.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be able to imitate simple actions of others by 1 year of age. By 2 years, they should be able to imitate an adult's behaviors in play.

### Learning Steps:

1. Assisted Imitation
2. Fading Prompts to Independent Imitation (1-step)
3. Imitating 2-Step Actions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will tolerate hand-over-hand assistance to imitate a simple action on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will imitate a simple action from an adult model with minimal adult cueing as necessary on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will independently imitate a simple action from an adult model on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will imitate a simple two-step action on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Imitate Actions Step One:

### Assisted Imitation

#### Description:

Since your child is not used to imitating actions yet, you will need to physically help her complete the action at first.

#### Activities:

Sit down at the table or on the floor with your child. Make sure you have something with you that your child will work for. This could be a favorite toy, a piece of favorite snack/drink, or just a hug and tickle if that is something your child loves. Choose one action that will you target for right now. Choose something simple like clapping hands. Then, say your child's name to get her attention and then say "Do this" and perform the action. Next, take your child's hands and help her perform the action as well. As soon as you do this, give her the reinforcement (the toy, food, or attention) and say "good do this!". I know that's a weird sentence to say but you need to reinforce her for responding to the command "do this". You can also say something like "Do this! You did it!" if that sounds better to you. Then, let her play with the reward (or eat it) for a moment before you take it away and start over. Do the same action again, help your child, and then reward her. Don't forget to give the command "do this" and then tell her afterwards why you're rewarding her ("you did this!").

#### When to Move On:

Your child may resist you moving her hands to complete the action at first, but as she sees that she will get her reward for doing it, she should become more tolerant of it. Just make sure that you're never forcing your child against her resistance so hard that you may hurt her. This skill is not worth hurting your child over! Keep doing this until your child will allow you to help her do the action about 80% of the time.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child allows you to move her hands):

	Date:						
<b>Tolerates assistance to imitate the action</b>							

## Assisted Imitation of Actions



### Assisted Imitation Steps:

1. Sit down with your child and something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. Choose an action from the list below and say “do this” and then do the action.
3. Take your child’s hands and help her do the action as well.
4. Reward her for doing the action by giving her the object she is working for (the toy or treat).
5. Wait for a moment, then take away the toy and do the same action again.

### Assisted Imitation Actions:

Choose one of these actions or use your own:

clapping hands

touching body parts (like nose, ears)

patting head

patting lap

standing up/sitting down

turning around

stomping feet

blowing with lips

### Imitate Actions Step Two:

#### Fading Prompts to Independent Imitation (1-Step)

##### Description:

Now that your child will allow you to help him imitate actions, we want to fade the amount of help that he needs.

##### Activities:

Sit down at the table or on the floor with your child just like in the last step. Make sure you have something with you that your child will work for and continue to target just that one action. Say your child's name, then say "Do this" and perform the action. Pause for a moment to see if he does the action on his own. If not, give the direction again and then gently tap or touch his hands or arms as a cue for him to move them. If that doesn't work, move his hands/arms toward the position to do the action and pause again. If he doesn't go ahead and finish the action, help him do it the rest of the way. Then reward him just as in the last step. If your child does more of the action on his own than he normally does, reward him with a more exaggerated response and more time with the toy or more of the food. If he needs you to help him do the whole thing, give him a little less. Follow this same pattern each time you ask your child "do this". Eventually, he should start to require fewer and fewer of these prompts and you shouldn't have to go all the way through the process each time.

##### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child is able to imitate the action without any additional prompts or cues about 80% of the time. Once he can do this, go back to step one and teach a different single action. Keep doing this until your child can imitate a wide variety of simple actions and you can switch up which action you do each time. For example, you can say "do this" and clap and the next time say "do this" and pat your head. When your child can imitate 80% of the actions you throw his way, you're ready to move on to the next step.

##### Data Collection (Mark if your child imitates the action on his own):

	Date:						
<b>Imitates 1-step actions with no prompts</b>							

## Independent Imitation of Actions



### Independent Imitation Steps:

1. Sit down with your child and have something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. Choose an action from the list below and say “do this” and then do the action.
3. Pause for a moment to see if he will imitate the action. If he does, go on to step 4. If not, help him imitate the action (by moving his hands) and then reward him but don’t give him as much of the treat or as long with the object as you would have if he had done it by himself. Move on to step 5.
4. Reward him for doing the action by giving him the object he is working for (the toy or treat).
5. Wait for a moment, then take away the toy and do the same action again. Keep doing this until your child can do the action 80% of the time. Then choose a new action to teach.

### Independent Imitation Actions (or use your own!):

clapping hands

touching body parts (like nose, ears)

patting head

patting lap

standing up/sitting down

turning around

stomping feet

blowing with lips

### Imitate Actions Step Three: Imitating 2-Step Actions

#### Description:

Now that your child can imitate many different single actions, let's try putting them together.

#### Activities:

Sit down with your child and set up the activity the same way that you have been doing. This time, say "do this" and complete two actions. For example, you may clap your hands and then pat your head. See if your child can complete both actions on her own. If not, step back to the kind of prompting you used to teach her one-step directions. You may have to start all the way back at physically helping her complete both actions and then move to fading your prompts so you're only giving her a little bit of help. Keep doing the process with the same method you used for teaching her one-step directions.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child is able to imitate two-step actions without any additional prompts or cues about 80% of the time. You should start with one set of actions and master that one before trying to teach her another. Once she is able to imitate two-step actions, try getting her to imitate a single action followed by a spoken sound or word. Or, try pairing sounds with the actions you're teaching him. For example, you could have your child imitate clapping hands and then point to her mouth and say "buh". Some children may just not be ready to imitate speech sounds yet but it's worth a try. If your child isn't able to do it, don't stress. But if she can, keep working on imitating various sounds in this way.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child can imitate a two-step direction):

	Date:						
<b>Imitates 2-step actions with no prompts</b>							

---

## Imitation of 2-step Actions



### 2-Step Imitation Steps:

1. Sit down with your child and something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. Choose two actions from the list below and say “do this” and then do both of the actions. \*If you choose an action that requires your child to make a sound with her mouth, do that one second.
3. Pause for a moment to see if she will imitate the actions. If he does, go on to step 4. If not, help her imitate both actions and then reward her but don’t give her as much of the treat or as long with the object as you would have if she had done it by herself. Move on to step 5.
4. Reward her for doing the actions by giving her the object she is working for (the toy or treat).
5. Wait for a moment, then take away the toy and do the same two actions again. Keep doing this until your child can imitate the actions 80% of the time. Then choose a new set of actions to teach.

### Independent Imitation Actions (or use your own!):

clapping hands

touching body parts (like nose, ears)

patting head

patting lap

saying a sound

making raspberry sound with lips

clicking tongue

saying a word

## How to Get a Child to Respond to His Name

### Rationale:

Children with significant social delays often don't respond to their name when called. This makes it difficult for adults to get their attention or call them away from what they're doing. It also makes it difficult for them to participate in social interactions with peers as they may not be aware that someone else is talking to them.

### Age of Mastery:

Children typically begin to respond to their name by 1 year of age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Respond in an Isolated Setting
2. Respond in a Structured Setting
3. Respond in an Unstructured Setting

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will respond to his name being called by looking at the speaker on 80% of recorded opportunities in a structured therapy setting on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will respond to his name being called by looking at the speaker on 80% of recorded opportunities in a one-on-one structured interaction in a classroom on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will respond to his name being called by looking at the speaker on 80% of recorded opportunities in an unstructured classroom setting on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Respond to Name Step One: Respond in an Isolated Setting

### Description:

The first thing we must do is teach your child to respond to her name when there are very few distractions. For this you will need to go to an area with few distractions for your child. This may be at the kitchen table or in a room that doesn't have many toys or fun things going on.

### Activities:

Sit down with your child in an isolated environment. Make sure you have something to reward your child with, such as a favorite toy, favorite food, or a hug and a tickle if your child likes that. Wait until your child is looking away from you and say her name. If she looks at you, reward her with whatever you've chosen. If she doesn't look at you, say her name again louder and make some sort of motion like waving or tapping the table. Keep doing this until she looks over at you. Reward her with what you've chosen. Each time you reward her, make sure you tell her what you're rewarding her for. Say "you heard your name, good looking!". Keep doing this and make sure you try just saying her name first and then only resort to waving or tapping if she doesn't respond.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will look at you when you say her name about 80% of the time in this isolated setting (few distractions). At that point, you will be ready to move on to the next step. Keep in mind that shorter, more frequent sessions work best to work on this skill as she may quickly tire of looking at you every time she hears her name.

### Data Collection (Mark if she looks at you when you say her name):

	Date:						
<b>Looks at speaker when name is called in isolated setting.</b>							

## Responding to Name in Isolated Setting



Photo Courtesy of Stuart Miles - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

### Responding to Name in Isolated Setting Steps:

1. Sit down in an isolated environment (few distractions) with your child and something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. When your child isn't looking at you, say her name.
3. If your child looks at you when you say her name, reward her with whatever she is working for while telling her "good looking!". If she doesn't look at you, keep saying her name louder and louder and start waving your arms until she looks at you. Then, reward her for looking.
4. Keep doing this and each time she should require less and less waving and commotion before she looks at you. Do this until she looks at you about 80% of the time when you say her name in this isolated environment.

## Respond to Name Step Two: Respond in a Structured Setting

### Description:

Now that your child can respond to his name with no distractions around, we want to increase the amount of distractions slightly and see how he does.

### Activities:

The next time you are ready to work on this skill, sit down with your child in a location that has more distractions than the last one. Go into his room where there are more toys or in the living room where there is a TV. Do the same activity from the last step where you say his name and reward him if he looks at you. If he doesn't look at you, say his name again louder and make some sort of commotion that will catch his attention. Then, reward him when he does look at you. This may be harder for him now that there are more distractions. Make sure that you give him a moment to play between each time you try this. You want to make sure that he is focused on something else when you call his name so that he is actually practicing bringing himself out of what he's doing instead of simply continuing to look at you once his focus is already on you.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will look at you when you say his name about 80% of the time. By the time you're ready to move on, you shouldn't need to wave and cause a commotion to catch your child's attention. He should be able to respond to just his name.

### Data Collection (Mark if he looks at you when you say his name):

	Date:						
<b>Looks at speaker when name is called in a structured setting with more distrac-</b>							

## Responding to Name in Structured Setting



Photo Courtesy of Stuart Miles - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

### Responding to Name in Structured Setting Steps:

1. Sit down in an structured environment (some distractions present but still sitting down to work instead of during free play) with your child and something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. When your child isn't looking at you, say his name.
3. If your child looks at you when you say his name, reward him with whatever he is working for while telling him "good looking!". If he doesn't look at you, keep saying his name louder and louder and start waving your arms until he looks at you. Then, reward him for looking.
4. Keep doing this and each time he should require less and less waving and commotion before he looks at you. Do this until he looks at you about 80% of the time when you say his name in this structured environment.

## Respond to Name Step Three: Respond in an Unstructured Setting

### Description:

Once your child can respond to her name when she's sitting down to work on it, we want to increase her ability to respond to her name at any time.

### Activities:

Wait until your child is busy doing something, such as playing with a toy or looking at a book. Stand relatively close to your child and say her name. Pause for a moment to see if she looks at you. If she does, go ahead and reward her just like you did in the last steps. Make sure you tell her "good looking" so she knows why she's being rewarded. If she doesn't look at you, keep getting louder and more obnoxious until she does look at you. Go ahead and reward her for looking when she does. Keep doing this until you are able to back off of how loud and obnoxious you make it. Eventually we want her to respond to just her name without needing you to catch her attention first. Keep in mind that we're not expecting perfection and even children without language problems don't respond to their names every time it is called. As your child gets better at this, start calling her name from farther and farther away. Eventually, your child should be able to respond even if you say her name from another room. You will need to increase your volume though for that one.

### When to Move On:

When your child will respond to her name about 80% of the time, you can consider that she has mastered this skill. Remember, we're not expecting perfection!

### Data Collection (Mark if she looks at you when her name is called while she's playing):

	Date:						
<b>Looks at speaker when name is called in a unstructured setting (like play)</b>							

## Responding to Name in Unstructured Setting



Photo Courtesy of Stuart Miles - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

### Responding to Name in Unstructured Setting Steps:

1. Go to wherever your child is playing on her own and bring something that your child loves and is willing to work for, like a favorite toy or treat.
2. When your child isn't looking at you, say her name.
3. If your child looks at you when you say her name, reward her with whatever she is working for while telling her "good looking!". If she doesn't look at you, keep saying her name louder and louder and start waving your arms until she looks at you. Then, reward her for looking.
4. Keep doing this and each time she should require less and less waving and commotion before she looks at you. Do this until she looks at you about 80% of the time when you say her name during play.

# Vocabulary Guides

## How to Teach a Child a New Word

### Rationale:

Children with language delays often have trouble learning new words. Other children may pick up a new word after only hearing it a few times (or one time from Grandpa if it's a curse word!). For children with language delays, they may need to hear a word many, many times before they start to remember and use it. You can speed this process along by using the following process to teach your child a new word.

### Age of Mastery:

By 18 months, we would expect a child to be able to say about 50 different single words. By 2 years of age, they should have 200-300 words in their vocabulary and should be combining some words together to make two-word sentences. A 3-year-old should have around 1,000 words in his vocabulary. A 5-year-old should have 2,200-2,500 words in his vocabulary. If your child falls significantly short of these marks, you may want to try to specifically teach your child new words using this procedure.

### Learning Steps:

1. Choose a Word
2. Increase Understanding of the Word
3. Use the Word

### Sample IEP Goals:

\*\* One way to improve goal writing for teaching new words is to create a pre-test and post-test list to quiz from. Create a list of 20-30 words (or more) and show the child pictures of those words. Write down how many of the words the child knows. Then, write a goal that the child will increase their knowledge to X number of those words. Set a reasonable goal based on how quickly that child learns new words. You can also attach the word list to the IEP so the receiving SLP will have it if he moves to a new school. You can also choose words that are from the grade-level curriculum that he will need for his classes anyway.

- By <Date>, Child will increase his ability to receptively identify words from the attached list from 4 words to at least 20 words on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase his ability to expressively label words from the attached list from 4 words to at least 20 words on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Teach A Word Step One:

### Choose A Word

#### Description:

It is important when teaching your child new words that you focus on one word at a time. This will help your child learn the word faster and allow you to teach her more words in a shorter amount of time. This section will show you how to choose a word for your child to learn.

#### Activities:

There are a few different ways to go about choosing a new word for your child:

**Younger Children:** When trying to decide what word to teach your child, think about something that she sees frequently in her daily routine or something that you say a lot when speaking to your child. For example, if you're always telling your child to get her shoes or to go get a book, you could pick "shoe" or "book" as a target word for your child. You could choose favorite toys or foods that your child may want to request. You should also make sure that your child has a wide variety of words in her vocabulary. For example, if she only knows the names of objects, then she won't be able to use any verbs or social words like "hi" and "bye". On the following page is a list of common first words from a variety of categories so you can see which areas your child is missing words from and choose one of those words.

**Older Children:** For older kids, you will want to choose words that are going to be useful for them in every day life or at school. Ask your child to tell you if you use a word that she doesn't know so you can make a list. Or, get out your child's school work and see which words in her homework she doesn't understand. If her class is in the middle of a unit about a certain topic, see what vocabulary words from that unit she's having trouble with.

#### When to Move On:

When you have some ideas of words to start with, write them in the box below. Then choose one and move on to the next step.

#### Data Collection:

<b>Words to Target:</b>	
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Here is a list of common first words in children's vocabularies. You can use this list to choose a word that may be appropriate to teach your child next. Try to choose a word from a category that your child doesn't use many words from. This will expand her vocabulary more than choosing a noun when she already has a lot of nouns. We typically see that 65% of a child's vocabulary is made up of nouns and the rest come from all of these different categories. This is not a comprehensive list of words every child should know and it is not necessary to teach your child every one of these words. These are simply ideas of words that can be useful to young children learning to talk. Please use this list as a reference and select words that are meaningful to your child.

<b>Non-existence:</b>	Little	Chair
No	Dirty	<i>Bathroom</i>
	Clean	Potty/Toilet
	Wet	Sink
	Dry	Bathtub
<b>Rejection/Cessation:</b>		<i>Vehicles</i>
Stop		Car
All done		Bike
		Truck
<b>Disappearance:</b>		<i>Kitchen</i>
All gone	Mine/My	Cup
Away	Your/Yours	Spoon
		Bowl
<b>Recurrence:</b>		<i>People</i>
More	Here	Boy
Again	There	Girl
	On	Baby
	In	<i>Toys</i>
<b>Demonstrative:</b>		Ball
This/that		Bubbles
		Block
<b>Action:</b>		<i>School</i>
Go	Dog	Slide
Up	Cat	Marker
Down	Bird	Glue
Eat	<i>Clothes</i>	
Throw	Shoe	
Sit	Shirt	
Open	Pants	
Get		<i>Food</i>
Put		Cookie
Help		Cracker
		Apple
<b>Attribute:</b>		<i>Household Items</i>
Big	Bed	
	Table	

## Teach A Word Step Two:

### Increase Understanding of the Word

#### Description:

Before you can expect your child to tell you what that thing is called, you must first work on making sure he understands the word when you say it.

#### Activities:

**Younger Children:** The best way to increase your child's understanding of the word is to model it and have him point it out when he sees it. Try these activities with your younger child:

- Point out the object whenever you see it. You can say "Oh here's a book! Book." Make sure you say the word by itself many times (instead of always saying the word in a sentence like "Oh here's a book")
- Put two objects in front of your child (one being the target word) and ask your child "Where's the \_\_\_\_\_. Reward your child with praise and/or a toy or food he likes when he finds the right one. Once he gets better at that, start adding more objects in front of him. Try the same activity with three or four objects in front of him.
- Find pictures of the object in books or online (google image search) and have your child point to the object when you name it.

**Older Children:** Have your child look up the word and write down a definition of the word. You can use the word webs included in this book (Pg 92) to help expand your child's knowledge of that word. You can also provide your child with examples of how to use that word in a sentence. See if he can find it in books or readings online (supervise to make sure he stays on trustworthy sites!)

#### When to Move On:

When your younger child is able to point to a picture that represents that word on command about 80% of the time or your older child can complete a word web or definition for the word, you're ready to move on.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child can point to or define the word):

	Date:						
<b>Point to or define the word</b>							

## Increase Understanding of a Word



Photo Courtesy of Phaitoon - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

We Are Learning a New Word! The word is:

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Here are some ways you can increase understanding:

1. Point out the word whenever you see it or hear it. For example, if it's an object, you can point it out when you see that object ("Look, here's a book! Book."). If it's an action, point it out whenever you see that action being performed. If it's another type of word, point it out when you or someone else says it.
2. Put two things or pictures in front of your child and have him point to the one that represents the target word. You could say "where's the book?" or "who is jumping?".
3. Find pictures that represent the word in books or online.
4. Say the word to your child over and over again. Use it in as many different ways as possible. The more your child hears this word, the more quickly he'll learn it!

## Teach A Word Step Three:

### Using the Word

#### Description:

Now that your child understands the word better, it's time for your child to use the word.

#### Activities:

**Younger Children:** For younger children, we want them to be able to say the word out loud when you show them a picture of the word. Try these activities to get your child to say it:

- Have your child imitate the word after you say it. Show your child the object and tell her “say \_\_\_\_”. When your child imitates the word back to you, reward her with praise and/or a toy or food she likes. If your child isn't speaking yet, help her make the sign language hand-sign for the word.
- When you see the object or a picture of the object, ask your child “what's this?”. Wait for a minute to see if she will come up with the answer. If not, say the word for your child and have her say it back to you.
- If the word you chose is something that your child really likes, try putting the object out of your child's reach and don't give it to her until she asks for it by name. If she is reaching but not saying the word, try to give her a little prompt to get her started. You could say the first sound or two of the word and see if she can remember the rest, or just move your mouth like you're going to say the word but don't let any sound come out. For example, if your child wants “bubbles”, you could put your lips together like you are going to say the “b” sound but don't really say it. Then, if your child still doesn't say it, try just saying “buh” and see if she can say the rest of the word.

**Older Children:** Have your child write a paragraph using the word several times. You could also have your child make up sentences that she says out loud using the word.

#### When to Move On:

When your child can use the word correctly about 80% of the time, you're ready to pick a new word!

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child uses the word correctly, says it, or writes it correctly):

	Date:						
<b>Use the word correctly</b>							

## Help Your Child Say a Word



Photo Courtesy of arztsamui - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

We Are Learning a New Word! The word is:

---

Here are some ways you can help your child say it:

1. Have your child repeat the word after you while looking at something that represents the word, like an object, picture, etc.
2. When you see something that represents that word, like a picture or object, ask your child “what’s that?”. Pause and give her time to answer and then help her if she needs help.
3. Try putting something out of reach that would cause your child to use the word to ask for it. For example, if she likes books and the word is “book”, place all of the books out of reach so she has to say “book” to request it.
4. Provide opportunities for her to use the word throughout her day. If she doesn’t use it, say it for her to repeat. For example, if the word is “again”, do some silly actions and ask her if she wants you to do it again. Then, have her repeat the word “again”.

## How to Jump Start a Late Talker

### Rationale:

Typically we consider children to be “late talkers” when they use fewer than 10 words by 18 months of age or fewer than 80 words at 2 years, though there is no hard and fast rule about this. Some children with delayed speech and language skills will grow out of it; others will require speech/language therapy to help them along. There’s no way to tell which route your child will take, but if you are concerned, there are many things you can do at home to help your child along. Here are some brief descriptions of some of those things. I recommend trying one strategy for at least a week before introducing the next one. You don’t need to do each strategy all of the time, just choose a few times per day or week that you will practice it. In the meantime, don’t hesitate to go get help or advice from a speech-language pathologist. Many therapists have long waiting lists so it’s best to at least call and get on the list now.

### Age of Mastery:

Typically, we begin to hear a child’s first word around one year of age. However, some children say their first word much later than that and still end up communicating just fine. By 18 months, we would expect a child to be able to say about 50 different single words. By 2 years of age, they should have 200-300 words in their vocabulary and should be combining some words together to make two-word sentences.

### Learning Steps:

1. Self Talk
2. Use Sign Language (see the next guide for how to use sign language)
3. Parallel Talk
4. Expansion
5. Receptive Vocabulary Building

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will increase his expressive vocabulary from \_\_\_ words to \_\_\_ words as measured by report of words used from parents, teachers, and therapists.

\*\* For this one, ask parents and teachers what words he says regularly and choose a reasonable number of words to increase it to.

- By <Date>, Child will point to 20 common objects in pictures and books upon request (“show me the \_\_\_”) on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Late Talker Step One: Self Talk

### Description:

The first thing you can do to start helping your late talker is something called “Self Talk”. This is essentially talking about what you’re doing. You’re going to feel like you’re just talking to yourself but I promise it will help!

### Activities:

When you are around your child, talk about what you are doing. Describe what you are holding, the actions you are performing, what you see, how you feel, and what you hear, smell, or taste. Talk about all of this! Your child will learn from hearing you talk about all of those things. The key here is to keep your utterances short. As a general rule of thumb, you should speak in phrases that are the same length as your child’s typical phrases or slightly longer. For example, if your child isn’t talking yet or is only using one word at a time, you should be speaking in one-word utterances and two-word phrases, like “Ball. Throw. Throw ball. Ball”. If your child is using mostly single words but is beginning to put a few two-word phrases together, use a lot of two-word phrases when you speak to your child but also throw in some three-word utterances as well as a few one-word utterances. Don’t be afraid to repeat those same words many times. These children learn through repetition!

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this activity around your child until you feel like you’re pretty good at it. Some of the other strategies build upon this one so make sure you feel comfortable self-talking before moving on. Move on whenever you think you’re ready, but I recommend at least a week of doing this when you can (not all the time, just whenever you have time and think about it) before moving on to the next strategy.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Write here the days you did self-talk around your child</b>							

## How to Self-Talk to Help Your Late Talker



Photo Courtesy of David Castillo Dominici - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

**Using self-talk can help your late talker. Here's how to do it:**

1. Talk about what you are doing while you are doing it. Describe what you're holding, what actions you're doing, what you hear, smell, taste, etc. Talk about everything.
2. Keep it short! You shouldn't be using big long sentences with your late talker. Try using utterances that are the same length or one word longer than the utterances your child usually says. This is probably just 1-2 words at a time. You could say "Mommy eat" or "eat banana" instead of "Look, my darling child, Mommy is eating a banana!".
3. Repetition is key! Keep repeating common words and phrases over and over again for your child. The more she hears it, the more likely she will be to pick it up.

## Late Talker Step Two: Use Sign Language

### Description:

In this strategy, you will continue to use the self-talk described above but you will pair your spoken word with a sign language sign. Researchers have found that sign language serves as a great tool to get kids talking (or talking more), especially late talkers. Once they learn the power of communication through signing, they soon abandon signs for spoken language, as that will always be a more effective way to communicate for them unless there are physical problems holding them back from speaking.

### Activities:

Learn some sign language that you can use when you're doing your self talk. You don't need to sign every word you say, but try to sign the ones that are meaningful to your child. Keep in mind that at this point, we're not expecting your child to be using these signs if he doesn't want to. It's just an added bonus if he does. Also, if he uses a sign, respond to it as if he had just said the word out loud. Go ahead and give him what he asked for or respond to what he said. The next guide in this book is dedicated to using sign language with late talkers so check out that section for some good tips on this. For now, just pick a few signs that are words you think your child would appreciate being able to communicate, possibly some favorite foods or toys.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this activity around your child until you feel like you're pretty good at it. Some of the other strategies build upon this one so make sure you feel comfortable using some signs before moving on. Move on whenever you think you're ready, but I recommend at least a week of doing this when you can (not all the time) before moving on to the next strategy.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Write here which signs you did in front of your child</b>							

## Late Talker Step Three:

### Parallel Talk

#### Description:

This strategy is very much like the “Self-Talk” strategy but instead of talking about what you are doing, you will be talking about what your child is doing.

#### Activities:

While allowing your child to lead the play (she picks what you do), label the objects your child is using, the actions she is doing, how she's feeling, what she hears, etc. Be sure that you're continuing to use sentences that are right at or slightly above the length of sentences that your child is typically using, even if that's only one or two words long. If you've learned some signs that you can use, sign the words as you say them. If your child is noticing your efforts and is enjoying having you narrate her play, you can also try to switch it up and see if she notices. For example, let's say your child is making her doll go up the ladder and down the slide over and over again. You're saying “up”, “down”, “up”, “down” every time the doll goes up or down and your child is loving it! The next time the doll goes up, don't say anything at all. Just look at her expectantly. Wait for a little to see if she'll say it on her own. If not, go ahead and say it for her again. You could also try saying the wrong word and see if she notices.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this activity around your child until you feel like you're pretty good at it. Make sure you feel comfortable parallel talking before moving on. Move on whenever you think you're ready, but I recommend at least a week of doing this when you can (not all the time) before moving on to the next strategy.

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Write here which days you did parallel talk with your child</b>							

---

## How to use Parallel Talk to Help Your Late Talker



Photo Courtesy of David Castillo Dominici - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

**Using parallel-talk can help your late talker. Here's how to do it:**

1. While allowing your child to lead the play, talk about what she's doing. Label things she's holding, actions she's doing, talk about things she may feel, see, hear, etc.
2. Keep it short! You shouldn't be using big long sentences with your late talker. Try using utterances that are the same length or one word longer than the utterances your child usually says. This is probably just 1-2 words at a time. You could say "Sally eat" or "eat banana" instead of "Sally is eating a banana!".
3. Repetition is key! Keep repeating common words and phrases over and over again for your child. The more she hears it, the more likely she will be to pick it up.
4. Try violating her expectations sometimes by saying the wrong word or by breaking a pattern in what you've been saying ("up, down, up, down, fish"). See if she notices the difference.

## Late Talker Step Four: Expansion

### Description:

In this strategy, you will build on your child's speech or gestures. This will help provide him with the language for what he is trying to communicate to you or someone else.

### Activities:

If your child is talking, repeat whatever your child says but add one word onto it. If your child says "ball", you could say "want ball", "my ball", "yellow ball", "throw ball", or anything else that contains the word ball with one other word. You could even use two or three different examples in a row if you're not sure what he was trying to communicate to you. If your child is not saying anything yet, you can build on his gestures. Whenever he points at something or makes a gesture to try to communicate something, say the word that goes along with that gesture. You can name the thing he's pointing at or reaching for, label the emotion he's feeling, or anything else you feel like your child is trying to communicate. Basically, you are going to try to guess what your child wants to communicate and say it for him. He doesn't need to repeat your expansions back to you at this point. Right now we just want to provide him a lot of models of great language that he can use himself some day. Children need to hear things many, many times before they are able to use them. For children with language delays, this can take even longer. Just keep modeling and eventually he'll start joining in on his own, without you forcing him or it becoming a battle.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this activity around your child until you feel like you're pretty good at it. Make sure you feel comfortable expanding on his communication before moving on. Move on whenever you think you're ready, but I recommend at least a week of doing this when you can (not all the time) before moving on to the next strategy.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Write here which days you expanded for your child</b>							

## How to use Expansion to Help Your Late Talker



Photo Courtesy of David Castillo Dominici - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

**Using expansions can help your late talker. Here's how to do it:**

1. If your child says something, repeat it back to him but add one word onto the utterance. For example, if he says "cookie" you could say "eat cookie" or "my cookie" or "cookie all-gone". Try to guess what he may be wanting to say.
2. If your child makes a gesture for something but doesn't actually say the word, say the word for him. For example, if he's pointing at something, you could say what that thing is called or say "more" or "want". Try to guess what he may be wanting to say.
3. Repetition is key! Keep repeating common words and phrases over and over again for your child. The more he hears it, the more likely he will be to pick it up.
4. Your child doesn't need to repeat anything yet. Just provide him that model and let him hear those words over and over again.

## Late Talker Step Five: Receptive Vocabulary Building

### Description:

In this strategy, you will work to increase your child's receptive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary includes all of the words your child understands when you say them, even if she's not saying them herself yet. Children must first understand words before they can use them.

### Activities:

You can increase your child's receptive vocabulary by having her point to pictures, objects, or people when you label them for her. For example, you can say "where's Daddy?" and help her point or look towards Daddy. This is a great skill to work on while reading books. You can ask your child to point to an object in the book by saying "where's the \_\_\_", "show me the \_\_\_" or "point to the \_\_\_". Give your child a bit of wait time, and if she can't find it, then you can point it out for her and help her point to it as well. Keep doing this and soon your child will begin to understand more words. Once again, you are not yet expecting your child to say these words, just to expand her understanding of them.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this activity with your child until she can point to common pictures when you ask about 80% of the time. If you have been doing all of these strategies and are now using them periodically throughout the week, you should see improvements in your late talker's communication skills. If you've been doing this for several weeks now and you're *not* seeing improvements, it's most definitely time to talk to a speech-language pathologist. There may be more going on than you will be able to address at home for the time being. Seek help from your local school district or seek out speech and language therapy centers near your home. In the meantime, keep doing these strategies, they can't hurt and they may be helping to expand her understanding, even if you haven't heard any great improvements in speech yet.

### Data Collection (Mark if she can point to the object/person/action that you name):

	Date:						
<b>Point to common objects in pictures</b>							

---

# How to Build Receptive Vocabulary to Help Your Late Talker



Photo Courtesy of David Castillo Jomphong- FreeDigitalPhotos.net

**Building receptive vocabulary can help your late talker. Here's how to do it:**

- 1. Have your child point to pictures in books of common objects, actions, and people/characters. Say “where’s the \_\_\_?” and have your child point to that picture. You can help her move her finger to point to the correct one if you need to.**
- 2. Have her locate certain places or objects around the house or out in the community. On the playground, you could say things like “go find the slide” or “where are the swings?”. Then, help her find those objects. When you find them, label them again by saying what they are called, like “swing!” or “slide!”.**
- 3. Help your child choose what she wants from two pictures. Show her two pictures of choices and ask her which one she wants. Have her point to the one she wants. You could do this with favorite foods, toys, or anything else that she really wants.**

## How to Use Sign Language With a Late Talker (Pg 1 of 2)

### Rationale:

There is much confusion in the world of parenting about using “Baby Sign” with your child. Research has shown that using sign language with young children is beneficial to all children, whether they have speech and language delays or not. Let me first discuss why it’s a good idea, and then I will go into how to do it.

### The Research:

- According to a research review by [Millar and Light](#), the current research provides evidence that using alternative communication means (such as sign language) does not prevent children with developmental disabilities from talking and may actually support their ability to speak.
- Millar and Light also found that using alternative communication (such as sign language) can help older children learn to communicate as well as younger children.
- A Study by [Capirci, Cattani, et. al.](#) found that learning sign language could actually improve cognition (intelligence) in typically-developing, hearing children.

### What The Research Means:

This means that using sign language with your child will help him develop his language skills and it will not prevent him from speaking. When children use sign language, they are able to develop their language systems even before they are able to speak. This actually gives them a head start on communicating until their mouth and speech system can catch up. This means that typical children as young as 9 months can begin communicating and learning language, a whole three months before children who must rely on their ability to speak to communicate (typically begins at 12 months). As for children with speech and language delays, using sign language will allow them to begin communicating before they are able to speak as well. For some children, this is the push they need to begin speaking. This is often true for children with autism. Once these children learn the power of communication (through the use of signs), they often are more motivated to communicate through speech since they now realize what will happen when they communicate.

### Age of Mastery:

Typically, we begin to hear a child’s first word around one year of age. However, some children say their first word much later than that and still end up communicating just fine. By 18 months, we would expect a child to be able to say about 50 different single words. By 2 years of age, he should have 200-300 words in his vocabulary and should be combining some words together to make two-word sentences.

**Continued on Next Page...**

## How to Use Sign Language With a Late Talker (Pg 2 of 2)

### Learning Steps:

1. Choose the Signs
2. Learn the Signs
3. Use the Signs
4. Help your Child Make the Signs

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will tolerate hand-over-hand assistance to form a sign on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase his expressive vocabulary to 5 signs or spoken words as reported by parents and teachers as signs/words that the child uses consistently.
- By <Date>, Child will imitate 10 signs during a 5-minute activity on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will spontaneously use signs or spoken words to request a desired object or action 5 times during a 5-minute activity on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will make requests using signs or spoken words (instead of crying, reaching, grabbing, or grunting) on 60% of observed opportunities in the therapy setting on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use signs or spoken words to respond to a social greeting or farewell on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use signs or spoken words to protest (instead of crying, pushing away, or throwing) on 60% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

\*\*\* There are tons of other ways to write goals about using sign language. Just think of any language skill you would want that child to do if speaking and add signs in. For that matter, you can also use this method to write goals for using any type of Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) such as PECS or a communication device. Just think about the language skill you want that child to work on and write the goal with the desired AAC as an option. I always like to include spoken speech as well in case the child starts communicating verbally during that time period. That is always our ultimate goal.

## Sign Language Step One

### Choose the Signs

#### Description:

The first thing you need to do is decide which signs you will learn to use first. Here are some ideas of how to choose them.

#### Activities:

Choose signs to use when you talk to your child. You don't have to sign every word you speak, I suggest you choose a selection of words that you want to learn and just sign those when they come up in conversation. Choose words that will be meaningful to your child, such as things that you think she may want to communicate. I suggest selecting words that are common first words in typically-developing children as well. These will be easier for your child to learn. Here is my list of suggested first words to sign for your child, though feel free to switch out different words if you feel like there are other things your child would be highly motivated by:

Nouns: dog, cat, bird, shoe, shirt, pants, cookie, cracker, apple, bed, table, chair, potty, sink, bathtub, car, bike, truck, cup, spoon, bowl, boy, girl, baby, ball, bubble, block, slide, marker, glue

Social Words: no, stop, all done, all gone, away, more, again, this, that, my, your

Action Words: go, up, down, eat, throw, sit, open, get, put, help

Descriptors: big, little, dirty, clean, wet, dry, here, there, on, in

#### When to Move On:

I suggest choosing about 20 words to start with and making sure that you have words from different categories (so not all nouns). Once you've chosen those 20 words, move on to step 2.

#### Data Collection:

<b>Words I Will Target:</b>	
-----------------------------	--

## Sign Language Step Two

### Learn the Signs

#### Description:

It's time to learn the signs for the words you selected. Take some time to teach them to yourself and practice them. You can also teach them to other family members and caregivers to that everyone can be on the same page with this.

#### Activities:

One way to do this is to use the sign language pictures included on the next 10 pages. There are also many online resources for learning sign language. One of my favorites is an online dictionary at [www.ASLPro.com](http://www.ASLPro.com). This website has a great library of signs to learn. I recommend using the signs from the American Sign Language so that your child is exposed to a real language, even if you're not planning on teaching your child the whole language. It's ok to modify these signs slightly if your child is having trouble doing them, though. Many children with physical limitations will need the signs to be modified. In fact, that's how "baby sign" was created. Most of the "baby signs" are real ASL signs that were adapted to make them easier for babies. You can buy books and DVDs of baby signs to help you and your child learn if this is something that interests you.

#### When to Move On:

When you feel comfortable signing the 20 signs you chose, you're ready to move on to step 3.

Sign Language Pictures Page 1



all done



again



away



all gone



little



big

Sign Language Pictures Page 2



clean



dirty



eat



down



go



get



Sign Language Pictures Page 3



in



help



my



more



no



your

Sign Language Pictures Page 4



open



on



sit



put



throw



stop



Sign Language Pictures Page 5



there



this



wet



up



cat



dry

Sign Language Pictures Page 6



bird



dog



toilet



sink



shirt



bathtub

Sign Language Pictures Page 7



shoes



pants



cup



bowl



cracker



spoon

Sign Language Pictures Page 8



apple



cookie



table



bed



boy



chair

Sign Language Pictures Page 9



baby



girl



glue



slide



block



marker



Sign Language Pictures Page 10



bubbles



ball



airplane



car



bike

## Sign Language Step Three

### Use the Signs

#### Description:

Next you will want to start using the signs in front of your child. This will serve to demonstrate the signs for him so he starts to learn them.

#### Activities:

Take a look at the guides for “Self Talk” (Pg 66) and “Parallel Talk” (Pg 69) to get some ideas for how to talk to your child with a language delay. While you’re doing this, you can start using some signs. You don’t need to sign every word you speak, just sign the ones you have learned. You can sign these words by themselves when you’re showing the object or action to your child, or you can sign them when you say the word in a sentence. I recommend you do some of both. You’ll want to demonstrate in this way for a while before you expect your child to sign back. If you’re doing this with a baby, you can begin signing to him as soon as he’s born, just like you talk to him. The sooner you start, the quicker he will learn.

#### When to Move On:

I recommend that you stay on this step for at least two weeks or longer if you don’t sign to your child very often. Keep in mind that typically, children hear a word many, many times before they start to use it on their own. For some words, they probably hear them thousands of times before using them! You don’t have to sign things thousands of times but you should definitely make sure your child has had plenty of opportunities to see the sign before expecting him to use it. Once you’ve been signing for about two weeks, you can move on to the next step, but be patient if it takes your child a while to catch on. For infants, don’t move on to the next step until he is at least 10 months old if there are no concerns with motor, or later if there are.

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Days I Signed to my Child</b>							
<b>Date:</b>	Date:						

---

## Sign Language Step Four

### Help Your Child Use the Signs

#### Description:

Once you've been signing to your child for a while, you can start helping her sign back to you. I recommend you don't try doing this until your child is at least 10 months old. That's when her motor skills will probably be good enough to form the signs. If your child has known motor delays, wait a little longer to expect your child to start signing.

#### Activities:

When you are offering something to your child, hold it up to show your child but don't give it to her yet. Ask her what he wants and pause for a minute to see if she will say or sign it first. If not, show her the sign and say the word out loud. Pause again and see if she imitates you. If not, take her hands and help her make the sign. Then, immediately reward her by giving her the object or action just as if she had said it out loud by herself. Keep doing this whenever your child wants something that you have been practicing signing to her. Each time, pause at the places mentioned above. Eventually, she should start doing parts of this on his own and you shouldn't need to go through the whole cuing process each time. If your child is relying on you to help her make the sign, you can try to use smaller physical cues to help her. For example, if you normally hold your child's hands to make the sign, try holding just her elbows and moving her arms into position and see if she will do the hand part of it herself. Then, eventually you could fade back to where you're just tapping her elbows and then she does it. Just keep fading back on the amount of prompting you give your child.

#### When to Move On:

Once your child can use a sign to request what she wants or communicate that thought about 80% of the time that you think she wants it, then you can consider that sign mastered. At that point, you can introduce a new sign to your child in the same way as before. Your child doesn't have to speak the word along with the sign. That part may not develop for a while. If your child signs a word to you, respond in the same way as if she had said the word out loud.

#### Data Collection (Mark if she uses the sign to communicate instead of reaching or grunting):

	Date:						
<b>Uses a sign to communicate something</b>							

## Helping Your Child Use a Sign



We are working on learning a new sign. Here it is:

---

Here's how you can help her use it:

1. When you offer this to your child, hold it up but don't say the word yet. Ask your child what she wants and see if she will make the sign on her own. If so, move to step 4. If not, move to step 2.
2. Say the target word for your child out loud and sign the word as well. If your child imitates the sign, move to step 4. If not, move to step 3.
3. Take your child's hands and help her make the sign. Move on to step 4.
4. Repeat the word back to your child as you give her what she wanted. Respond as though she had actually said the word. You could say "Sure, you can have \_\_\_\_" or "You asked for \_\_\_\_".
5. Do this again the next time your child wants that same thing.

## How to Use a Word Web to Expand Your Child's Vocabulary

### Rationale:

This guide focuses on how you can use a word web to expand the vocabulary of an elementary school-aged child (5-10 years) but these techniques can be used for older or younger children as well with some minor adaptations. This guide presents a word web for mapping out a new word as well as a word web for themed vocabulary.

### Age of Mastery:

This activity is appropriate for children ages 5-10 but could be used with older or younger children as well. Simply use words that are appropriate for your child, however old he is. Just as a point of reference, a 3-year-old should have around 1,000 words in his vocabulary. A 5-year-old should have 2,200-2,500 words in his vocabulary and a 12-year-old should have around 50,000 words. If your child falls significantly short of these marks, these activities will help increase his vocabulary.

### Learning Steps:

1. Use a Word Web to Map Out a New Word
2. Make a Vocabulary Word Web

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will create a word web (including part of speech, synonyms, antonyms, category, word parts and meanings, function, and descriptors) of a target vocabulary word from the current English curriculum using references as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

\*\*Most IEP systems will allow you to attach a document to the goal or the IEP. Attach a blank copy of the word web so the receiving SLP knows what you were using just in case the child moves to another school.

- By <Date>, Child will create a word web with at least three branches to categorize vocabulary words from a given topic in the current science curriculum on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

\*\*Again, attach an example.

## Word Webs Step One: (Page One)

### Use a Word Web to Map Out a New Word

#### Description:

One way to expand your child's vocabulary is to find new words and discuss them at length. You can do this by creating a word web that maps out the new word. Go through a book with your child that is right at or slightly above her reading level. Pick out a word from that book that your child doesn't know the meaning of. You could also do this with an assigned reading from school. Chances are, those words will come up again. Use the word web on the following page or draw one on a piece of paper. If desired, stick that paper in a page protector so that you can write on it with dry erase markers and use it again.

#### Activities:

Write the target word in the middle of the word web and then fill in the circles that surround it. Use another piece of paper if you need more room. Here's what to put in each circle:

- Part of Speech: Include if it is a noun (person/place/thing), verb (action word), adjective (describes a noun), adverb (describes a verb), preposition (location word like on and in), conjunction (combining words like and/but), interjection (ah ha! Or uh oh!).
- Synonyms: Identify words that mean the same thing as the target word.
- Antonyms: Identify words that mean the opposite of the target word.
- Category: If applicable, talk about what category the word belongs to. If it is a noun, use categories like "foods" or "clothing".
- Word Parts and Meaning: Break the word apart into as many pieces as you can that still have some sort of meaning. For example, the words "balls" can be broken down into the root "ball" and the plural "s". "Ball" means the object and "s" means there is more than one. For another example, "repositioning" could be broken down into "re" (again), "position" (movement or placing), and "ing" (currently happening). On the other hand, "butterfly" cannot be broken down any further as it is its own thing. If you broke it down into "butter" and "fly", it would have a completely different meaning. A butterfly is obviously not a tub of butter flying across the room. Talk about the parts of the word and what each one means. This will help your child learn to decode other new words when she encounters them.

**Continued On Next Page...**

## Word Webs Step One: (Page Two)

### Use a Word Web to Map Out a New Word

#### Activities cont.:

- Function: If it is a noun, talk about the function of that object. If it is a different part of speech, talk about what role the word has in the sentence. For example, the conjunction brings two thoughts together.
- Descriptors: For nouns, use the five senses to describe the word. How does it feel, look, taste, sound, and smell? For verbs, include what adverbs you could use to describe the action. For the word run, you could use “quickly”, “slowly”, “staggeringly”, etc.
- Other Info: Include any other information that you have about that word.

#### When to Move On:

You can do this for any new word your child encounters. For the purposes of this activity, keep practicing until your child is able to do one of these on his own using a dictionary, thesaurus, or online resources about 80% of the time. Then, you will know that your child has the skill to do this on her own if she needs to. Later on, you can encourage her to do this when she comes across a new word or needs to learn a new word for school.

#### Modifications:

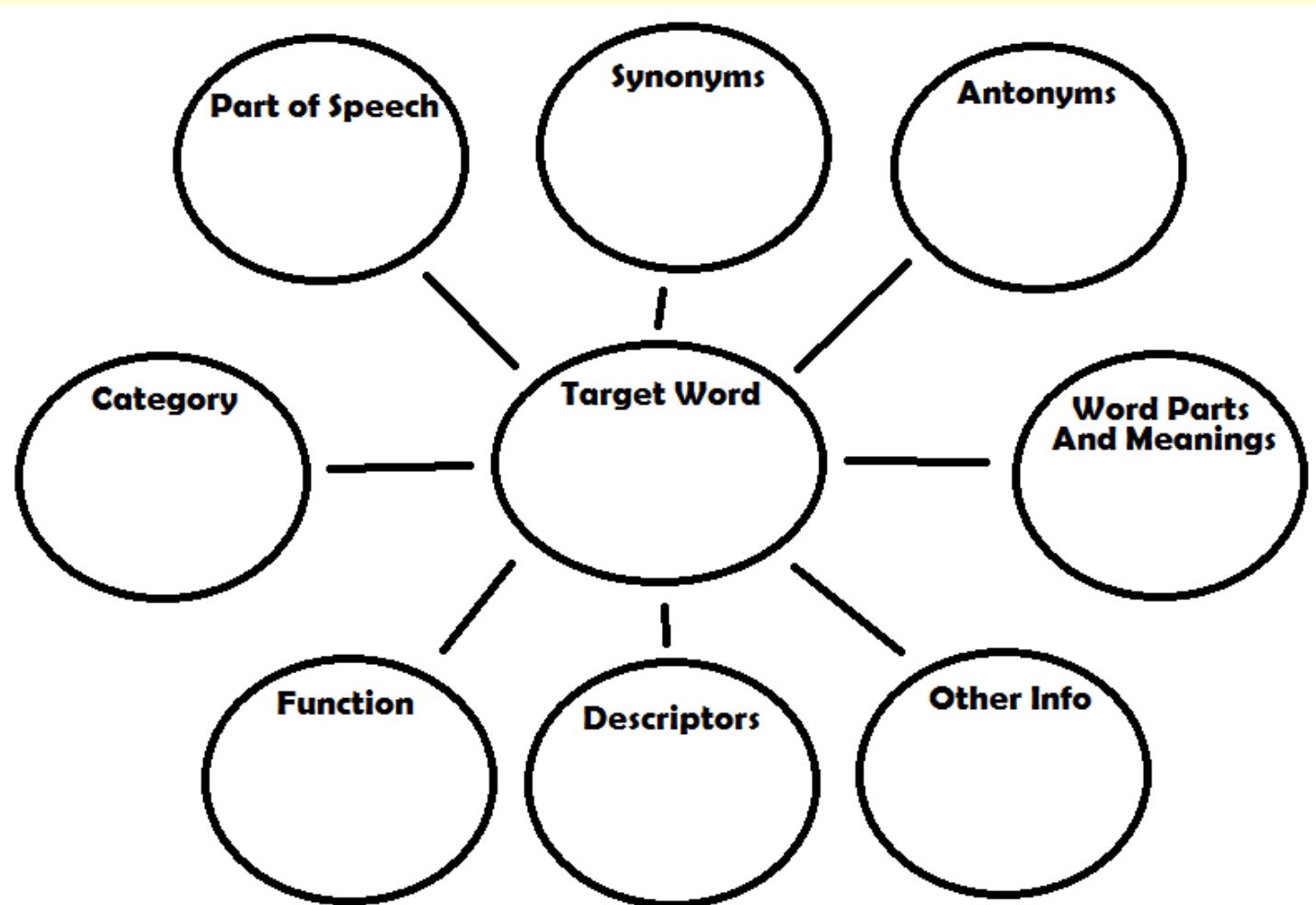
There are two ways to do this activity. One way is to put the word web in a sheet protector and write on it with dry erase markers. This way you can use it again and again. However, if you'd rather, you can copy the word web and make several of them for your child to use. Every time she encounters a new word, he could create a web and keep it in a notebook. This will serve as your child's own personal dictionary that she can reference back to when she encounters one of those words again.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child can do fill out the word web by herself):

	Date:						
<b>Can Complete Word Web Independently</b>							

---

## Word Web for Mapping out New Words



1. Write the new word in the middle
2. Fill in the other bubbles based on the label for each one. Use the instructions on the previous page to know what goes in each bubble.
3. Use a separate piece of paper or a new word map if you need more space.
4. Use a dictionaries, thesauruses, or online resources to help you fill in the bubbles if you're not sure.

## Word Webs Step Two: Make a Vocabulary Word Web

### Description:

If your child is struggling with vocabulary from a particular unit or theme at school, try creating a vocabulary word web for common words that your child might encounter. Here's what you can do:

### Activities:

Pick a unit or theme and find an developmentally-appropriate text about that topic. That means, if your child is 14 but is reading at the level of a 9-year-old, choose a 9 or 10-year old text instead of something meant for a 14-year-old. You can use one of your child's school books or find a book at the library. Go through the text with your child and pick out 20-30 words that seem to be key vocabulary for that unit. Many textbooks will include a list of key vocabulary at the beginning or end of the chapter. Write all of those words on a piece of paper. Next, look at the list with your child and see if you can find similar traits that would allow you to group the words into categories on your word web. You could group them by part of speech, by topic, or by something else. For example, words about The Earth may be grouped by land, water, and sky. Once you have some groups in mind, create a word web that has your topic/unit in the middle in a circle. Then create more circles for your groups and have those branching off the topic. Finally, have each word in its own circle that branches off of one group. There's an example on the next page to get you started.

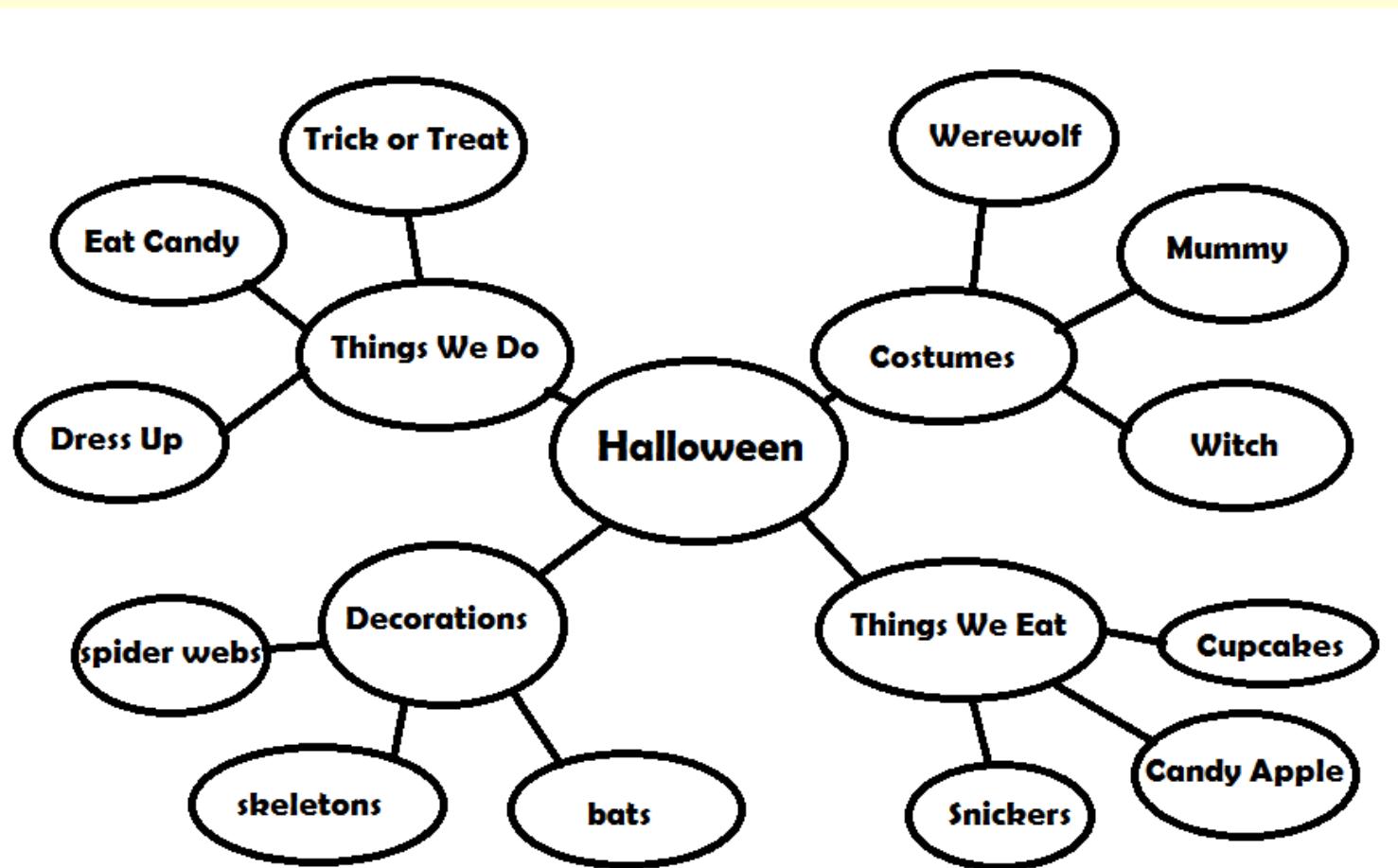
### When to Move On:

Your child should be able to complete one of these word webs on his own. If he can't, help him through it until he's more independent with it. Encourage him to look up words in dictionaries or online if he doesn't know what a word means or how to group it. Keep doing this until he can do it on his own about 80% of the time. Then, just encourage him to do this whenever he's having trouble learning a new group of words or topic.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can complete one of these by himself):

	Date:						
<b>Can Complete Word Web Independently</b>							

## Word Web for Vocabulary Units



1. Write the vocabulary topic in the middle of your paper and draw a circle around it.
2. Create a list of other words related to the topic on a separate piece of paper. Decide how you could group those words (by category, by word type, etc.)
3. Create circles that connect to the main circle and label each category or word type.
4. Add more circles coming off of the categories that contain specific key terms for this vocabulary unit.

## How to Teach a Child A Spatial Concept

### Rationale:

Spatial concepts like “in”, “on”, “under”, “over”, etc. are especially difficult for children with language delays. You can teach your child a spatial concept by using the following procedure. Make sure you choose one spatial concept to teach at a time. The four I listed above are good ones to start with because they are a little bit easier than some others like “between”, “next to”, etc. Children need spatial concepts in their speech to provide detailed information about the location of objects as well as to follow directions which contain spatial concepts that are present in our every day speech. After all, putting your baby sister down *next to* the pool is very different than putting her *in* the pool!

### Age of Mastery:

A child should know simple spatial concepts like “in”, “on”, and under by 2 years. A child should know a few more, like “off”, “out of”, “together”, and “away from” by 3 years. “Next to”, “beside”, “behind”, “in front of”, “around”, and “between” come around 4 years. Words like “nearest” and “through” aren’t mastered until 5 years and “right/left” doesn’t come in solid until 6 years.

### Learning Steps:

1. Demonstrate And Label
2. Following Directions
3. Yes/No Questions
4. Where Is It?

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will follow directions with the spatial concepts of <List target spatial concepts here> on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Put it under the house”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer yes/no questions about the spatial concepts of <List target spatial concepts here> on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Is it under the house?”)
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about the location of objects immediately by providing one of the spatial concepts listed below on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s the block?” “Under the barn”). Target spatial concepts include: <List Target Spatial Concepts Here>.

## Spatial Concepts Step One: Demonstrate And Label

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is choose a single concept to start with. I recommend working on one at a time to avoid confusion and maximize success. Choose an easier one to start with. If you want to know which ones are easier, take a look at the ages on the previous page and choose from the beginning of the list. You could also choose a word based on its importance in your child's life. For example, if you're constantly asking your child to put something *under* something else and it causes much confusion, that would be a good one to start with. This first step is all about demonstrating the concept to your child.

### Activities:

Once you've picked the concept you want to start with, demonstrate it for your child using real objects. For example, let's say you chose "on". You will want to get out some objects that will allow you to put one thing on top of another. Let's say you choose a barn and a cow. Put the cow on the roof of the barn and say "On! The cow is on. Cow on". Then, put the cow somewhere else. Shake your head and say "not on". Now put the horse on and do the same thing. Keep demonstrating objects being on other objects until you feel absolutely ridiculous. Remember, children with language delays need to be shown a new concept many times before it starts to stick! Be sure you're saying "on" and "not on" but don't throw in any other concepts like "in" or "under" yet. Also, make sure you say the word "on" by itself several times as well as in short phrases and sentences. Often in this phase, I feel like I've said the target word so many times that it doesn't really make sense any more. Strive for saying it that many times!

### When to Move On:

Demonstrate the concept on 5 different occasions before you decide to move on. Make sure your child was paying attention at least a little during these demonstrations. She may not be totally enthralled with what you're doing but hopefully she picked up on some of it.

### Data Collection:

	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
<b>Days I demonstrated it for my child.</b>					

---

## Spatial Concepts Step Two: Following Directions

**Description:**

Once you've thoroughly demonstrated the target concept until you're blue in the face, it's time for your child to start doing some of the work. Now you will ask your child to demonstrate the concept by following directions that contain the word. Note that at this point, your child is not yet required to say anything.

**Activities:**

After demonstrating the concept a few more times (just for kicks), hand your child something and say "Put it \_\_\_" using the spatial concept you've chosen. Following our previous example, you could give him the cow and tell him to put it *on* the barn. Do this with a variety of objects in a variety of contexts until your child can successfully follow directions with that concept upon command.

**When to Move On:**

Move on to the next step when your child can follow directions with the concept about 80% of the time but make sure he can do it with a variety of objects and in a variety of contexts (not just the cow on the barn).

**Modifications:**

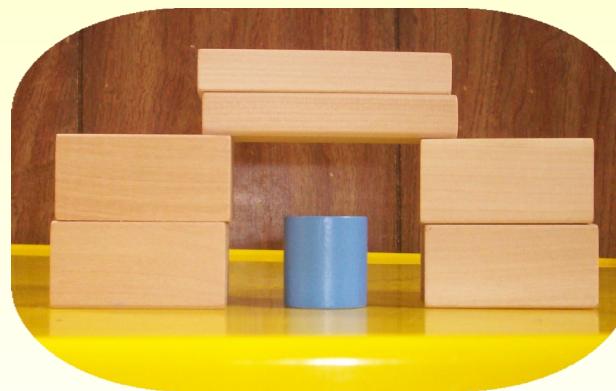
Whether you have a child on the autism spectrum or a child who is just having trouble with this and isn't picking it up quickly, the modification is the same. Ask your child to follow the direction and then physically help him do it (put the object in his hand and then put it on). Immediately provide him a reinforcer (like a favorite toy, a hug, tickles, food, etc.) and say "On. You put it *on*." Keep doing this until your child can do it without you having to move his hand to do it for him.

**Data Collection (Mark if your child correctly follows the direction):**

	Date:						
<b>Follow Directions with the Concept</b>							

---

## Helping Your Child Learn a Spatial Concept



We are working on learning a new spatial concept.  
Here it is: \_\_\_\_\_

Here's how you can increase understanding:

1. Demonstrate the concept to your child frequently. If the concept is “under”, sit down to play with your child and put toys under other toys. Every time you do this, point it out to your child and say “Look! Under! I put it under”. Make sure you say the word a lot of times.
2. Have your child follow directions using the concept. For example, you could have your child put a block under the couch or under the table.
3. Your child does not need to say the word “under” at this point. We are just working to increase his understanding of the word, so it is not necessary for him to say it yet.

## Spatial Concepts Step Three: Yes/No Questions

### Description:

Now that your child can follow directions with this concept, it's time to start asking your child yes/no questions about the concept. Note again that your child is still not expected to speak the target word, that comes in next step. For now, we just want a simple yes or no.

### Activities:

Start by putting an object in the desired location that contains the concept you are targeting. Then, ask your child "Is it \_\_\_?" using the spatial concept word. For example, if you chose "on", you would put the cow somewhere and say "Is it on? Is it on the barn?" Exaggerate the word "on" when you say it so she knows that's the concept you're targeting. Your child should say "yes". If not, model the word "yes" for her and have her repeat it back. Keep doing this until your child says "yes" every time you demonstrate the concept and then ask the question "Is it \_\_\_?". Once she can do that, switch and put the object somewhere that does not represent the concept. Ask the question again. Your child should say "no". Help her say "no" if she doesn't do it. Keep going back and forth between "yes" and "no" with the concept you are targeting.

### When to Move On:

Move on to the next step when your child can answer yes/no questions about the target concept about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble answering yes/no questions, try going to the yes/no questions tutorial in this book.

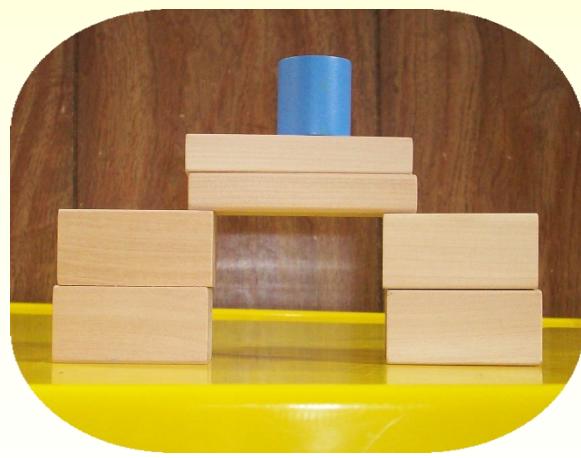
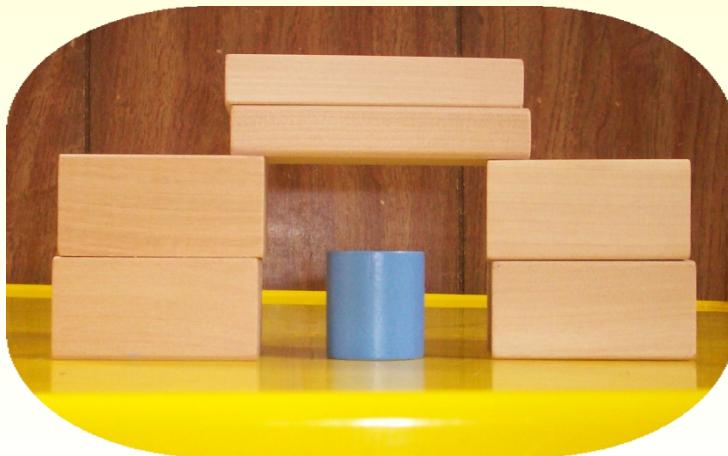
### Data Collection (Mark if your child can answer yes/no questions about the concept):

	Date:						
<b>Answer yes/no question about concept</b>							

---

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: Under

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



Is the blue block under the bridge?

Now is the blue block under the bridge?

Is



Is the phone under the desk?



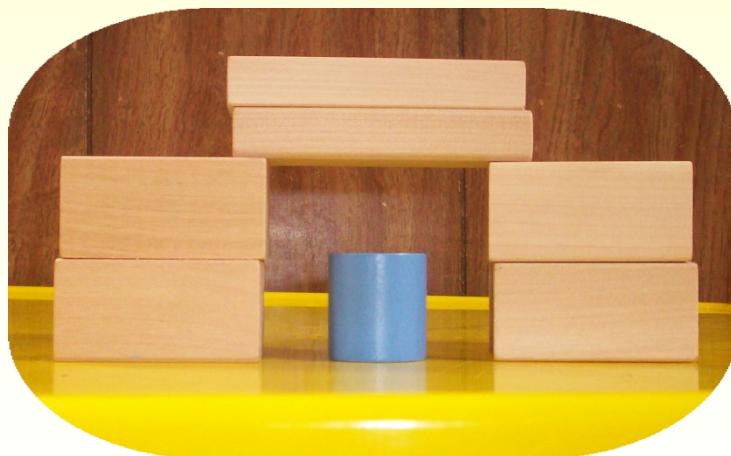
Is she under the blanket?

#### Extra Practice:

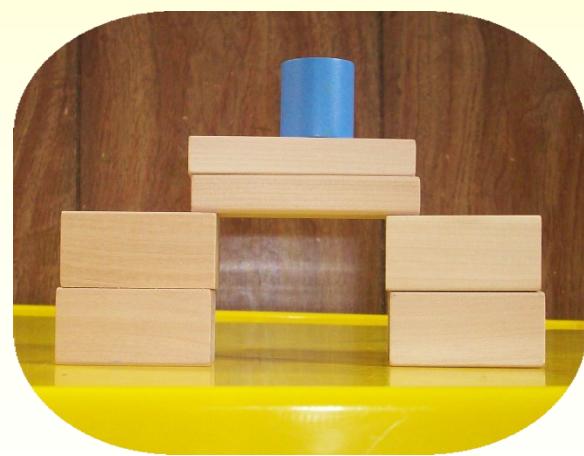
Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are under something. Don’t try working on “over” or “on” yet, just keep asking about “under”.

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: On

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



the blue block on the bridge?



Now is the blue block on the bridge?



Is the phone on the desk?



Is she on the blanket?

### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are on something. Don’t try working on “under” or “over” yet, just keep asking about “on”.

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: In

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



Is the blue block in the box?

Now is the blue block in the box?



Is the juice in the cup?

Now is the juice in the cup?

### Extra Practice:

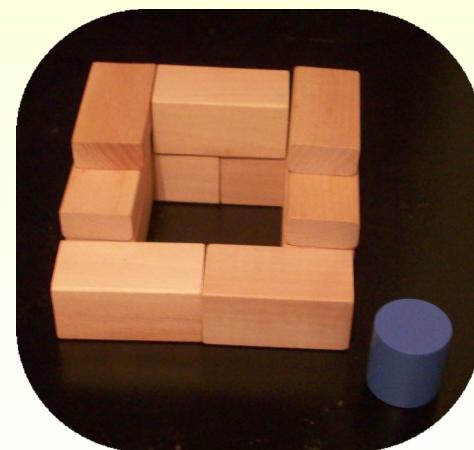
Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are in something. Don’t try working on “out” or “beside” yet, just keep asking about “in”.

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: Out

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



the blue block out of the box?



Now is the blue block out of the box?

Is



Is the juice out of the cup?  
Now is the juice out of the cup?



#### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are out of something. Don’t try working on “in” or “beside” yet, just keep asking about “out of”.

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: Beside

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



the blue block beside the brown blocks?

Is  
Now is the blue block beside the brown?



Is the red block beside the others?  
Is the purple baby beside the pink baby?

#### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are beside something. Don’t try working on “in front of” or “behind” yet, just keep asking

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: Behind

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



Is

the blue block behind the brown blocks? Now is the blue block behind the brown?



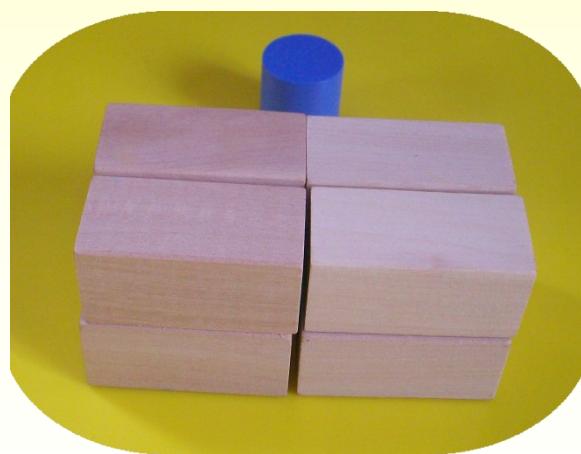
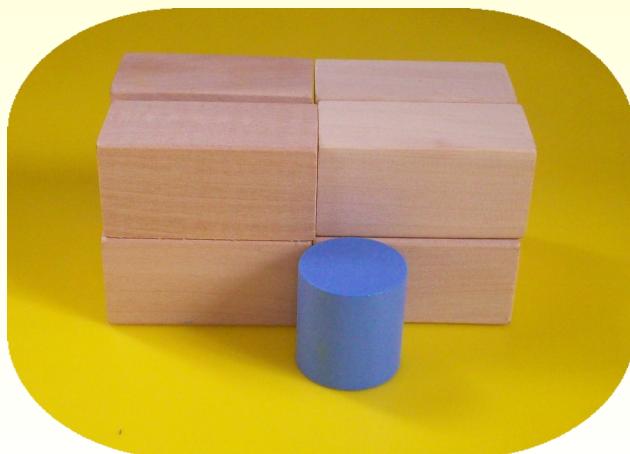
Is the burger behind the French fries??  
Are the rocks behind the waterfall?

#### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are behind something. Don’t try working on “in front of” or “beside” yet, just keep asking

### Answering Yes/No Questions About Spatial Concepts: In Front of

Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer with a “yes” or “no” response.



Is

the blue block in front of the others?

Now is the blue block in front of the others?



Are the French fries in front of the burger?

Is the horse in front of the fence?

### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about other objects and whether or not they are in front of something. Don’t try working on “beside” or “behind” yet, just keep asking

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## Spatial Concepts Step Four: Where Is It?

### Description:

Now that we've done all of this prep work, it's finally time for your child to say the word! He may have already been saying it by this point but if not, you will want to start asking him where things are to try to elicit him to say it.

### Activities:

Put an object in a location that represents the concept you've been working on. Ask the question "where's the \_\_\_\_?" and wait. Hopefully, your child will say the word you've been targeting. Not everyone gets so lucky on the first try though. You will probably have to say the word for your child and have him repeat it back to you. Keep doing this until your child can answer the question by himself.

### When to Move On:

Once your child is able to answer the question "where's the \_\_\_\_" using the appropriate spatial concept about 80% of the time (using a variety of objects), you can consider this one met. Keep talking about it occasionally as it comes up but now you can go back and teach another spatial concept using the same technique.

### Modifications:

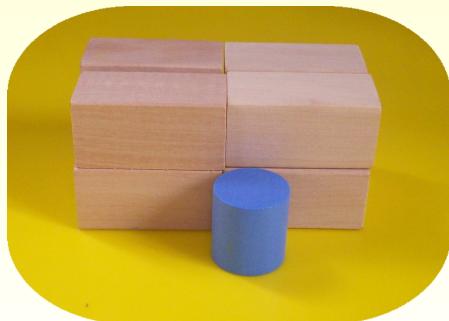
If your child is struggling with saying the word and you feel like you're always having to say the word for him, you can try using other types of prompts. For example, say the first few sounds of the word and then let your child finish it. Or, draw a picture that represents the concept (like a circle on top of a rectangle) and write the target word above the picture. Then, show your child the picture to jog his memory if he can't think of the word. You can also try working on an entirely different spatial concept for a while and come back to this one if he is really stuck.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child says the correct spatial concept when you ask):

	Date:						
<b>Answer a "where" ques- tion using the spatial con- cept</b>							

## Answering Where Questions About Spatial Concepts

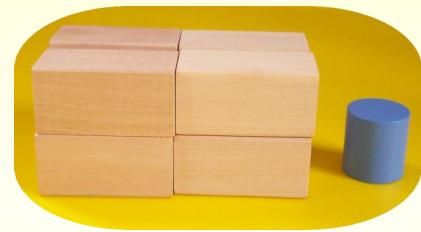
Show your child the following pictures and ask your child the questions. Help your child answer the question using the correct spatial concept, like in, under, on, etc.



Where is the blue block?



Where is the blue block?



Where is the blue block?



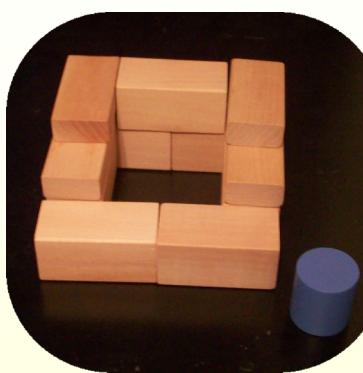
Where is the blue block?



Where is the blue block?

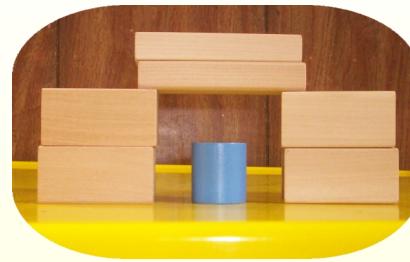


Where is the blue block?



block?

Where is the guy?



Where is the blue block?



Where is the blue

block?

### Extra Practice:

Ask your child other questions about the locations of objects and help him answer using a spatial concept. If your child is struggling with one of the concepts, work on just that one for a while.

## How To Teach a Child Descriptors

### Rationale:

Descriptors are an important part of our vocabulary. They are the words that describe other words. These can be adjectives (words that describe nouns) or adverbs (words that describe verbs). We use these throughout our everyday conversation to convey information or add interest to what we're talking about. Many children with speech and language delays have difficulty with these words and may not use them in their conversational speech. This can make their message hard to follow or become uninteresting.

### Age of Mastery:

Here is a table with common descriptors and when children are typically able to use them.

Descriptor(s):	Age of Mastery:
Up and Down	2 years
One/Many, Sizes (small, medium, big)	3 years
Different, Colors (red, blue, etc.)	4 years
Superlatives (big, bigger, biggest), Time Concepts, Thin, Whole, First, Middle, Last	5 years
Opposites, Left/Right, Number Concepts	6 years

### Learning Steps:

1. Choose a concept
2. Model the concept
3. Follow directions with the concept
4. Answer yes/no questions about the concept
5. Say the concept word

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will follow directions containing the following concepts on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days: <List Concepts Here>
- By <Date>, Child will answer yes/no questions about the following concepts on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days: <List Concepts Here>
- By <Date>, Child will use/say the following concepts on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days when asked a question (such as, "what color is it"): <List Concepts Here>

## Descriptors Step One: Choose a Concept

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do when trying to teach descriptors to your child is to choose one concept to work on. The tendency is to try to teach several related concepts at the same time, such as all of the colors, or all of the shapes. However, this can be very confusing to a child with a language delay. You will want to start with one very simple concept, such as one color, one shape, big (but not big and little), etc.

### Activities:

Take a look at the list of concepts on the previous page and the ages associated with them. Circle the ones that your child is not able to use correctly at this time. Choose one of these concepts, preferably one that is toward the top of the list. If one of the things you chose was a group of concepts, like “colors” or “shapes”, choose one particular concept from that group. Make sure that you are specific with which concept you will target. Here is a list of specific concepts you could target with your child:

### When to Move On:

Big	Little	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple
Sweet	Crunchy	Soft	Chewy	Salty	Sour	Thin	Open
More	Short	Empty	Circle	Square	Rectangle	Triangle	Oval
Stinky	Quiet	Loud	Low	High	Dry	Heavy	Hairy
Hot	Rough	Bumpy	Smooth	Wet	Hard	Cold	Light

When you have chosen one concept, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

<b>The Concept We Will Target Is:</b>	
---------------------------------------	--

## Descriptors Step Two:

### Model The Concept

#### Description:

Now that you have chosen your concept, it's time to model that concept for your child. Now, when I say "model", I don't mean you have to be Vanna White, though if that gets your child more interested you're more than welcome to put on a sparkly dress and hold it up! What I mean is that you will be showing your child the concept over and over again.

#### Activities:

Find a few different ways to show your child the concept you are working on. For example, if you chose a color, get out many things of that same color. Or, if you chose a size concept, get out many things that represent that size. Now, here comes the tricky part, you must also get some non-examples. A non-example is something that does not fit the concept and you want it to be as far from the concept as possible. So, if you have several examples of things that are green, you will also want some non-examples that are red, yellow, or orange. These are very dissimilar colors to the one you are trying to present. Or, if you chose "big" as your concept, you could get some non-examples of things that are little. Make sure they are much smaller than the big examples you have. Try to get your non-examples to be the same type of object as your examples. So, if you have a big ball, try to find a small ball to compare it to, instead of a small car. This will help your child see that the only difference between those two objects is the size (or whatever concept you're targeting). Next, show your child that concept over and over again while saying the name of the concept (such as the color or shape name). When you pick up a non-example, say "not \_\_\_\_" and use the concept word again. So you may have objects that are green and some that are "not green". Don't use the other color words or other concepts just yet, we want to focus on just the target word. Also, point out the concept when you see it other places as well, such as all of the green things on your walk.

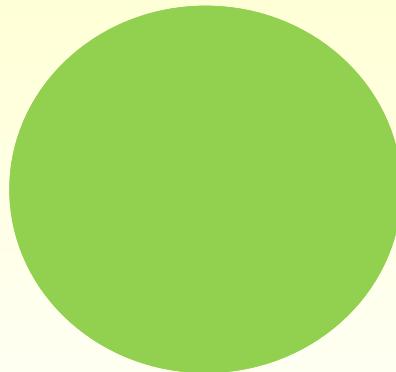
#### When to Move On:

Model the new concept for your child on at least 7 different days before moving on to the next step.

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Days that I modeled the concept for my child</b>							

## Helping Your Child Learn a Descriptor



We are working on learning a new descriptor. Here it is:

---

Here's how you can increase his understanding:

1. Get a lot of examples that represent this descriptor. For example, if it's a color, collect several things that color. Then, label that descriptor many times when you show your child something that matches that word.
2. Also, find some things that do not fit the descriptor and show those to your child as well. Say "not \_\_\_\_" using the descriptive word to tell your child that one does not match. For example, if your target is "green", show your child some red or purple things and say "not green".
3. Your child does not need to say the word at this point. We are just working to increase his understanding of the word, so it is not necessary for him to say it yet.

## Descriptors Step Three: Following Directions with the Concept

### Description:

Now that you have bombarded your child with the concept until you're blue in the face, we want your child to start following directions using the concept. Keep in mind, this is easier than having your child say the concept out loud, so make sure you take these steps in order.

### Activities:

Get out the examples and non-examples that you used in the last step. Model the concept for your child a few more times as a reminder. Then, ask your child to follow a direction with the concept. You can say "give me the *green* ball" or "get the *big* car". Make sure you exaggerate the target word in the sentence so she knows which one to focus on. Then, pause for a moment to see if your child follows the direction on her own. If your child does follow the direction, give her feedback on whether or not she found the correct object. If she did, say "yes, you found the *green* ball!", but if she didn't you can say "oh, not green. This ball is not green. Where's the *green* one?" Then you can help her find the correct one. If your child does not attempt to follow the direction, help her follow the direction by moving her hand to pick up the correct object and then praise her for it, even though you had to help her. Keep doing this over and over again with different directions and different objects so your child begins to understand the concept in many different ways.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to follow simple directions using the target concept with about 80% accuracy, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, try simplifying your language down to saying "touch" and then the target word, such as "touch blue" or "touch big". Then, help her touch the correct one. Reinforce your child every time she touches the correct one, even if you had to help her. You can reinforce using a hug/tickle, a favorite toy, or a bite of her favorite snack. Then, try it again and pause to see if she does it on her own this time. If not, try just a small prompt first, like moving her hand toward the correct object and see if she'll complete the direction on her own.

### Data Collection (Mark if she correctly follows the direction):

	Date:						
<b>Follows Directions Using the Concept</b>							

## Helping Your Child Learn a Descriptor



We are working on learning a new descriptive word.  
Here it is: \_\_\_\_\_

Here's how you can increase understanding:

1. Demonstrate the descriptor to your child frequently. Use the word whenever possible to describe things around your house or out in the community.
2. Have your child follow directions using the descriptor. For example, if the descriptor is “yellow”, you could ask your child “where’s the yellow ball?”. These should be requests that your child can follow without needing to say anything.
3. Your child does not need to say the descriptive word at this point. We are just working to increase her understanding of the word, so it is not necessary for her to say it yet.

## Descriptors Step Four:

### Answering Yes/No Questions About the Concept

#### Description:

Once your child can follow simple directions with the concept, we want him to answer yes/no questions about the concept.

#### Activities:

Get out your examples and non-examples again and this time hold up one of the objects and ask “is this \_\_\_?” using the target concept. Make sure you have the non-examples present so he has something to compare it to. For example, if you says “is this big?” but there’s nothing any smaller to compare it to, the term “big” kind of loses its meaning. If your child is having trouble answering yes/no questions, you can go back to the yes/no questions guide and work on that as well.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child is able to correctly answer “is this \_\_\_?” with the target concept about 80% of the time. Then, you will be ready to move on to the next step.

#### Modifications:

If your child is struggling, try giving him some examples. Hold up an object that is an example of that concept and say “is this \_\_\_?” Then, immediately say “yes, this is \_\_\_”. Then, hold up a non-example and ask the same question again. Then, immediately say “no, this is not \_\_\_”. Do this a few times and then give your child a chance to answer. You can also bring in another child or a sibling to answer the question a few times as well.

#### Data Collection (Mark if he correctly answers the yes/no question about the concept):

	Date:						
<b>Answer yes/no questions using the concept</b>							

## Answering Yes/No Questions About a Descriptor



We are working on learning a new descriptive word.  
Here it is: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Here's how you can increase understanding:

Ask your child yes/no questions using the descriptor. For example, you could say “is this hot?” or “is this cold?”

- Make sure you only ask questions using the word listed above, if the word is “hot”, don’t ask about “hot” and “cold”.
- Also, make sure you’re asking questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” instead of something like “is this hot or cold?”.
- Your child does not need to say the descriptive word during this activity. We are just working to increase his understanding of the word, so it is not necessary for him to say it yet.

## Descriptors Step Five:

### Say the Concept

#### Description:

Now that your child is able to follow directions with the concept and answer questions about it, you're finally ready to start having your child say the concept word out loud.

#### Activities:

This time when you get out your examples and non-examples, you will want to ask your child a question that will encourage her to say the concept word out loud. If you chose a color, you could say "what color is this?". Or, if you chose a texture you could say "how does it feel?". Think about the question you want to ask ahead of time. Hold up one of your examples (though have your non-examples there as references) and ask your child the question. You may have to model the correct answer for her at first but eventually she should be able to start using the word on her own. If she still needs prompts, try saying just the first sound or first syllable of the word at first to see if she can finish the word for you. Then, you can just try mouthing the first sound. Then, you should be able to fade your prompting to not needing to cue her at all. Do this with the examples that you have been working with but also try this when you see the concept somewhere else. For example, at the store, you could find things that are the target color and say "what color is this?".

#### When to Move On:

When your child is able to correctly answer the question about the concept about 80% of the time, you're ready to introduce a new concept. Keep in mind that your child may confuse the two concepts at first, especially if they are similar like two colors, so have patience and just keep drilling the difference between the two.

#### Data Collection (Mark if she uses the target word when you ask the question):

	Date:						
<b>Answers a question by saying the concept word</b>							

## Answering Yes/No Questions About a Descriptor



We are working on learning a new descriptive word.  
Here it is: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Here's how you can help your child say it:

- Ask your child questions that will prompt him to say the descriptor we are targeting. For example, you could say “how does it feel?” or “what color is it”.
- At first, you may have to tell your child the answer and have her repeat it back to you. After a while, try just telling her the first sound or syllable of the word to see if she can get the rest of it. Eventually, you should be able to ask the question and have her give you the correct descriptor.
- Try asking these questions in different settings, like when you're at home but also when you're out in the community. Use this approach anywhere you see that descriptor.

## How to Improve a Child's Word Retrieval Skills

### Rationale:

Word retrieval means a person's ability to think of the right word when he/she needs it, such as during conversation. We all have those moments when we can't think of the right word. In that instant, we're having a word retrieval problem. Some children have a wonderful vocabulary but in conversational speech they have a lot of trouble coming up with the right word. This may cause them to have unnecessary pauses, use filler words like "um" and "like", or use non-specific words like "that thing" or "that stuff". Here are some activities that you can do with your child that will improve his word retrieval and ability to come up with the right word when he needs it.

### Age of Mastery:

There are no hard and fast rules as to when a child should be able to retrieve words fluently. If your child is struggling with this and/or exhibiting some stuttering-like behaviors as a result, it never hurts to try some of these strategies to see if they work.

### Learning Steps:

1. Fill in the Blank Associations
2. Rapid Naming from Categories
3. Providing a Word from a Definition
4. List Things Needed to Complete a Task
5. Finish Similes
6. Antonyms and Synonyms

### Sample IEP Goals:

\*\*Collect data on each of these to see where your child is, then set the goal at a faster time.

- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by completing 10 fill in the blank associations in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by naming 10 items from a given category in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by naming 10 words when given their definitions in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by listing 10 things required to complete a given task in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by finishing 10 similes in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will increase word retrieval skills by providing antonyms or synonyms of 10 given words in fewer than \_\_\_ seconds on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Word Retrieval Step One: Fill in the Blank Associations

### Description:

Have your child fill in the blank with common phrases and sentences. This will teach your child to use other words in the sentence or phrase to trigger the word he wants to get to. This will also help organize the language centers of your child's brain.

### Activities:

Here are some examples of fill in the blank associations you can use with your child. Try these while you're riding in the car or waiting in line somewhere. You can also make up your own or have your child complete the worksheet on the following page.

A pair of \_\_\_\_\_

Peanut butter and \_\_\_\_\_

Close the \_\_\_\_\_

The elephants live in the \_\_\_\_\_

Head, shoulders, knees, and \_\_\_\_\_

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to do 10 of these and see if you can decrease your child's time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to complete 10 Fill-In-The-Blank Associations</b>							

## Activities for Improving Word Retrieval:

### Fill in the Blank Associations

Write a word in each blank that completes the phrase. The word must make sense in the phrase. If your child cannot read or write, say these out loud and have your child say a word that could fill in the blank.

- A pair of \_\_\_\_\_
- Peanut butter and \_\_\_\_\_
- Close the \_\_\_\_\_
- Elephants live in the \_\_\_\_\_
- Head, Shoulders, Knees, and \_\_\_\_\_
- Run away from \_\_\_\_\_
- Bread and \_\_\_\_\_
- Socks and \_\_\_\_\_
- Out to \_\_\_\_\_
- Slip and \_\_\_\_\_
- Over the \_\_\_\_\_
- Give me \_\_\_\_\_
- Help me \_\_\_\_\_
- Where's my \_\_\_\_\_
- Follow the \_\_\_\_\_
- Take me \_\_\_\_\_
- Eat your \_\_\_\_\_
- Please and \_\_\_\_\_
- Coat and \_\_\_\_\_
- Shirt and \_\_\_\_\_
- Play with \_\_\_\_\_
- Simon says \_\_\_\_\_
- Drain the \_\_\_\_\_
- Push the \_\_\_\_\_
- Ring around the \_\_\_\_\_
- Fun and \_\_\_\_\_
- Ride the \_\_\_\_\_
- Show me \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't wake \_\_\_\_\_
- Hold your \_\_\_\_\_
- Eat and \_\_\_\_\_
- Throw the \_\_\_\_\_
- Hammer and \_\_\_\_\_

#### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice these types of fill-in-the blanks at other times as well. You can say some of these while waiting in a line or driving in the car. The more you do this, the faster his word retrieval will become!

## Word Retrieval Step Two: Rapid Naming From Categories

### Description:

Another way to increase your child's word retrieval is to practice coming up with as many things as possible from a certain category.

### Activities:

Have your child list as many things as she can think of from a certain category. For example, have your child list as many foods as she can or as many clothes. Here are some common categories to get you started:

- Clothes
- Vehicles
- Foods
- Toys
- Body Parts
- Actions
- Movies

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to name 10 items and see if you can decrease your child's time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to name 10 items from a category</b>							

## Improving Word Retrieval Skills

### Rapid Naming from Categories

Have your child name as many things from each of these categories as she can. Make sure she does it as quickly as she can as well. Time her to see how fast she can come up with 10 items. When you've used all of these categories, try asking about other categories as well.



Vehicles



Clothes



Foods



Drinks



Toys



Actions



Body Parts



Furniture

#### Extra Practice:

Continue to ask your child to do this throughout the week. You can try this activity while waiting somewhere or on a long car ride. Make it a family game and have everyone try. Have your child choose a category for you to name 10 items from as well.

## Word Retrieval Step Three: Providing a Word from Definition

### Description:

If you describe a word for your child, can he find the word in his head? Let's find out! This is a great way to work on word retrieval because this is often how our own brain works. We imagine the thing that we want to talk about and then we have to find the word for it in our language centers.

### Activities:

Define a word for your child and see if he can guess what it is. For example, you could say "it's a red fruit that is juicy and sweet and sometimes comes in green and yellow" and see how long or how many clues it takes for your child to guess apple. You can switch this around and have your child define a word for you as well. This will help his language processing skills, also. If you're having trouble coming up with new ones, get out a dictionary and start reading off definitions. A kids dictionary may be good for this one. Or, you could use a website that defines words for kids.

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to do 10 of these and see if you can decrease your child's time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to name 10 words from definition</b>							

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## Activities for Improving Word Retrieval:

### Provide a Word from a Definition

Write a word in each blank that fits the definition provided. The word must make sense with the definition. If your child cannot read or write, say these out loud and have your child say a word that could fill in the blank. Time how long it takes your child to do 10 of these. Then, see if your child can beat his record next time.

- A red and juicy fruit that is often made into juice or sauce. \_\_\_\_\_
- An animal whose hair is made into clothing and who needs to be sheared. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something green that grows outside and needs to be mowed regularly. \_\_\_\_\_
- A place where children play outside during school. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something you wear on your hands to keep you warm when it's cold outside. \_\_\_\_\_
- An eating utensil that has three or four tines so you can pick up pieces of food better. \_\_\_\_\_
- An animal that lives at the zoo and has a very long neck. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something you use to spread paint onto paper. \_\_\_\_\_
- What you put under your head at night when you sleep. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something that flies in the air while being attached to a string that you hold. \_\_\_\_\_
- An animal that lives on the farm and lays eggs. \_\_\_\_\_
- A place where you wash your dishes. \_\_\_\_\_
- A vehicle that flies in the sky and has two large wings that stick out on either side. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something you put on your toothbrush to brush your teeth \_\_\_\_\_
- A food with a crust, cheese, and toppings that is shaped like a circle but cut into triangles. \_\_\_\_\_
- Something green that grows on a tree and can shade you if there are enough of them. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice these types of reverse definitions at other times as well. You can say some of these while waiting in a line or driving in the car. You can also play a jeopardy-like game to practice these as well.

## Word Retrieval Step Four: List Things Needed To Complete a Task

### Description:

Now let's see if your child can list things needed to complete a certain task. This requires word retrieval and it requires your child to organize items in his brain according to activity.

### Activities:

Tell your child the name of a task and ask her to tell you all of the things she would need to complete that task. For example, if the task is swimming, your child could say "goggles, swimsuit, floaties, innertube, pool toys, towel". Here are some ideas of other tasks you could ask about:

- Getting Ready for Bed
- Making Dinner
- Setting the Table
- Packing for vacation

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to name 10 items for a task and see if you can decrease your child's time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to name 10 items needed for a task</b>							

## Improving Word Retrieval Skills

### Listing Items Required for a Task

Have your child quickly name all of the things she would need to have to complete one of the following tasks. Time her to see how fast she can come up with 10 items. When you've used all of these tasks, try asking about other tasks as well.



Brushing Your Teeth



Washing Your Hands



Getting Ready for Bed



Pouring a Bowl of Cereal



Painting a Picture



Making a Sandwich



Taking a



Bath

Putting on Your Shoes and Socks

#### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice these types of lists at other times as well. You can say some of these while waiting in a line or driving in the car. See if she can beat her time for coming up with a list of 10.

## Word Retrieval Step Five: Finish Similes

### Description:

A simile is when you compare two things using the words “like” or “as”, such as saying that something is “\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_.” For example, you could say you’re happy as a clam, or sweating like a pig (oddly enough, pigs aren’t that sweaty and I’m not sure how happy clams are, but they don’t seem to express very strong emotions). When you start one of these for your child and have him finish it, you are forcing him to make an association between the word you said and a word in his head. This will help his word retrieval as well.

### Activities:

Provide the descriptive word for your child and have him finish the simile. For example, you could say “sticky as a \_\_\_\_” and your child might fill in “peanut butter sandwich”.

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to finish 10 similes and see if you can decrease your child’s time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to finish 10 similes</b>							

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## Activities for Improving Word Retrieval: Finish Similes

Write a word in each blank that completes the simile. The word must fit with the descriptor provided. If your child cannot read or write, say these out loud and have your child say a word that could fill in the blank.

- As sticky as \_\_\_\_\_
- As wet as \_\_\_\_\_
- As scary as \_\_\_\_\_
- As happy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As creepy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As loud as \_\_\_\_\_
- As quick as \_\_\_\_\_
- As sneaky as \_\_\_\_\_
- As lazy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As dry as \_\_\_\_\_
- As slow as \_\_\_\_\_
- As wide as \_\_\_\_\_
- As long as \_\_\_\_\_
- As excited as \_\_\_\_\_
- As wrong as \_\_\_\_\_
- As smart as \_\_\_\_\_
- As hungry as \_\_\_\_\_
- As full as \_\_\_\_\_
- As warm as \_\_\_\_\_
- As soft as \_\_\_\_\_
- As friendly as \_\_\_\_\_
- As bossy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As stuck as \_\_\_\_\_
- As strong as \_\_\_\_\_
- As dizzy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As funny as \_\_\_\_\_
- As perfect as \_\_\_\_\_
- As stubborn as \_\_\_\_\_
- As sleepy as \_\_\_\_\_
- As weak as \_\_\_\_\_
- As thirsty as \_\_\_\_\_
- As dirty as \_\_\_\_\_
- As short as \_\_\_\_\_
- As bored as \_\_\_\_\_

### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice these similes at other times as well. You can say some of these while waiting in a line or driving in the car. See who can come up with the funniest or most clever similes.

## Word Retrieval Step Six: Antonyms and Synonyms

### Description:

Now it's time to have your child come up with some antonyms (words that mean the opposite of a given word) and synonyms (words that mean the same as the given word). Just like in the last activity, this will force your child to make a connection between a word you say and a word in her head. Once she gets good at this, challenge her to come up with the most creative words possible. This will help make associations between even more words in her brain. The more associations the brain has between words, the faster she will be able to access those words when she needs them.

### Activities:

Tell your child a word and have her come up with one synonym (a word that means the same thing) and one antonym (a word that means the opposite). For example, if the word is "sweet", she could say "sugary" for the synonym and "salty" for the antonym.

### When to Move On:

The steps to this activity are not actually sequential. You can do them in any order and you do not need to complete one step before trying another. Simply keep track of how long it takes your child to provide 10 antonyms or synonyms and see if you can decrease your child's time with continued practice.

### Additional Practice:

Many similar word retrieval activities can be found in the [Linguisystems HELP-2 Handbook for Language Processing](#).

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Time in seconds it takes to provide 10 antonyms or synonyms</b>							

## Activities for Improving Word Retrieval: Antonyms and Synonyms

Look at the word on the left side of the page. In the first blank, write a word that means the same as the target word. In the second blank, write a word that means the opposite of the target word. If your child cannot read or write, say these out loud and have your child say a word that could fill in the blank.

Word:	Synonym:	Antonym:
Happy	_____	_____
Scary	_____	_____
Excited	_____	_____
Lonely	_____	_____
Fancy	_____	_____
Fast	_____	_____
Sneaky	_____	_____
Lazy	_____	_____
Dry	_____	_____
Slow	_____	_____
Wide	_____	_____
Hurry	_____	_____
Run	_____	_____
Eat	_____	_____
Smart	_____	_____

### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice these antonyms and synonyms at other times as well. You can say some of these while waiting in a line or driving in the car. Time your child to see how long it takes her to do 10 of these and see if she can beat her time.

# Grammar Skill Guides

## How to Teach a Child to Use the Possessive 's

### Rationale:

Many children with language delays have trouble remembering to include word endings that change the meaning of a word. The possessive 's is no exception. It is the word ending that indicates that the object in the sentence belongs to a person. For example, "Abby's boot" or "Carrie's head". You can use this simple process for teaching your child to include this grammatical marker in his speech.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be using the possessive 's marker in his speech by about 3 years, 2 months. Keep in mind that there is a wide range of normal so some children may learn it earlier and some later, but that's a good general age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Whose Pile?
2. Whose is It?
3. Questions Throughout the Day
4. Correcting in Conversation

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will use the possessive 's to answer basic "whose" questions about his own or someone else's immediate possessions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: "Whose candy is this?" "Johnny's" or "Mommy's").
- By <Date>, Child will use the possessive 's to answer "whose" questions about the possessions of people in books and pictures on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: "Whose ball is that?" "The girl's" or "Dora's").
- By <Date>, Child will use the possessive 's to answer a variety of questions in conversation on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: "Where are we going?" "Ms. Apple's room" or "Whose jacket is this?" "Johnny's Jacket").
- By <Date>, Child will correctly and spontaneously use the possessive 's in a 5-minute conversational speech sample taken in the therapy setting in 80% of obligatory contexts with 1 reminder as necessary.

## Possessive 's Step One: Whose Pile Is This?

### Description:

You will begin teaching your child the possessive 's by talking about her own possessions or the possessions of those very close to her. This will help make it more real and will make your lessons more successful. You may want to even start by using something she loves very dearly, such as her favorite toys or a favorite food item.

### Activities:

To start with, sit down with your child and give her a pile of something (blocks, snack, candy, books, etc.). Give yourself a pile as well. Point to your child's pile and say "whose is this?" Have your child say her name with the possessive 's (like "Andy's"). You may need to over exaggerate the 's on the end so she can hear it. Then, point to your own pile. Say "whose is this?" ("Mommy's"). Make sure she gets the 's on there. Keep doing this back and forth until your child is able to say it on her own. You can also use visuals to help her learn this such as by taking a picture of the person and setting it right next to a big "s" that you write on a different piece of paper. Show her that the "s" says "ssss" or "zzzz" and you need to add it to the end of the name.

### When to Move On:

The sooner you can move on from this step the better. We'd rather her not be talking about herself in the 3rd person any longer than she has to but it helps to start with something personal so that's why we do it. I recommend getting your child to the point where she can say the 's about 80% of the time, but really as soon as you feel like she's starting to get the hang of it, go ahead and move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses the Possessive 's to label own possessions and those of others (present)</b>							

## Learning the Possessive 's



We are practicing using the possessive 's. Here's how to Increase Understanding at Home:

1. Sit down with your child and give her a pile of something. This could be blocks, candy, cars, toys, etc. Give yourself a pile, too.
2. Point to your child's pile and say "whose is this?". Have your child say her own name with an exaggerated possessive 's on the end (like Amber'ssss). You may have to say it for her to repeat the first several times you do this.
3. Now point to your pile and say "whose is this?". Again, help her say your name (or "Mommy") with the possessive 's on the end.
4. Keep doing this back and forth until your child can say it on her own.

## Possessive 's Step Two: Whose Is This?

### Description:

Now that your child has been introduced to the concept, we'll move on to talking about possessions in pictures. This way we can get away from using your child's name in the 3rd person ("Johnny's candy" instead of "my candy") and start talking about the possessions of others.

### Activities:

Show your child a picture of someone that he knows holding an object. Ask your child whose \_\_\_ the object is. For example, if Sally is holding a ball, you might say "whose ball is that?" and your child should say "Sally's". If your child forgets the 's, make sure you model it for him so he can imitate it back with all of the sounds. Once your child gets better at this, see if he can use it in a sentence, such as "that's Sally's ball". If you don't have many pictures of familiar people, try using familiar characters from books or TV shows. You can do this the same way but have your child say the character's name with the possessive 's. These can be easily found on the internet, such as on the PBS Kids website or through a google image search (with safe search on!).

### When to Move On:

Move on from this step when your child can answer the question "whose is this?" using the correct possessive 's about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble doing this from pictures, start by using real people in your child's environment. Give all of his family members something to hold and then go around saying "whose \_\_\_ is this?" You can also pause movies while a character is holding something and try the question. Then, move on to being able to answer these questions about pictures.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses the Possessive 's to label possessions of others from pictures</b>							

## Possessive 's, Step Two: Whose is it?

Point to the objects in these pictures and say “whose \_\_\_ is this?”. Your child can respond with “the boy’s” or “the girl’s”, or you could give them specific names. Just make sure your child is practicing the possessive ‘s at the end.



Photo Courtesy of papaija2008—  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Photo Courtesy of tiverylucky -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



## Possessive 's Step Three: Questions Throughout Your Day

### Description:

Now that your child can use possessive 's while describing pictures, we want her to start doing it when you ask her questions throughout his day. Many times, when a child learns a new skill, she will only be able to do it in very structured activities at first. This activity will make sure she's able to use the skill throughout his day as well.

### Activities:

Throughout your child's day or during other activities, ask her questions like "where are we going?" (Grandma's house) or whose jacket is this? (Daddy's Jacket). If your child forgets the possessive 's, gently remind her and have her repeat the correct way back to you. Keep asking these until your child remembers to use the possessive 's every time. If you need a more focused approach for your child, try asking questions that require a possessive 's during these types of activities:

- While playing with blocks or cars, place a few of each in front of you, your child, and the other people playing. Ask "whose blocks are these?"
- While reading books or looking through magazines, ask "whose" questions about the people and objects you see.
- While cleaning, ask "whose" questions about the things you find, then ask "where" questions about whose room it goes in (like "Johnny's room" or "Mommy's room")

### When to Move On:

Move on from this step when your child is using the correct possessive 's to answer a variety of questions about 80% of the time.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses the Possessive 's when answering questions</b>							

## Possessive 's Step Four: Correcting In Conversation

### Description:

If you've made it through the other steps, your child should already be starting to use some possessive 's sounds in conversation on his own. The last step is to just to correct those few possessive 's that your child still leaves off in conversation. This comes down to reminding him when you hear him forget one. If your child isn't yet doing this in conversation on her own, you will simply want to start easy on your reminders. Don't point it out every time he misses one (because that would be overwhelming!). Just point out a few here and there.

### Activities:

If you hear your child forget a possessive 's, try to gently point it out to him. You can do this a number of ways, here are some of my ideas:

#### What Not To Do:

- "OOOOHHH You totally forgot that one! BUSTED!! (Haha! Ok, you wouldn't really do that anyway, but there's the way not to do it!)

#### What To Do Instead:

- "Oh listen! I hear our "s" sound on that word. That's Johnny'sssss ball!"
- "Don't forget your /s/ sound on that one: Johnny'ssss ball"
- "That's Johnny ball?" Pause "Oh, did you mean 'Johnny's ball'?"

### When to Move On:

When your child is remembering to use the possessive 's about 80% of the time, you can consider it mastered. Just monitor your child after that to make sure he doesn't slide back and forget. If he does, you can come back to any of these steps and practice them again.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses Posses- sive 's in Con- versation</b>							

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## Learning the Possessive 's



We are practicing the possessive 's. Here's how to Help Your Child Generalize:

1. Ask your child questions throughout his day that require a possessive 's in the response. This would be questions like "whose blocks are these?" (Sarah's blocks) or "where are we going?" (grandma's house). Help your child remember to include the possessive 's on the end of these names to indicate possession.
2. If your child forgets a possessive 's in conversational speech, gently point it out to him by saying "oh, there's a possessive 's, let's practice that one: Grandma'ssss house". Or, you could say "don't forget your possessive 's on that one!" You could also repeat his error back to him as a question to see if he can correct it himself. You could say "That's Johnny ball?" Then wait to see if he corrects it to add the possessive 's. If not, add it for him.

## How to Teach a Child to Use the Plural –s

### Rationale:

Many children with language delays have trouble adding that /s/ to the ends of words to indicate that they are plural. This can cause them to have trouble indicating whether they are talking about one or more objects but it can also have an affect on their ability to read and write correctly now or in the future.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be using the plural –s by 3 and a half years.

### Learning Steps:

1. Plural –s in two-word phrases
2. Plural –s in carrier phrases
3. Plural –s in structured conversation
4. Plural –s in conversational speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the plural –s in two-word phrases on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “two bananas” or “three cars”).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the plural –s in carrier phrases on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “bananas” or “I see two bananas”).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the plural –s in structured conversation on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: Using plurals when describing what was bought at the grocery store that day).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the plural –s in 5 minutes of conversational speech on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Plural –s Step One: Plural –s in Two-word Phrases

### Description:

First, you will work on helping your child use the plural –s when describing pictures using two-word utterances, like “three bananas”. You will need to make sure that your child understands some simple number concepts before starting. For example, if she doesn’t understand the difference between one and two of something, it will be very hard to explain how plurals work. If that’s the case for your child, work on some basic counting skills first and come back to this once your child has mastered that.

### Activities:

For this phase you will need sets of two pictures of the same thing. One picture should have just one of the item and the other picture should have two or more of the item. For example, one picture could be a single banana, and the other picture could be two bananas. Have your child point to the single picture and say “one banana”. Then have your child point to the double picture and say “two bananas”. You will probably have to say this for your child for a while so that he can hear what it’s supposed to sound like. Exaggerate the –s at the end so he can hear it. Sometimes it will sound like the /s/ sound and sometimes it will sound like the /z/ sound, depending on the sound that comes before it. Try to figure out which one it is beforehand so you can exaggerate the right sound. For example, the word “socks” has a /s/ sound at the word but the word “cars” is actually the /z/ sound, even though it’s spelled with an “s”. Keep practicing this until your child can do this with any picture you give him. However, for now, make sure you only use regular plurals that require a –s at the end instead of pictures like “foot/feet”.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer “what’s this” questions by looking at the pictures and appropriately labeling the objects with or without the plural –s about 80% of the time, you’re ready to move on.

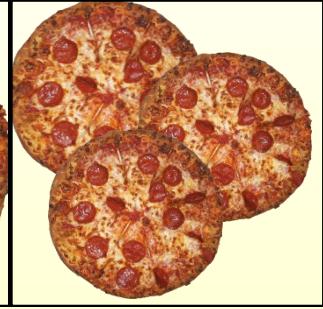
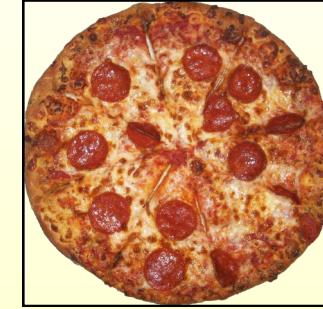
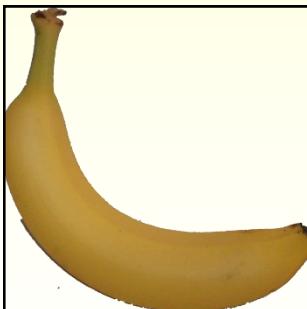
### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses Plural –s when describ- ing pictures in 2-word phrases</b>							

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## Plural -s, Step One: Teaching Your Child the Plural -s

Help your child learn the plural -s by asking her “what is this” or “what are these” for the pictures below. Make sure she says the plural -s on the end of the pictures with multiple items. You can say “one” in front of the single items and say “two”, “three”, or “a lot of” in front of the plural items. (Example, “one banana, three bananas”)



### Extra Practice:

Point out other plural -s words in conversation when you hear them!

## Plural –s Step Two: Plural –s in Carrier Phrases

### Description:

Once your child can do the previous step on his own, you will want to start using the plural –s in a carrier phrase like “I see...”.

### Activities:

Use the same pictures as in the last step. Place both pictures in front of your child and have him repeat a carrier phrase sentence. This just means that you stick the same sentence starter before the target word. For example, you could say “I see one banana. I see two bananas”. Have your child repeat each sentence back to you and make sure your child is including the plural –s. Once your child is able to imitate you saying these sentences, have your child say the sentences on his own.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use a simple carrier phrase to create sentence of the target picture with the appropriate use of the plural –s about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble figuring out this step, try writing out the words “I see” on separate index cards and laying them out before the target picture. Use this as a guide: help your child point to the two cards as he says the words “I” and “see”.

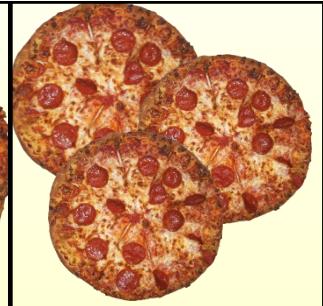
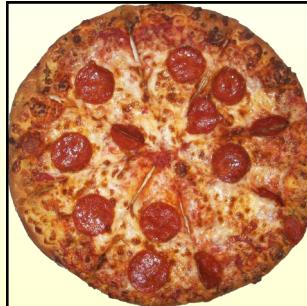
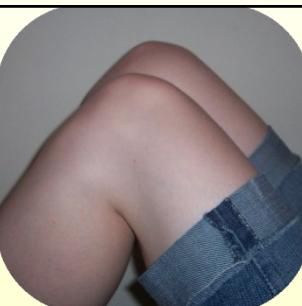
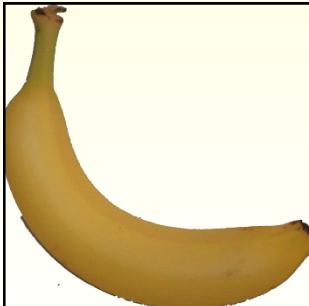
You may also want to include some pictures that have more than two of the item in them. We don’t want your child to think that you only use the plural –s when there are two of something but not when there are three or more. You can even say “a lot of \_\_\_” instead of a particular number.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses Plural –s when describing pictures with carrier phrases</b>							

## Plural –s Step Two, Carrier Phrases

Help your child practice the plural –s by saying these words in carrier phrases. A carrier phrase is a sentence starter that you can use to create a sentence about every picture. For example, you can say “I see...” and then describe what’s in the box. “I see one banana. I see three bananas”. Make sure your child uses the plural –s!



### Extra Practice:

Point out other plural –s words in conversation when you hear them!

## Plural –s Step Three: Plural –s in Structured Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can use the plural –s in short sentences, it's time for your child to use them in an activity that's slightly more natural and more like conversational speech. We're still not expecting her to use it all of the time in conversation because that is a huge jump, so we will use more controlled conversational activities.

### Activities:

Try some of these activities to increase your child's ability to use plural –s in conversational speech. It's ok to talk about the "plural –s" to your child and to call it that. Explain, "we use the plural –s when there is more than one of something".

- Tell your child that you're going to read a book and talk about it but that you're going to be listening for her plural –s whenever there are more than one of something. Get out a book and start reading. Whenever you see multiple items, ask her a question like "what are those?" and see if she includes the plural –s at the end. If not, gently remind her by catching it like this "Oh listen! That picture has three cars so we need to say carsss".
- Ask your child to describe certain events while using her plural –s. You could have her list all of the things you bought at the grocery store or describe the steps to putting on her shoes and socks. Just make sure she's using full sentences and that she's including that plural –s when necessary.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use the plural –s in these controlled, structured conversational tasks about 80% of the time, she's ready to move on to the final step.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses Plural –s in structured conversation tasks</b>							

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## Plural -s, Step Three: Structured Conversation

Tell your child one of the prompts below and tell her that she has to remember to use her good plural -s while she's talking about it. If she forgets a plural -s where there should be one, gently remind her to include it.



Tell me about your last birthday party.



Tell me about the last time you went to recess.



Tell me about the last place you went.



Tell me about the last time you were sick.



Tell me about the coolest animal you ever saw.



Tell me about the last thing you drew or the last piece of art you made.

### Extra Practice:

You can start reminding your child to use the plural -s during conversational speech as well. Don't nag her all the time, just remind her every once in a while for now. Keep pointing out plural -s in your speech and the speech of others as well.

## Plural –s Step Four: Plural –s in Conversational Speech

### Description:

Once your child is able to do this task during structured conversation when he knows you're listening for it, we'll start listening for it during normal conversation.

### Activities:

Tell your child how proud you are of him for being able to use his good plural –s during your practice sessions. Tell him it's time for him to start using it during other times, too. Choose a few times throughout the week that you will listen for his plural –s. Let him know ahead of time when you will be listening. During those times, remind him that you are listening for his good plural –s and you will help him remember when he forgets. Try to do this during a low-pressure time when he's not going to be embarrassed by being around other people and when he won't already be stressed about whatever else he's doing. You could do this while he's telling you about his day, during dinner, or when reading books before bedtime. Whenever you hear him slip up during that time, gently remind him to include that plural sound just like you did in the last step. You can say "Oh! There's a plural –s! Let's fix it!" Don't make it seem like you are chastising him, just helping. Help him fix it and then move on. At first, there will probably be a lot of missed plurals but you don't have to fix every one. Start by just correcting a few here and there and gradually increase the percentage of them that you fix. After doing this for long enough, he should start correcting them on his own or be remembering without your help more and more. Eventually, you will get to the point where you can just correct the few errors whenever you hear them and you won't need to have specific times to work on it.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use the plural –s in conversational speech about 80% of the time without being reminded frequently, you're done! Just monitor the skill and come back to work on it if your child starts to forget.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses Plural –s in conversa- tional speech</b>							

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## Plural –s, Step Four: Conversational Speech



We are working on the plural –s in conversation. Here's how to help your child generalize it at home:

1. Ask your child questions throughout his day that require a plural –s in the response. This would be questions like “what are those?” (blocks) or “what do you want to eat?” (cookies). Help your child remember to include the plural –s on the end of these nouns to indicate that there is more than one.
2. If your child forgets a plural -s in conversational speech, gently point it out to him by saying “oh, there’s more than one \_\_\_\_\_, let’s add our plural –s”. Or, you could say “don’t forget your plural –s on that one!” You could also repeat his error back to him as a question to see if he can correct it himself. You could say “You want cookie? You only want one cookie?” Then wait to see if he corrects it to add the plural –s to tell you he wants more.

## How to Teach a Child to Use Irregular Plurals

### Rationale:

Most of the time in the English language, when we want to say that there is more than one of something, we just add an –s to the end of the word. Easy enough. However, there are quite a few words that change entirely when they are made plural. These words are quite tricky for children with language delays to learn because they don't follow many logical rules. When children say them incorrectly, they can sound much younger than they really are. Here are some steps to help your child learn those crazy ones.

### Age of Mastery:

Your child should be able to use irregular plurals by 5 years of age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Collect a list of target word pairs
2. Drill word pairs
3. Make sentences with word pairs
4. Correct in conversation

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will provide the correct irregular plural form of a singular word on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use irregular plurals in sentences on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use irregular plurals during conversational speech on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Irregular Plural Step One: Create a Word List

### Description:

First you will need to compile your list of word pairs and create materials to help your child practice.

### Activities:

Come up with a list of word pairs that have irregular plurals. For example, “foot” and “feet” would be one pair. You can choose word pairs that you know your child has trouble with or select from a list of commonly used pairs. Write down all of your words and decide how you will present them to your child. If your child can read, you can just use written words on flashcards or index cards. However, if your child is not reading yet, you can make a collection of pictures of each word that you can use as flashcards. You can use the ones on the following page or you can make your own using images you find online or in clipart. Come up with a list of about 20 words that you want to target. Unfortunately, you simply can't teach your child every irregular plural that is out there, but you can teach the most common ones now and then teach her others as she comes across them in life. Here are examples of word pairs you may want to use:

### When to Move On:

When you have a list of about 20 word pairs, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

Foot/feet	Child/Children	Cactus/Cacti	Elf/Elves	Fish/Fish	Half/Halves
Leaf/Leaves	Man/Men	Mouse/Mice	Moose/Moose	Octopus/Octopi	Person/People
Sheep/Sheep	Shelf/Shelves	Tooth/Teeth	Thief/Thieves	Wolf/Wolves	Woman/Women
Goose/Goose	Ox/Oxen	Knife/Knives	Scarf/Scarves	Loaf/Loaves	This/These

<b>Words We Will Target for Irregular Plurals</b>	
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## Irregular Plurals Cards

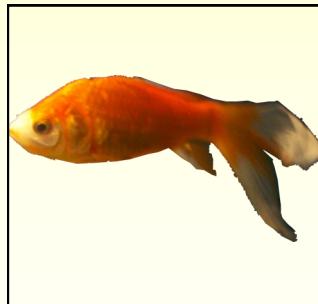
Use these cards for the irregular plural activities to help teach them to your child. Cover up the words if your child can read.



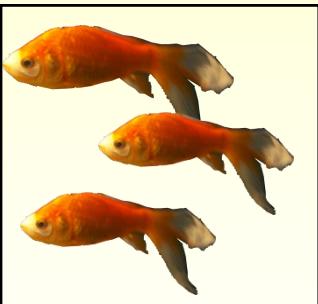
foot



feet



fish



fish



leaf



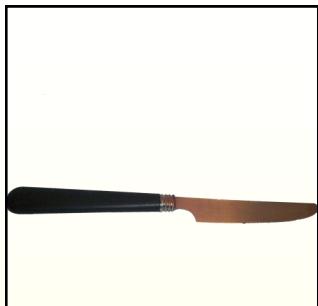
leaves



shelf



shelves



knife



knives



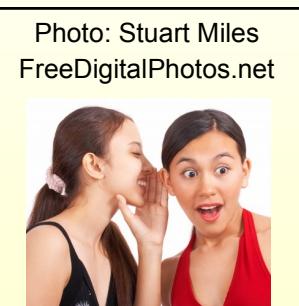
child



children



woman



women



mouse



mice

## Irregular Plural Step Two: Drill Word Pairs

### Description:

Now it's time to teach each of these word pairs to your child. Since there are very few rules about these words, you will need to teach each pair directly.

### Activities:

Show your child the list of words or the picture flashcards that you have created. Explain to him that most of the time when we want to say that there is more than one of something, we add an –s to the word. Then explain to him that these words are different and that they must change when there is more than one. Go over the list with him to show him what you mean. You can say “when there is one of these, we call it a foot. But when you talk about two of them, we say ‘feet’”. Then, tell your child it's his turn to practice. Try some of these activities to see what works best for your child:

- Straight drill and practice: Say a singular word to your child and ask him what the plural pair is. For example, you say “foot” and your child should say “feet”. Just do this over and over again with different word pairs.
- For a little more fun, you can play memory. Turn over all of the picture flashcards and have your child turn over two cards. Have your child tell you what's on each card. Make sure he uses the correct irregular plural on those that need it. If the two words match (are from the same pair), then he gets to keep them. See which of you can get the most matches. If you're taking turns at this as well, say a few of them wrong to see if your child can catch it and correct you.
- Get a fun app for your tablet such as [Plurality for I-Pad](#). This app will allow you to play memory games with irregular plurals. This is a great way to drill and practice because kids will typically play on the I-Pad for very long periods of time.

### When to Move On:

When your child can label the irregular plurals in single words about 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
Label irregular plurals in single words							

## Irregular Plurals, Step 2: Learning Irregular Plurals

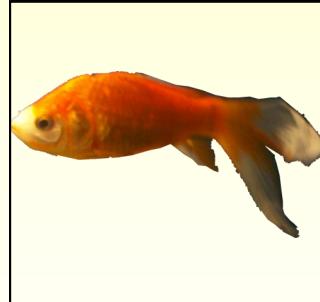
Have your child say these words individually (not in sentences). Ask your child “what is this?” or “what are these?” and help him come up with the correct answer. Cover the words if your child can read.



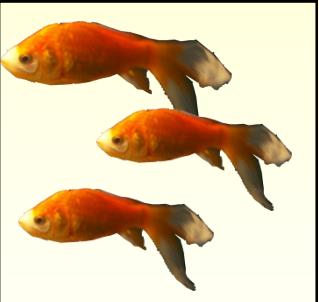
foot



feet



fish



fish



leaf



leaves



shelf



shelves



knife



knives



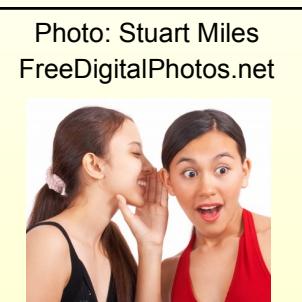
child



children



woman



women



mouse



mice

**Extra Practice:** Teach your child and practice other irregular plurals in the same manner!

### Irregular Plural Step Three: Make Sentences with Word Pairs

#### Description:

Now that your child knows the words, it's time for her to start using them in sentences.

#### Activities:

Show your child a pair of words from the last step. Tell your child that she will need to create a sentence using both of those words. You can get her started with a sentence like "I see one foot and two feet." Have her repeat the sentence back to you with the correct irregular plural. Then, show her another pair and have her say the same sentence but now with this pair of words. Once she gets the hang of it, see if she can come up with some more creative sentences, like "I fed the monster one cactus and he spit out two cacti".

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child is able to create sentences using pairs of words using the correct irregular plural about 80% of the time.

#### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, try backing up to simple phrases like "one foot, two feet" and then build your way up to being able to say them in sentences. Keep in mind it may take a while for your child to start remembering which plural to use. Have patience and keep practicing until this becomes second nature for your child.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child uses the correct irregular plural in each sentence):

	Date:						
<b>Use irregular plurals in sentences</b>							

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### Irregular Plurals, Step Three: Sentences

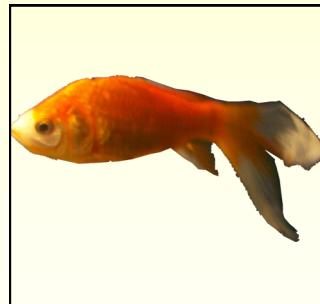
Have your child say these words in sentences. You can start with easy sentences like “I see one \_\_\_\_\_. I see two \_\_\_\_\_” or you can make up a unique sentence for each word. Make sure your child is using the correct plural! If your child can read, cover up the written words.



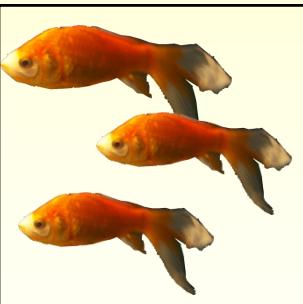
foot



feet



fish



fish



leaf



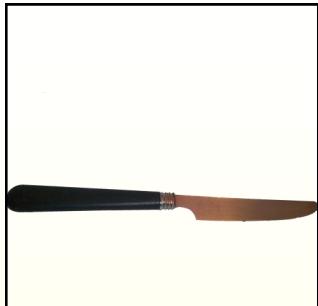
leaves



shelf



shelves



knife



knives



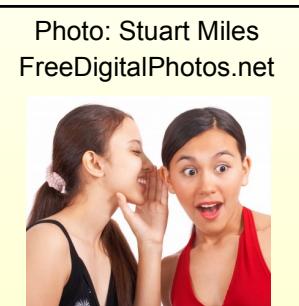
child



children



woman



women



mouse



mice

**Extra Practice:** Teach your child other irregular plurals and practice in the same manner!

## Irregular Plural Step Four: Correcting in Conversation

### Description:

The only thing left is for your child to start using the correct irregular plurals in conversation.

### Activities:

Start paying attention to how your child is saying these words in conversational speech. Chances are, he's still using the incorrect word when he's not focusing on it, like when you practice with the flash cards, and that's ok! Start by correcting those irregular plurals about 10% of the time when you hear them in conversation. This means you're not correcting him all the time (that would drive him nuts) but you're slowly beginning to bring his awareness to the fact that he needs to be saying those correctly in conversation. Gradually, increase the percentage of his irregular plural errors that you hear. As your percentage increases, his accuracy should also increase. Ease into this so that by the time you're correcting him 90-100% of the time, he's using it correctly most of the time anyway so there aren't many errors for you to correct. Make sure you correct him in a gentle manner so that he doesn't feel like you're picking on him.

### When to Move On:

When your child is using the irregular plurals about 80% of the time without being reminded, you can consider this skill mastered. Now all you have to do is watch for other troublesome irregular plurals that creep up and deal with them in the same way.

### Modifications:

If your child is still struggling to say these correctly in conversational speech, try staging some more structured conversations while reminding him periodically to be thinking about those irregular words. For example, you could ask him to tell you all the steps to putting his shoes on while using his good irregular plurals or ask him to tell you about his last birthday party.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses the correct irregular plural in conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Use irregular plurals in conversation</b>							

## Irregular Plurals, Step Four: Conversational Speech



We are practicing using correct irregular plurals in conversational speech. Here's how to help your child generalize the skill at home:

1. Ask your child questions throughout his day that require an irregular plural in the response. These would be questions like “where do you put your shoes?” (on your feet) or “what are those?” (children). Help your child remember to use the correct irregular plural form of these nouns to indicate that there is more than one.
2. If your child uses an irregular plural incorrectly in conversational speech, gently point it out to him by saying “oh, there’s more than one \_\_\_\_\_, we change that word to \_\_\_\_\_. You could also repeat his error back to him as a question to see if he can correct it himself. You could say “You put your shoes on your foots?” Then wait to see if he changes it to the correct irregular plural form.

## How to Teach a Child to Use the Present Progressing “-ing”

### Rationale:

The present progressive “-ing” grammatical marker is the one we tack on the end of a verb to say that the action is currently happening. For example, we might say “he is running” or “she is flying”. When a child does not use the “-ing” ending on present progressive verbs, it can be hard for the listener to determine the exact meaning of the sentence and can make the child’s speech sound telegraphic or choppy.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be using the present progressive “-ing” by two and a half years. However, keep in mind that there is a wide range of normal so some children may learn it earlier and some later, but that’s a good general age.

### Learning Steps:

1. “-ing” in single words
2. “-ing” in sentences
3. “-ing” in conversation

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will use the present progressive “-ing” in single words when answering the question “what is \_\_ doing?” on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the present progressive “-ing” in sentences when describing pictures on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the present progressive “-ing” during 5 minutes of conversational speech on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Present Progressive “-ing” Step One: “-ing” in Single Words

### Description:

First we need to teach your child to include the “-ing” on simple verbs.

### Activities:

Use the action card pictures on the following page or make your own by finding pictures online and printing them out. Show your child one picture and say “what is she doing?” Your child should already know the name of the action that the person is doing. If not, go back and teach those first. Your child will probably say the action word without using the “-ing” on the end. For example, if you say “what is she doing?”, your child may say “sit”. Repeat the word back to your child but add the “-ing” to the end. You can say “Sitting. She is sitting.” Then, have your child repeat “sitting” back to you. Do the same thing for each picture. Model the correct “-ing” form of the verb for each one. As you continue to do this, your child should begin to include the “-ing” on some of them by herself. Once she can label the cards using an “-ing” ending, start asking her the same question about other pictures or real people. If you see someone at the park, ask your child “what is she doing?” and help her respond with the correct “-ing” on the end. The more places you can do this with your child, the quicker she will learn to use it and generalize it to other settings.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to answer “what is \_\_\_ doing” with a verb + “-ing” about 80% of the time, you’re ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is not interested in this task, try finding pictures of her favorite tv or book characters doing these actions or take pictures of her doing various things. Then, use those pictures to ask “what is \_\_\_ doing?”.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses the “-ing” when describing actions):

	Date:						
<b>Use present progressive in single words</b>							

## Present Progressive “-ing”, Step One: Single Words

Ask your child “what is he/she doing?” and help your child answer by labeling the action and using the present progressive “-ing” on the end, like “jumping”.



Standing



Sitting



Eating

Photo Courtesy of Photostock -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Building

Photo Courtesy of Photostock -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Running

Photo by David Castillo  
Dominici - FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Hugging



Jumping

Photo Courtesy of jackthumm -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Washing Hands



Clapping

**Extra Practice:** You can practice this at home or in the community by talking about what people are doing. You can also look at family pictures or home movies and ask your child what people are doing in those. Make sure you help your child include the “-ing” at the end of the word.

## Present Progressive “-ing” Step Two: “-ing” in Sentences

### Description:

Now that your child knows how to use the “-ing”, let’s bump it up to saying it in sentences.

### Activities:

Get out the action pictures you used from step one again but this time prompt your child with “tell me about this picture”. The response we are looking for now is a full sentence about what the person in the picture is doing. The first several times you do this, you will need to tell him the answer and let him repeat it back to you. He will be used to saying just the single word and it will take some practice to get the whole sentence out. If you know the name of the character or person in the picture, you can say her name when you describe what she’s doing, such as “Dora is jumping”. If not, you can say “he” or “she”. If your child is having trouble with “he” and “she”, now would be a great time to work on those as well. Just make sure you don’t lose sight of whether your child is using the “-ing” on the verb. After having your child repeat the answer back to you several times, try asking him one and see if he will give you the whole sentence on his own. If he just tells you the name of the action again, you can prompt him by saying “use all of your words” and then get him started by saying “he...” and let him finish. Eventually, he should be able to create these sentences all on his own.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to use a full sentence with a verb + “-ing” when describing pictures about 80% of the time, you’re ready to move on to the next step.

### Modification:

As your child gets better at this, try making it harder by asking him to describe other pictures besides the ones you’ve been practicing. Ask him to tell you about pictures in books or about what real people are doing. Keep using that prompt “tell me about this picture” or “tell me about her”.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses “-ing” in the sentences):

	Date:						
<b>Use present progressive in sentences</b>							

## Present Progressive “-ing”, Step Two: Sentences

Say to your child, “tell me about this picture?” and help your child answer by saying a sentence about what the person is doing. Make sure your child uses the “-ing”.



Cutting



Standing



Falling



Helping



Kicking



Laying Down



Hanging



Opening



Riding

**Extra Practice:** You can practice this at home or in the community by talking about what people are doing. You can also look at family pictures or home movies and ask your child what people are doing in those. Make sure you help your child include the “-ing” at the end of the word.

### Present Progressive “-ing” Step Three: “-ing” in Conversation

#### Description:

Your child is moving right along! Time to start working on using that “-ing” in conversational speech.

#### Activities:

Start listening to your child’s conversational speech and see if she’s using that great “-ing” yet. If she is already using it just from practicing those sentences, then you’re good to go! Chances are though, she’ll need a little more help to get there. Start correcting those “-ing” verbs when you hear her use them incorrectly in conversational speech. Start by just correcting about 10% of the errors you hear. This will ease her into being corrected without overwhelming her. Then, slowly increase the percentage of time that you correct her. As you increase the frequency of your corrections, she should also begin doing more on her own. By the time you’re correcting 80-90% of the errors you hear, she shouldn’t be making many errors anymore so you’re still only correcting her every once in a while.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child is able to use the present progressive “-ing” in conversational speech about 80% of the time. After that, you can just monitor to make sure she doesn’t start forgetting again. If she does, get out some of these activities to practice as a refresher.

#### Modification:

If your child is having trouble with this, go back and practice using the “-ing” in pictures again every once in a while but still keep correcting her in conversational speech. This may give her the extra boost she needs to remember to do it more often. Use a variety of books and other media to give her plenty of different type of practice on this skill.

#### Data Collection (Mark if she uses the “-ing” in conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Use present progressive in conversation</b>							

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## Present Progressive “-ing”, Step Three: Conversation



### How to Help Your Child Generalize:

1. Ask your child questions throughout her day that require a present progressive “-ing” in the response. These would be questions like “what are you doing?” or “what is she doing?”. Help your child remember to use the present progressive “-ing” at the end of the word.
2. If your child forgets to include the “-ing” in conversational speech, gently remind her to include the word ending. You can say the correct word for her and have her imitate it back to you. Or, you could repeat her error back to her as a question to see if she can correct it herself. You could say “He jump?” Then wait to see if she adds the “-ing” to the end of the word.
3. Model the correct “-ing” on words frequently throughout your child’s day to remind him what it should sound like. Exaggerate the “-ing” when talking about verbs.

## How to Teach a Child to Use the Pronouns “He” and “She”

### Rationale:

Children with language delays often have difficulty with “he” and “she”. Some children call everyone “he” or everyone “she” despite their gender, some children say “him” and “her” instead, and some children just omit them entirely. No matter how your child is changing it, it can make it very hard to follow his train of thought if you’re not sure exactly who he’s talking about. Here are 5 steps you can use to teach your child how to correctly use “he” and “she” to describe other people.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be using the pronouns “he” and “she” by 3 years of age. Keep in mind that there is a wide range of normal so some children may learn it earlier and some later, but that’s a good general age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Know the Difference Between Boy and Girl
2. Use “he” and “she” in short phrases
3. Use “he” and “she” in sentences
4. Use “he” and “she” in short stories
5. Correct your child in conversational speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will correctly label the gender of a person in a picture or in real life on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the pronouns “he” and “she” in short phrases when answering questions about boys and girls on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Who has a ball?” “She does”).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the pronouns “he” and “she” in sentences when describing pictures of boys and girls on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “She is climbing” or “He is eating”).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the pronouns “he” and “she” in a short story while describing pictures or retelling a story from a book on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the pronouns “he” and “she” in conversational speech during a 5 minute language sample on at least 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Pronouns “He” and “She” Step One: Know the Difference Between Boy and Girl

### Description:

This is the first step to using “he” and “she” correctly because if you don’t understand the difference between a boy and a girl, you’re not going to be able to use those pronouns correctly. If you know that your child can already do this, you can move to step two.

### Activities:

Start by just asking your child “is that a boy or a girl?” when looking at pictures or pointing out real people. You can have her tell you boy or girl for family members, friends, familiar people, or pictures of people or characters in books. If your child is having trouble with real people, start with cartoon boys and girls. For some reason these seem to be easier for some children. Keep practicing this until your child can accurately tell you boy/girl when you ask. Make the practice fun by playing games while you do it.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to label boys and girls 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

What to do if your child is struggling:

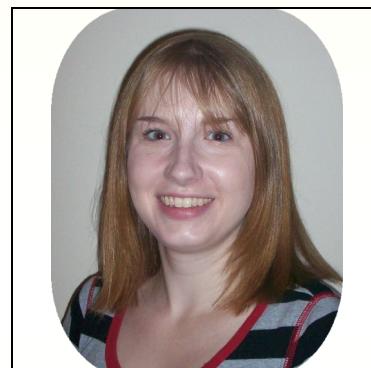
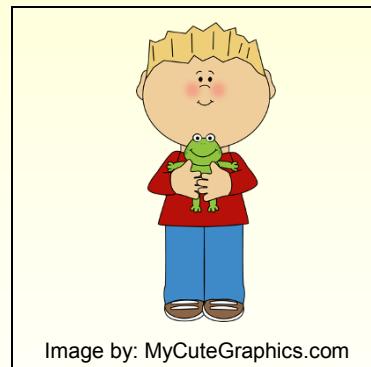
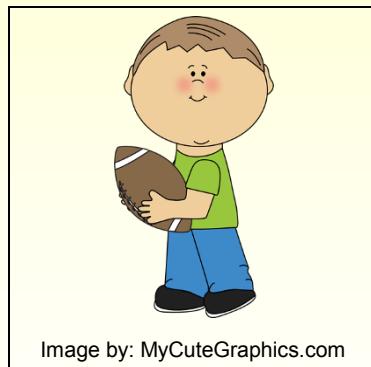
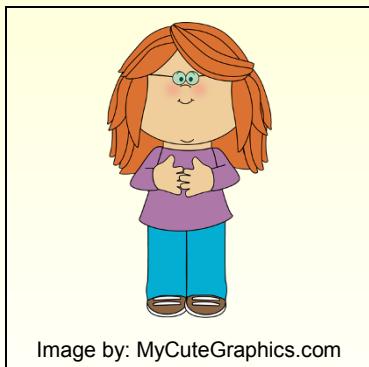
- Try just using one boy and one girl. Start with a cartoon boy and girl that are very obviously male or female or use pictures of real people he knows. Drill these with your child for a while, point out the girl, boy, girl, boy. Then pause to play with a toy or take a break. Do this several times and then lay both pictures in front of your child and say “where’s the boy” and have your child point to the boy. Say “where’s the girl” and have your child point to the girl. Keep doing this until your child can point without your help. Then, have your child label if each one is a boy or a girl. After he gets really good at this, switch one of the pictures to a slightly different cartoon boy and keep doing the same thing as you switch out pictures.

### Data Collection (Mark if he knows if the picture is a boy or a girl):

	Date:						
Labels boy or girl							

## Pronouns He/She, Step One: Is that a Boy or a Girl?

Look at the pictures below and ask your child if each one is a boy or a girl.



### Extra Practice:

Have your child tell you if other people are boys or girls. You can use people in your family, people your child sees on a regular basis, or people in pictures or books. Some children find either real photos or cartoons the easiest. Start with whichever one is easier for your child.

## Pronouns “He” and “She” Step Two: Use “He” and “She” in Short Phrases

### Description:

Now we want your child to be able to say “he” and “she” in very short phrases.

### Activities:

**Option One:** Use the pictures on the next page of a boy and a girl and then cut out the pictures of objects. Place the boy and girl in front of your child. Hold up one object and say “who wants the \_\_\_\_?”. Help your child choose if he wants the boy to have it or the girl. Then, help your child say “he does” or “she does”. Place the object next to that person. Keep doing this until all of the objects have been passed out.

**Option Two:** Another way you can use “he” and “she” in phrases is by placing two pictures in front of your child of a boy and a girl doing something. Then, ask your child “who is \_\_\_\_-ing?” and help your child answer “he is” or “she is”. For example, you could put down a picture of a boy riding his bike and a girl clapping her hands. Then you could ask, who is riding? Your child would then need to say “he is”. You can also do this while reading books with your child. Look at a picture that contains a person and say “who is \_\_\_\_-ing” with the appropriate action. Then, have your child point to the correct person and say “he is” or “she is”.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to answer a question using “he” or “she” appropriately in a short phrase about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses “he” or “she” in short phrase after a question</b>							

## Pronouns He/She, Step Two: Short Phrases

Help your child practice saying “he” or “she” by cutting out the objects below and having your child place them next to either the boy or the girl. For each object, say “who wants the \_\_\_?”. Then, have your child say “he does” or “she does” before you give her the object to place next to the person.



Photo Courtesy of David Castillo Dominici  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Photo Courtesy of Photostock  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice saying “he” and “she” in other settings as well. You can practice when you see people out in public or when you’re talking about who wants certain foods at dinner.

### Pronouns “He” and “She” Step Three: Use “He” and “She” in Sentences

#### Description:

Once your child can use “he” and “she” in simple phrases, have your child create sentences using “he” and “she”.

#### Activities:

Show your child pictures of people performing various actions and have him describe what that person is doing using “he” or “she” (such as “she is riding a bike”). You could use family photos, pictures of people online, pictures from magazines, or the pictures on the following worksheet. Give your child examples of the types of sentences you are looking for by taking turns and making up your own sentences with “he” and “she” when it’s your turn. If your child says “the boy is riding” or “Johnny is riding” instead of using the pronoun, you can say, “Yes, the boy is riding. If it’s a boy, do we say ‘he’ or ‘she’?” Then, have your child repeat the sentence using “he” or “she”. If your child uses the wrong pronoun, repeat it back to him with the error as though it were a question. For example, if he says “she is riding” but it’s a boy, you could say “She is riding??”. Pause for a moment and see if he can correct the error himself. If not, correct it for him by saying something like “this is a boy, do we say ‘he’ or ‘she’?”. Then, have your child repeat back the sentence correctly.

#### When to Move On:

When your child is able to describe pictures using “he” or “she” appropriately in sentences about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses “he” or “she” in sentences when describing pictures</b>							

## Pronouns He/She, Step Three: Sentences

Prompt your child with "tell me about this picture?" and help your child answer by saying a full sentence using the words "he" or "she".



Standing



Sitting



Eating

Photo Courtesy of Photostock -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Building

Photo Courtesy of Photostock -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Running

Photo by David Castillo  
Dominici - FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Hugging



Jumping

Photo Courtesy of jackthumm -  
FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Washing Hands



Clapping

**Extra Practice:** You can practice this at home or in the community by talking about what people are doing. You can also look at family pictures or home movies and ask your child what people are doing in those. Make sure you help your child include the pronouns "he" and "she" in full sentences.

## Pronouns “He” and “She” Step Four: Use “He” and “She” in Short Stories

### Description:

Once your child can correctly use “he” and “she” in single sentences, you will need to make the activities more difficult.

### Activities:

Get out a story book that has girl and boy characters and have your child describe what’s happening in the pictures. Make sure that your child uses the correct pronouns (he/she) when describing what’s going on. After you finish the story, have your child recall back to you what happened in the book. Make sure she uses the correct pronouns (he/she). If your child is having trouble remembering what happened, open the book and let her use the pictures as a reference. You can also do this same activity while making up stories. Make sure that your child uses “he” and “she” when telling you about the characters in her story. If you need some picture cues to help your child create a story and keep track of the characters, events, places, etc., take a look at the [Once Upon A Time card game on Amazon](#). This game has cards for various fairy tale characters, events, places, descriptors, and more. You can play the game according to the directions or just use the cards to help you create a story.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to tell or retell short stories using “he” or “she” appropriately about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Uses “he” or “she” in when telling or re-telling short stories</b>							

## Pronouns He/She, Step Four: Short Stories

Your child is ready to start working on saying “he” and “she” when telling stories. Use the steps below to help your child learn how to use “he” and “she”.



1. Get out a story book that has both girl and boy characters that your child can clearly identify the gender of (gender-neutral characters and animals are not great for this).
2. Open to the first page and tell your child that you want her to read you the book. Ask her to tell you what's going on using only the pictures. If your child can already read, cover up the words so she doesn't get any hints as to if she's supposed to say “he” or “she”. Ask your child to describe the first picture. Make sure she uses full sentences with the pronouns “he” and “she” when appropriate. You can show your child what to do on the first several pages if she's having trouble.
3. As you read the story, continue to correct your child when she misuses “he” and “she”. After the story, see if your child can recall what happened while still using the pronouns “he” and “she”.

\*\*\* Alternative option: Have your child make up a story. While she's telling you the story, make sure she uses “he” and “she” as appropriate. Remind your child before she starts that you will be listening for “he” and “she”, then, remind her frequently while she's talking.

## Pronouns “He” and “She” Step Five: Correcting In Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can use “he” and “she” in sentences and structured story-telling tasks, it’s time for your child to start using “he” and “she” correctly all the time.

### Activities:

Start listening to your child’s use of the pronouns “he” and “she” in conversational speech. When you hear your child use these pronouns incorrectly, use one of the following prompts to try to guide your child back to using the correct word:

- Repeat the error back as a question: “*She* is running?”
- Ask if the person is a boy or a girl and then ask which pronoun should be used: “Is that a boy or a girl? Ok, so should we say ‘he’s my friend’ or ‘she’s my friend’?”
- Catch the error and (kindly) point it out to your child: “Oh, you mean ‘*she* is happy’.”
- Fix the error without pointing it out: “Yes, *she* is at her Grandma’s house.”

At first, try not to correct every time your child says one of these pronouns incorrectly because there will most likely be a lot of errors at first. Try setting aside a certain time that you will correct your child and let him know ahead of time. For example, you might say “Tonight at dinner, I want you to focus really hard on saying “he” and “she”. I’m going to help you remember if you forget, ok?”. This will help your child understand that you’re not going to bug him all of the time, just during certain “good speech time” activities. As your child gets better, you can start catching and correcting more of his errors but start off small so that he doesn’t get frustrated. After a while, your child should begin to produce more correctly and you should be able to provide fewer prompts. Just remember, this whole process takes time and it may take months of working this process before your child is able to say “he” and “she” correctly all the time. Have patience and have faith that your child can do it, it will just take a lot of practice.

### When to Move On:

When your child is using “he” and “she” in conversation 80% of the time, you’re done! Then, you can just monitor to make sure your child doesn’t slip back again.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child uses “he” and “she” correctly in conversation):

	Date:						
<b>Uses “he” and “she” in conversation</b>							

## Pronouns He/She, Step Five: Conversation

Your child is ready to start working on saying “he” and “she” in conversational speech. Use the steps below to help your child generalize the pronouns “he” and “she” so that she begins to use them all the time.

1. At first, try not to correct every pronoun your child says incorrectly because there will most likely be a lot of them. Try setting aside a certain time that you will correct your child and let him know ahead of time. For example, you might say “Tonight at dinner, I want you to focus really hard on saying “he” and “she”. I’m going to help you remember if you forget, ok?”. This will help your child understand that you’re not going to bug him all of the time, just during certain “good speech time” activities.
2. As your child gets better, you can start catching and correcting more of his errors but start off small so that he doesn’t get frustrated. After a while, your child should begin to produce more correctly and you should be able to provide fewer prompts.
3. Use the following prompts to remind your child about using “he” and “she”:
  - ⇒ Repeat the error back as a question: “*She* is running?”
  - ⇒ Ask if the person is a boy or a girl and then ask which pronoun should be used: “Is that a boy or a girl? Ok, so should we say ‘*he*’s my friend’ or ‘*she*’s my friend?’”
  - ⇒ Catch the error and (kindly) point it out to your child: “Oh, you mean ‘*she* is happy’.”
  - ⇒ Fix the error without pointing it out: “Yes, *she* is at her Grandma’s house.”

## How to Teach a Child to Use Past Tense Verbs

### Rationale:

Many children with language delays have difficulty using the past tense of verbs. If they want to talk about something that already happened, they will use the present tense. This can make it difficult to tell when a child is talking about something in the past or something they want to do right now. You can teach your child this by using the following procedure.

### Age of Mastery:

Research shows that children are usually using past tense verbs by 4 years of age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Get Your Materials Together
2. What Happened?
3. Answering Questions About Past Events
4. Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will use the past tense to describe before/after pictures on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “What happened?” “He fell”).
- By <Date>, Child will use the past tense when recalling past events in his own life on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “What did you do outside?” “I played in the yard and rode my bike”).
- By <Date>, Child will correctly use the past tense verbs during 5 minutes of conversation on 80% observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where are we going?” “Ms. Apple’s room” or “Whose jacket is this?” “Johnny’s Jacket”).

## Past Tense Verbs Step One: Gather Your Materials

### Description:

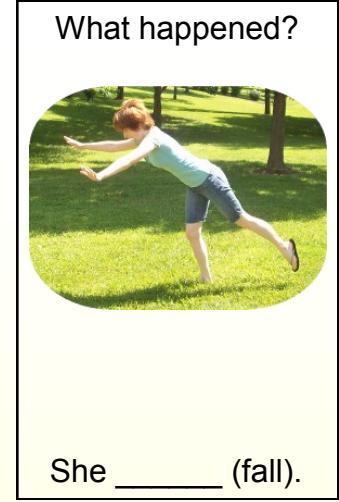
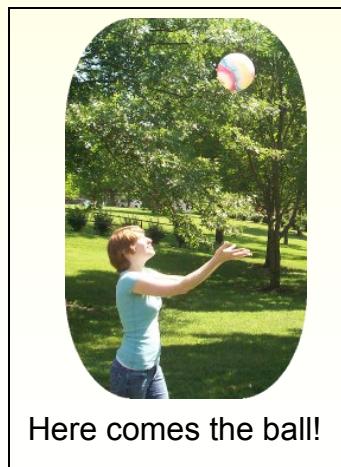
This first step is just for you. For this activity, you will need before and after pictures of many different actions. There must be a clear enough difference in these pictures that your child can tell what happened between the two. You can use the pictures included on the worksheets for this step or make your own. If you make your own, print them out so that you have the two pictures side by side or print them on the front and back of cards so you can just flip the card to see the after picture.

### When to Move On:

Once you have your materials together, head on to the next step!

## Past Tense Verbs 1

Help your child practice past tense verbs by asking your child what happened between the two pictures. If your child does not say her answer in the past tense, model the correct word and tell her that we change the word when we're talking about things that already happened.



### Extra Practice:

You can help your child learn past tense verbs by modeling and talking about correct use of past tense verbs. When you hear your child use the present tense to describe a past action, model the correct tense and talk to your child about how that event already happened so we need to change the way we say it.

## Past Tense Verbs 2

Help your child practice past tense verbs by asking your child what happened between the two pictures. If your child does not say her answer in the past tense, model the correct word and tell her that we change the word when we're talking about things that already happened.

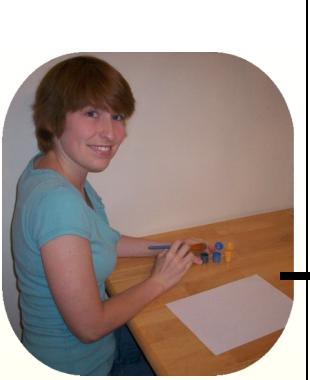
	What happened?  She _____ (open) it.	 She sees the ball.  She _____ (kick) it.
	What happened?  She _____ (sit) down.	 She is sleeping.  She _____ (wake) up.

### Extra Practice:

You can help your child learn past tense verbs by modeling and talking about correct use of past tense verbs. When you hear your child use the present tense to describe a past action, model the correct tense and talk to your child about how that event already happened so we need to change the way we say it.

## Past Tense Verbs 3

Help your child practice past tense verbs by asking your child what happened between the two pictures. If your child does not say her answer in the past tense, model the correct word and tell her that we change the word when we're talking about things that already happened.

	What happened? 		What happened? 
She has scissors and paper.  She _____ (cut) the paper.	She has a lot of blocks  She _____ (build) a tower.		
	What happened? 		What happened? 
She has paint and a paintbrush  She _____ (paint) a picture.	She has peanut butter, jelly and bread.  She _____ (make) a sandwich.		

### Extra Practice:

You can help your child learn past tense verbs by modeling and talking about correct use of past tense verbs. When you hear your child use the present tense to describe a past action, model the correct tense and talk to your child about how that event already happened so we need to change the way we say it.

## Past Tense Verbs Step Two: What Happened?

### Description:

For this step, you will be showing your child the before and after pictures and asking your child what happened. Your child should be able to tell the difference between the two pictures and know the vocabulary to describe what it was.

### Activities:

Show your child the first picture and describe what is happening. Then, show your child the second picture and say “what happened?” Your child should be able to describe the action that was performed, even if he doesn’t know how to use the past tense yet. If not, you may want to go back and work on labeling actions before you work on the past tense of them. Model the correct past tense of the word your child just provided and tell him that since it’s something that already happened, you have to change the word. Here’s how that might sound during the activity:

- ⇒ Parent: Look, she is running! (Show second picture) Oh no! What happened?
- ⇒ Child: Fall down!
- ⇒ Parent: You’re right, she *fell*. Listen, that’s something that already happened, so we’re going to change it. Instead of “*fall*”, we’re going to say “*fell*”. Listen, she *fell*.
- ⇒ Child: She fell.

Keep doing this activity until your child can appropriately use the past tense to talk about the actions that are represented in the pictures.

### When to Move On:

When your child is using the past tense 80% of the time to describe the pictures, you can move on. This may take a while so be patient and keep working on it!

### Data Collection (Mark if your child uses the correct past tense to describe the picture):

	Date:						
<b>Uses Past Tense to Describe Pics</b>							

## Past Tense Verbs Step Three: Answering Questions About Past Events

### Description:

Now that your child is able to use the past tense verbs in the controlled environment of the before/after cards, we want to expand her ability to use them elsewhere. We will start with working on using the past tense when answering questions about past events from her own life.

### Activities:

Ask your child questions about past events like birthday parties, going on a trip, or events from her day. While she's talking about these things, make sure she's using the past tense. If she forgets, you can use the same cues as you did in step two by telling her that it's something that already happened so we have to change the word. Keep doing this until your child can recall past events using the correct past tense verbs. Here are some ideas of questions you can ask to get you started:

- What did you do at Ryan's birthday party?
- What happened at recess today?
- How was your lunch today? Tell me about it.
- What was Molly up to today?
- What was your favorite part of our vacation/trip?

### When to Move On:

When your child is using the past tense 80% when answering questions about her day or other past events, you can move on.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses the correct past tense verb):

	Date:						
<b>Uses Past Tense to Answer Questions About the Past</b>							

## Past Tense Verbs, Step Three: Past Events

Your child is working on correct use of past tense verbs. Here is how you can help your child practice the past tense of verbs when answering questions about past events:



1. Ask your child questions about past events like birthday parties, going on trips, etc. Ask her to tell you about those events. If your child can't think of what to say, you can give prompts like "tell me about what you did while you were there" or "what kinds of food did you eat?". Encourage your child to use full sentences when answering these questions. Here are some examples of questions to get you started:
  - What did you do at Ryan's birthday party?
  - What happened at recess today?
  - How was your lunch today? Tell me about it.
  - What was Molly up to today?
  - What was your favorite part of our vacation/trip?
2. When you hear your child forget to use the past tense (such as "I go to the store" instead of "I went to the store") or if she uses the incorrect word (such as "I goed to the store"), you can gently remind your child how to say it correctly. Remind her that when we talk about things that already happened, we need to change the word. Then, model the correct word for your child to imitate.
3. Point out past tense verbs in your own speech from time to time and talk about how you changed the word because it was something that already happened. You can even say the incorrect past tense word sometimes and see if your child catches you. If not, make sure you point out your error to her so she doesn't think that was the correct way to say it.

## Past Tense Verbs Step Four: Conversational Speech

### Description:

Now that your child is able to use past tense verbs when describing pictures and when recalling past events, the only thing left is everyday conversation. You can help your child remember to use past tense in conversation using the reminders below.

### Activities:

Whenever you hear your child incorrectly use the past tense in conversation, help remind him in the same way you did in the other steps. Eventually, he'll be able to do this on his own and not need reminders from you anymore. However, if you are just starting this step and your child isn't already doing some past tense correctly on his own, try to start off slow. Don't correct every error you hear or you will stress your child out and he will become frustrated. Just point out a few here and there to start with and gradually start reminding him about more of them. Here are some prompts you can use to remind him:

- Repeat your child's sentence back to him with the corrected verb, exaggerate the corrected verb (Yes, she *ran* all the way to the park).
- Repeat your child's sentence back with the error as a question and see if he can correct it on his own (She *runned* all the way to the park?).
- Use a reminder like this: "Oh, she did something that already happened, we need to change that word. Let's say 'She *ran* all the way to the park.'"

### When to Move On:

When your child is using the past tense in conversation about 80% of the time, you can consider that he's mastered this skill. Keep reminding him if he forgets but you can now go on to focus on a different speech and language skill.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses the past tense correctly in conversation):

	Date:						
<b>Using Past Tense In Conversation</b>							

## Past Tense Verbs, Step Four: Conversation

Your child is working on correct use of past tense verbs in conversation. Here is how you can help your child practice the past tense of verbs when you're talking to your child:



Whenever you hear your child incorrectly use the past tense in conversation, help remind him to change it to the past tense. Eventually, he'll be able to do this on his own and not need reminders from you anymore.

However, if you are just starting this step and your child isn't already doing some past tense correctly on his own, try to start off slow. Don't correct every error you hear or you will stress your child out and he will become frustrated. Just point out a few here and there to start with and gradually start reminding him about more of them. Here are some prompts you can use to remind him:

- Repeat your child's sentence back to him with the corrected verb, exaggerate the corrected verb (Yes, she *ran* all the way to the park).
- Repeat your child's sentence back with the error as a question and see if he can correct it on her own (She *runned* all the way to the park?).
- Use a gentle reminder like this one: "Oh, she did something that already happened, we need to change that word. Let's say 'She *ran* all the way to the park.'"

## How to Teach a Child to Use Articles

### Rationale:

Children with language delays often leave out articles like “a”, “the”, and “some”. This can make their speech choppy and hard to follow.

### Age of Mastery:

Your child should be using articles by 4 years of age. Some children start using them much earlier but this is a good point of reference for when you may want to start intervention.

### Learning Steps:

1. Articles in short phrases
2. Articles in sentences
3. Articles in conversational speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will use the articles “a”, “the”, and “some” in short phrases on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the articles “a”, “the”, and “some” in sentences on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the articles “a”, “the”, and “some” in conversational speech on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Articles Step One: Articles in Short Phrases

### Description:

We will start by simply asking your child “what’s this” and having her reply with an article such as “a”, “the”, or “some”.

### Activities:

Start with several pictures of common objects. You can use the pictures on the next page or create your own. Show your child a picture of an object and say “what’s this?” Your child will probably say the name of the object but not include any articles. Demonstrate for your child how to say the word with an article. Start with just pictures of single items at first so that you can practice “a” and “the” in front of the word. You can say “a dog” or “the chair”. You will probably need to say it for your child for a while and have her practice saying it back to you. Eventually, your child should get to the point where she can say it on her own with the article. Once she can do this, move on to pictures of multiple objects. Then, help your child use the article “some” in front of those. Explain to your child that when there’s more than one of something we say “some”. Your child will need to have some concept of quantity in order to do this, at least enough to know when there is one or more items. Help your child practice saying “some \_\_\_\_”. You can also help her add the plural /s/ or irregular plural word on there as well, as long as she doesn’t get too overwhelmed. Once she can use “some” consistently, start switching between pictures with one item and pictures with many. This should give her practice at switching between “a” or “the” and “some”. Keep in mind that “the” can be used for single or multiple items.

### When to Move On:

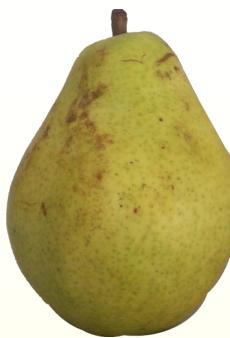
When your child is able to use an appropriate article in front of a noun about 80% of the time in short phrases, you are ready to move on.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses an appropriate article in front of each noun):

	Date:						
<b>Uses appropriate article in front of noun in short phrases</b>							

## Articles, Step One: Using Articles in Short Phrases

Ask your child “what’s this?” for each of the pictures below. Help your child say the name of the object along with an article (such as “a ball”, “the car”, “some bananas”).



\*\* If your child is having trouble with this, try focusing on one article at a time. For example, if it's too hard to figure out when to use “a” and when to use “some”, just start with “a” and only talk about pictures that have one object in them instead of many.

**Extra Practice:** Start pointing out articles in conversational speech as well. Exaggerate them when you say them or repeat back what your child said while including the correct articles.

## Articles Step Two: Articles in Sentences

### Description:

Now that your child can use articles in short phrases, it's time to move up to the big leagues, time for sentences!

### Activities:

Get out the pictures you used in the last step and show your child a picture. Ask him to come up with a sentence about this word. You may have to help him come up with sentences at first if he's not used to this type of task. Say the sentence for him and have him repeat it back to you. Make sure he uses the correct article in the sentence. Use the different articles in different sentences so he gets practice with a variety of them. Once he starts to get the hang of it, you can have him come up with the sentences on his own.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to use appropriate articles in sentences about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

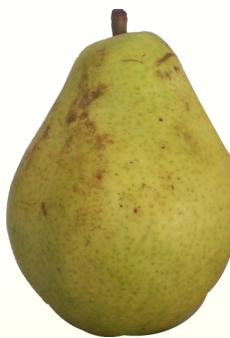
If your child is having trouble with this step, try using some simple repetitive sentences at first. You can say "I see a \_\_\_" or "Give me the \_\_\_" for each sentence for a while. Then, as he starts to get better at it, you can add in some different sentence types and eventually make it to the point where he's making up his own sentences.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses an appropriate article in each sentence):

	Date:						
<b>Uses appropriate articles in simple sentences</b>							

## Articles, Step Two: Using Articles in Sentences

Ask your child to tell you a sentence about each picture below. Make sure your child uses an appropriate article (a, the, some) in the sentence: such as, "I see a ball" or "she is wearing *the* coat".



\*\* If your child is having trouble with this, try focusing on one article at a time. For example, if it's too hard to figure out when to use "a" and when to use "some", just start with "a" and only talk about pictures that have one object in them instead of many.

**Extra Practice:** When your child leaves out an article in conversational speech, repeat his sentence back to him while including and exaggerating the missing article.

## Articles Step Three: Articles in Book-Reading Activities

### Description:

Time to bump it up again, now you get to work on helping your child say the articles during book-reading activities.

### Activities:

Sit down with your child for some book-reading time. Find a comfy spot to work and let your child choose the books. Practice the following activities while making sure your child is using appropriate articles:

- Ask your child to describe the pictures to you. Have her tell you what's going on in each of the pictures while making sure to use her good articles. If she forgets one, gently remind her to include it.
- Ask your child questions about what's going on in the story or pictures. You can ask questions like "what's this?", "what does she have?", "what did she do?", and "what is she going to do next".
- Have your child recall what happened after you finish reading the story.
- Show your child the written word for one of the articles. Help your child find that word in the printed text of the book and then read that sentence back to her.
- Have your child "read" you the book by making up a story based on only the pictures.

If your child forgets an article during any of these activities, gently remind her to use it and have her imitate the sentence back to you correctly.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to use appropriate articles in these book-reading activities about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses appropriate articles when they are needed):

	Date:						
<b>Uses appropriate articles in book-reading activities</b>							

## Articles Step Three: Articles in Book-Reading Activities



Your child is working on using articles (a, the, some) during book-reading activities. Sit down with your child for some book-reading time. Find a comfy spot to work and let your child choose the books. Practice the following activities while making sure your child is using appropriate articles. If she forgets, gently remind her and have her repeat the correct sentence back to you:

- Ask your child to describe the pictures in the book to you. Have her tell you what's going on in each of the pictures while making sure to use her good articles.
- Ask your child questions about what's going on in the story or pictures. You can ask questions like "what's this?", "what does she have?", "what did she do?", and "what is she going to do next".
- Have your child recall what happened after you finish reading the story.
- Show your child the written word for one of the articles. Help your child find that word in the printed text of the book and then read that sentence back to her.
- Have your child "read" you the book by making up a story based on only the pictures.

## Articles Step Four: Articles in Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can use articles in sentences and structured activities, we want him to start using them all the time.

### Activities:

Start listening to your child's use of articles during conversational speech. If he's beginning to use them, then you will just need to remind him every once in a while along the way. However, if he's not yet using them, he may need a little boost. Try some of these activities to improve his ability to use articles in conversation. The ideas at the top of the list will be easier and should be used before the later ones.

- Repeat back the sentences that he says with missing articles but add them back in. Exaggerate the article when you say it. For example, if he says "I see dog", you can say "you see A dog".
- Repeat back his sentences with missing articles exactly the way he said it but make it sound like you're confused. You could say "you see dog?". See if he can correct it to add the article on his own. If not say "Oh, you see A dog. Tell me that, say 'I see A dog'."
- Point out when you hear him miss articles. You can say "Oh, I hear an article there, listen: "I see A dog". See if he can repeat it back to you.
- Remind him to use an article by saying something like "I think you forgot your article, can you say that again?"

### When to Move On:

When your child is using articles in conversation about 80% of the time, you can stop working on it directly. At that point, you will want to just monitor and make sure your child continues to use articles, but you can move on to working on a different speech and language skill.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses articles in conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Uses appropriate articles in conversational speech</b>							

## Articles Step Four:

### Articles In Conversation



Your child is working on using articles (a, the, some) in conversational speech. Follow these tips to help your child remember to do this at home and out in the community. Start listening to your child's use of articles during conversational speech. If he's beginning to use them, then you will just need to remind him every once in a while along the way. However, if he's not yet using them, he may need a little boost. Try some of these activities to improve his ability to use articles in conversation. The ideas at the top of the list will be easier and should be used before the later ones.

- Repeat back the sentences that he says with missing articles but add them back in. Exaggerate the article when you say it. For example, if she says "I see dog", you can say "you see A dog".
- Repeat back his sentences with missing articles exactly the way he said it but make it sound like you're confused. You could say "you see dog?". See if he can correct to add the article on his own. If not say "Oh, you see A dog. Tell me that, say 'I see A dog'."
- Point out when you hear him miss articles. You can say "Oh, I hear an article there, listen: "I see A dog". See if he can repeat it back to you.
- Remind him to use an article by saying something like "I think you forgot your article, can you say that again?"

## How to Teach a Child to Use The Conjunction “And”

### Rationale:

Children with language delays often leave out conjunctions like “and” in their conversational speech. This can make their speech sound choppy and hard to follow. Try these activities to help your child start using the “and” conjunction.

### Age of Mastery:

Your child should be using conjunctions by 4 years of age. Some children start using them much earlier but this is a good point of reference for when you may want to start intervention.

### Learning Steps:

1. Combining Two Nouns
2. Structured Conversation
3. Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will use the conjunction “and” in short phrases on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the conjunction “and” in structured conversation on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use the conjunction “and” in conversational speech on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Conjunction “And” Step One: Combining Two Nouns

### Description:

First, we will start by using the conjunction “and” between two nouns. This will be the simplest way to address this with your child.

### Activities:

Put two pictures in front of your child of two different objects. Write the word “and” on a small piece of paper that will fit between the two pictures. Have your child tell you what the pictures are (ex: “cat, dog”). Now, add the piece of paper that says “and” and read the phrase to your child while you touch each picture or word as you say it (ex: “cat and dog”). Have your child repeat that back to you while she points to each picture/word. You may have to help your child point to each picture as she says it. This can be tricky for kids who haven’t done it before but it’s a great pre-reading skill. Tell your child that the word in the middle means “and”. Tell your child that when we are talking about more than one thing together, we have to put the “and” between their names. Next, ask your child “What are these?” and have her repeat back the phrase while pointing (ex: “Cat and dog”). Now, switch to two different pictures but leave the “and” in the middle. Ask your child “What are these?”. Help your child point and say “\_\_ and \_\_”. Keep doing this until your child can “read” the phrase all by herself. Then, take away the word “and” and just hold up two pictures. Ask your child “What are these?” and help her say “\_\_ and \_\_” without the cue of having the “and” word printed between them.

### When to Move On:

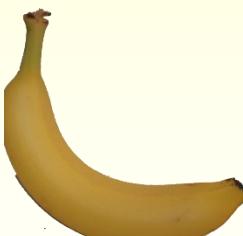
When your child can answer the “what are these” question with two objects using the conjunction “and” about 80% of the time (without needing to have the printed word “and” there), you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says “and” when you show her two objects and ask “what are these?”):

	Date:						
<b>Answers “what are these” ques- tion with con- junction “and”</b>							

**Conjunction “And” Step One:****Combining Two Nouns**

Help your child “read” the following phrases by combining the two nouns with the conjunction “and”. Have her point to each word, including “and”, as she says it out loud.

**and**

apple

**and**

bus

**and**

cupcake

donut

**and**

cookie

**and**

fish

football



ice cream



plane

**Extra Practice:** Once your child can “read” these phrases above, hold up two objects or pictures of objects in front of your child. Ask your child “what are these?” Then, help her answer by combining the two nouns with the conjunction “and”, such as “apple and ball”.

## Conjunction “And” Step Two: Structured Conversation

### Description:

Now we want to get your child to use the “and” in other tasks besides just the very controlled activity you did in step one.

### Activities:

Try some of these activities and remind your child to use “and” when it should be used.

- Have your child answer questions while reading a book or talking about his day and see if you can catch your child leaving out an “and”. For example, you could say “what do you see on this page?” or “what did you eat for dinner?” Questions that require a list of answers will be great for practicing this. If your child leaves off the “and”, gently remind him by saying “oh wait, you said more than one thing, we need to add “and” in there. You ate chicken *and* corn.”
- Ask your child to describe all of the steps that he would need to do to complete a task. For example, ask your child all of the steps to washing his hands or putting on his shoes and socks. Make sure that he’s using “and” at all of the appropriate times when describing these sequences.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use the conjunction “and” in structured conversation about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

For some children, this step is a little bit too much of a leap from the last step. If your child is struggling with this, try having your child use the conjunction “and” in single sentences first, like “I see a ball *and* a dog”. Then, once your child is able to do that consistently, try moving on to this step.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child uses “and” in these structured conversation tasks):

	Date:						
Uses “and” in structured conversation							

**Conjunction “And” Step Two:  
“And” in Structured Conversation**



Your child is practicing using the conjunction “and” in structured conversation. Try these activities to help your child remember to use them.

- Have your child answer questions while reading a book or talking about his day and see if you can catch your child leaving out an “and”. For example, you could say “what do you see on this page?” or “what did you eat for dinner?” Questions that require a list of answers will be great for practicing this. If your child leaves off the “and”, gently remind him by saying “oh wait, you said more than one thing, we need to add “and” in there. You ate chicken *and* corn.”
- Ask your child to describe all of the steps that he would need to do to complete a task. For example, ask your child all of the steps to washing his hands or putting on his shoes and socks. Tell your child before you begin the activity to make sure he uses “and” when he needs to. As he talks, think about if he’s using “and” at all of the appropriate times when describing these sequences and correct him as necessary.

\*\*If your child is struggling with this, try having your child practice using the conjunction “and” in simple sentences, like “I see a ball and a tree”. Once he is able to do this well, then try these harder activities again.

## Conjunction “And” Step Three: Conversational Speech

### Description:

Now that your child can use “and” during the structured conversational tasks, we want to encourage your child to use “and” all the time.

### Activities:

Start listening for “and” in your child’s conversational speech. You will either notice that your child is always leaving it out, that she’s always including them, or somewhere in between. If your child isn’t using “and” all of the time yet, you’ll want to start using gentle reminders to help her include them in conversation. Try some of these tips.

- Choose a 5-minute time block and tell your child that you’re going to be listening for her “and”s. If she forgets an “and”, gently remind her by saying “Oh, let’s put an “and” in there!”. Help her say it correctly and then move on. After the 5 minutes are up, don’t keep bugging your child about the “and”. Start having more and more 5-minute blocks throughout your week and eventually start increasing the time as well. Eventually, you will get to the point where you are always on alert for your child’s “and”s and she’s always thinking about using them, though this might take a while so build up to it gradually!
- Start by correcting only 10% of the time that your child doesn’t use the conjunction “and”. That means, only point it out once out of every 10 times. After doing this for a week or two, bump it up to 20%. As you continue to increase the amount of prompting, your child should begin to increase the number of times she remembers it on her own. By the time you get up to correcting 90% of the time, the errors should be few and far between so your child still won’t feel like you’re constantly nagging her about it. If she doesn’t improve that quickly, slow down your rate of increase.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use the conjunction “and” in conversational speech about 80% of the time, then she is done working on this skill. Just keep monitoring it until she is doing it all the time.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses “and” in conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Uses “and” in conversation</b>							

**Conjunction “And” Step Three:****“And” in Conversational Speech**

Start listening for “and” in your child’s conversational speech. You will either notice that your child is always leaving them out, that she’s always including them, or somewhere in between. If your child isn’t using “and” all of the time yet, you’ll want to start using gentle reminders to help her include them in conversation. Try some of these tips.

- Choose a 5-minute time block and tell your child that you’re going to be listening for her “and”s. If she forgets an “and”, gently remind her by saying “Oh, let’s put an “and” in there!”. Help her say it correctly and then move on. After the 5 minutes are up, don’t keep bugging your child about the “and”. Eventually, start having more and more 5-minute blocks throughout your week and eventually start increasing the time as well.
- Start by correcting only 10% of the time that your child doesn’t use the conjunction “and”. That means, only point it out once out of every 10 times. After doing this for a week or two, bump it up to 20%. As you continue to increase the amount of prompting, your child should begin to increase the number of times she remembers it on her own. By the time you get up to correcting 90% of the time, the errors should be few and far between so your child still won’t feel like you’re constantly nagging her about it. If she doesn’t improve that quickly, slow down your rate of increase.

## How to Increase a Child's Length of Utterance

### Rationale:

Many children with language delays are not using sentences that are as long as they should be for their age. These children may only be using a few words at a time instead of full sentences like other children their age. This can make it difficult to understand what your child is saying and can cause your child to become frustrated when he's not able to communicate.

### Age of Mastery:

Age Range:	Expected Sentence Length:
1;0-2;2	1.0-2.0
2;3-2;6	2.0-2.5
2;7-2;10	2.5-3.0
2;11-3;4	3.0-3.75
3;5-3;10	3.75-4.5
3;11+	4.5 +

Here is a table of specific ages and what average sentence length is expected for that age in morphemes. Morephemes are the smallest parts that you can break a word into that still have their own meaning. For example, "socks" can be broken into "sock" (the thing you wear on your foot) and "-s" (the marker that indicates there is more than one). "Jumping" can be broken into "jump" (the action) and "-ing" (the marker that indicates it's happening right now). However, the word "butterfly" cannot be broken down at all because it is all one unit. As a general rule to make it easier to remember, a 1-year-old should be using 1 word at a time, a 2 year old should be using 2-word combinations, and a 3-year-old should be using 3-word sentences.

### Learning Steps:

1. Talk Right Above Their Level
2. Expand on Their Utterances
3. Find Out What's Missing

### Sample IEP Goals:

To write IEP goals for increasing length of utterance, you will want to write the target MLU plus give strategies of what the child will do to get there. Here are some ideas:

- Overall Goal: By <Date>, Child will increase MLU from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ as measured during a 5-minute language sample on 3 consecutive data collection days.
  - Benchmarks: Child will produce \_\_\_\_ grammatical marker with 80% accuracy in conversational speech. –or– Child will imitate 3-word utterances with 80% accuracy, etc.

## Increase Sentence Length, Step One: Talk Right Above Your Child's Level

### Description:

Let me clarify, this doesn't mean talking down to your child, this means speaking in sentences that are slightly longer and more difficult than the sentences she is producing herself. Here's how to do this.

### Activities:

Take a moment to think about how long your child's sentences typically are. Are they mostly one word at a time? Or does she combine words into 2, 3, or 4 word sentences? Whatever your child does most often, you will want to model sentences for your child that are slightly longer than that. For example, if your child uses mostly 2-word utterances, then you should use mostly 3-word sentences when you speak to your child. This will give your child a great model of sentences that are more challenging than what she's currently saying but not so challenging that she won't be able to figure them out and imitate them. It can be hard to get into the habit of using only 3 words at a time with your child but the more you do this, the more she will benefit from it. Here are some ideas of activities you can do while practicing shortening what you say to your child.

- Self-Talk: Talk about what you are doing while you do it. Make sure you are using sentences that are slightly longer than the ones your child typically uses.
- Parallel Talk: Talk about what your child is doing while she's doing it. You can comment on what she's doing, what she's holding, what she might be thinking or feeling, etc.
- Describe pictures in books while using these shortened sentences.

### When to Move On:

When you feel comfortable speaking this way when talking to your child, you are ready to move on to the next step. I recommend doing several times for a week before moving on to introducing a new strategy.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Days I practiced shortening my sentences</b>							

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## Increasing Mean Length of Utterance (MLU):

### Step One—Talk Right Above Your Child’s Level



The average length of your child’s sentences is not what is expected for your child’s age. We want to work to increase his length of utterance by adding more words to his vocabulary and increasing his ability to use those words to form longer sentences. Here are some ideas of how to do that. Try these activities at home.

Take a moment to think about how long your child’s sentences typically are. Are they mostly one word at a time? Or does she combine words into 2, 3, or 4 word sentences? Whatever your child does most often, you will want to model sentences for your child that are slightly longer than that. For example, if your child uses mostly 2-word utterances, then you should use mostly 3-word sentences when you speak to your child. This will give your child a great model of sentences that are more challenging than what she’s currently saying but not so challenging that she won’t be able to figure them out. It can be hard to get in the habit of using only 3 words at a time with your child but the more you do this, the more she will benefit from it. Here are some ideas of activities you can do while practicing shortening what you say to your child.

- Self-Talk: Talk about what you are doing while you do it. Make sure you are using sentences that are slightly longer than the ones your child typically uses. Use a variety of different words to give your child plenty of models.
- Parallel Talk: Talk about what your child is doing while she’s doing it. You can comment on what she’s doing, what she’s holding, what she might be thinking or feeling, etc. Try to predict what your child might say if she were to talk about what is going on with her.
- Describe pictures in books while using these shortened sentences. You don’t need to read the words exactly from the page, summarize using shorter sentences.

## Increase Sentence Length Step Two: Expand on What Your Child Says

### Description:

Expansion is a great tool that can help you build on what your child says.

### Activities:

While you are playing or talking with your child, repeat back something he says but add one additional word to it as you do. For example, if your child says “ball”, you could say “throw ball”, “mommy ball”, “my ball”, etc. If your child says “eat cookie”, you could say “Tommy eat cookie”, “you eat cookie”, “want eat cookie”, etc. Try to anticipate what you think your child is trying to communicate to you and provide him that word to say. Just make sure you’re only adding one word to what he said. It may feel weird to leave out other words in the sentence that you know should go there but if you add more than one word at a time, it will be too difficult for him to remember and use later. You can always add those other words in later. For this activity your child doesn’t need to repeat the sentences you say back, we just want him to hear what you’re saying and how you’re saying it. Keep doing this even if you feel like your child isn’t paying attention. Chances are he’s picking up at least some of it.

### When to Move On:

When you feel comfortable expanding on what your child says by adding one word, you are ready to move on to the next step. I recommend you practice this strategy several times for a week to get comfortable using it before you try adding in a new strategy.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Days I practiced expanding my child's utterances</b>							

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## Increasing Sentence Length Step Two: Expanding On What Your Child Says



The average length of your child's sentences is not what is expected for your child's age. We want to work to increase his length of utterance by adding more words to his vocabulary and increasing his ability to use those words to form longer sentences. One way to do that is through use of expansions. Here's how you can use expansions at home to help increase your child's average sentence length:

- While you are playing or talking with your child, repeat back something he says but add one additional word to it as you do. For example, if your child says "ball", you could say "throw ball", "mommy ball", "my ball", etc. If your child says "eat cookie", you could say "Tommy eat cookie", "you eat cookie", "want eat cookie", etc. Try to anticipate what you think your child is trying to communicate to you and provide him that word to say. Just make sure you're only adding one word to what he said. It may feel weird to leave out other words in the sentence that you know should go there but if you add more than one word at a time, it will be too difficult for him to remember and use later. You can always add those other words in later. For this activity your child doesn't need to repeat the sentences you say back, we just want him to hear what you're saying and how you're saying it. Keep doing this even if you feel like your child isn't paying attention. Chances are he's picking up at least some of it.
- If your child isn't talking yet or doesn't speak very often, you may find it difficult to use this strategy. In that case, you can use a single word to describe any gestures or body language he uses to communicate. For example, if he points at the cookie, say "cookie" or "eat" or "yummy" to him. Try to guess at what you think he might be trying to say and model the word for it, even if he doesn't say it back to you yet.

### Increase Sentence Length Step Three: Find Out What's Missing

#### Description:

Now that you are providing your child with great language models that she can use to build and grow her language skills, it's time to take a look at specific structures you may be able to target next.

#### Activities:

Start writing down things your child says. Write down the whole sentence if she's using more than one word at a time. Make sure that you write them down exactly the way she says them, including any grammar errors (that's what we're looking for!). For example, if she says "That Mommy hat", don't write down "that's Mommy's hat" because then she would get credit for using the 's on "that's" and "Mommy's". It may take some time to get used to this because we often translate what we know our kids are trying to say in our heads. Try to write down exactly what she says. When you have 40-50 different sentences written down, go through and look at the types of words your child is using. Is he using nouns? Verbs? Adjectives? Grammatical markers like "and" and "the"? How about social words like "hi", "bye", and "thank you"? Go through and find out what your child is missing. Then, go back to the developmental charts at the beginning and see which of these things he should be using. If your child is not using a variety of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, then I would pick one of those groups and teach a few words from that word type. For example, if you notice that your child uses mostly nouns, try going through and teaching him some verbs to expand his vocabulary. If your child is using a good variety of these types of words, you could try adding some grammatical markers. Pick some from the lists that are early-developing so they will be easier. Markers like "-ing" and plural "s" are great to start with. Go through and figure out what words you think your child is missing and then go back and find a guide that will help you teach that to your child. The more word structures you teach your child, the longer his sentences will become.

#### When to Move On:

Keep doing these strategies until your child's sentence length is about average for a child his age.

#### Data Collection:

<b>Which Types of Words or Grammatical Markers are Missing:</b>	
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# Question Guides

## How to Teach a Child to Answer Yes/No Questions

### Rationale:

This is a common target for speech therapy sessions because once a child can answer yes/no questions, you will be able to get more information to find out what they are trying to communicate to you. This can be incredibly helpful to reduce frustration caused when your child is trying to tell you something but can't be understood.

### Age of Mastery:

Your child should be able to answer basic yes/no questions by 2 years of age. As your child gets older, he should be able to answer more complex yes/no questions as well.

### Learning Steps:

1. Do You Want It? (Yes)
2. Do You Want It? (No)
3. Yes/No About Basic Wants and Needs
4. Is this a \_\_\_\_?

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer yes or no to the question "do you want it?" on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer yes/no questions about his wants and needs (like "are you hungry?" or "are you ready?") on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer yes or no to "is this a \_\_\_\_" questions when shown a familiar object or "is she \_\_\_\_-ing" questions when shown a familiar action on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer a variety of yes/no questions about a book read aloud (about the story and/or pictures) on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

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## Yes/No Questions Step One: Do You Want It? (Yes)

### Description:

First, we'll start by just asking your child the simple question "do you want it" about something we know she will want.

### Activities:

Show your child something you know she likes, such as bubbles or a favorite snack. Then, ask your child, "Do you want \_\_\_\_?" (Fill in the blank). If your child shows you that she wants it (by reaching for it or repeating the word), say "yes" and nod your head for your child to imitate. You can do this by having her say the word "yes" or by nodding her head up and down. If she's not speaking, you may have to physically move her head up and down to make the nodding gesture. Don't force this if she resists you, you don't want to hurt her neck. After you've helped her do it several times, ask the question and then pause to see if she'll nod on her own. Try nodding your own head to remind her. If she doesn't do it, tap her chin or head to start the nod. If she still doesn't do it, go ahead and help her do it all the way again. Eventually, she should be able to do this on her own without needing you to go through all of those cues. As your child gets better at this, try just nodding your own head to remind her instead of saying the word "yes" for her to imitate each time or helping her physically do it.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will answer "yes" to "Do you want \_\_\_\_?" about 80% of the time without your help.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says "yes" or nods her head when you ask "do you want it?"):

	Date:						
<b>Answers "yes" to "do you want it"</b>							

### Teaching Yes/No Questions, Step One:

Do You Want It? (Yes)



Follow these directions to help your child practice the first step of answering yes/no questions:

- Show your child something you know she likes, such as bubbles or a favorite snack. Then, ask your child, “Do you want \_\_\_\_\_?” (Fill in the blank).
- If your child shows you that she wants it (by reaching for it or repeating the word), say “yes” and nod your head for your child to imitate. You can do this by having her say the word “yes” or by nodding her head up and down. If she’s not speaking, you may have to physically move her head up and down to make the nodding gesture. Don’t force this if she resists you, you don’t want to hurt her neck.
- After you’ve helped her do it several times, ask the question again and then pause to see if she’ll nod on her own. Nod your own head in an exaggerated movement to remind her. If she doesn’t do it, tap her chin or head to start the nod. If she still doesn’t do it, go ahead and help her all the way again.
- Eventually, she should be able to say the word “yes” or nod her head on her own without needing you to go through all of those cues. As your child gets better at this, try just nodding your own head to remind her instead of saying the word “yes” for her to imitate each time or helping her physically do it.

## Yes/No Questions Step Two: Do You Want It? (No)

### Description:

Next, you'll need to teach your child to say "no" when he doesn't want something. I know, that sounds awful because then you're afraid you'll get to that terrible twos stage of your child saying "no" to everything. Well look at it this way: wouldn't it be so much better to have your child tell you "no" than to scream and have a total meltdown in the middle of the grocery store because he has no way of communicating that to you? "No" is a good thing, it can be very helpful to a child who doesn't have much other communication!

### Activities:

Start with the last step's activity. When your child is consistently answering yes, try offering something that you know he would answer "no" to. For example, if you're playing with bubbles and your child is consistently answering "yes", switch it up and offer something uninteresting, like a small scrap of paper: "Do you want paper?" or a food that he really doesn't like to eat. Model "no" just like as described above with yes. Say "No, no paper" and shake your head back and forth. Then, switch back to the one you know he likes: "Do you want bubbles?" Once you've practiced helping him say "no", try to get him to answer without your help. If he still says "yes", say "yes, yes paper" and hand him the uninteresting or unpreferred object. He will probably be confused because that wasn't really what he wanted. When he discards it or hands it back to you, say "oh! No, no paper" and switch back to offering the preferred object.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will answer "yes" or "no" to "Do you want \_\_\_?" depending on if he actually wants that thing about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If you've worked on this for a while and your child still isn't getting it, try moving on to the step four and come back to this later. Some kids have more success with step 4 than with this approach.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
Answers yes/no to "do you want it?"							

## Teaching Yes/No Questions, Step Two:

Do You Want It? (No)



The next step to teaching your child yes/no questions is to teach him to respond with “no” when he doesn’t want something. I know, that sounds awful because then you’re afraid you’ll get to that terrible twos stage of your child saying no to everything. Well look at it this way: wouldn’t it be so much better to have your child tell you “no” than to scream and have a total meltdown in the middle of the grocery store? “No” is a good thing, it can be very helpful to a child who doesn’t have much other communication! Practice these steps at home to help your child learn to use “no” to answer yes/no questions.

- Start by holding up something your child wants and asking “do you want this?”. Your child should already be able to answer “yes” to get what he wants. If not, keep practicing until your child can answer “yes” consistently.
- When your child is consistently answering “yes”, try offering something that you know he would answer “no” to. For example, if you’re playing with bubbles and your child is consistently answering “yes”, switch it up and offer something uninteresting, like a small scrap of paper: “Do you want paper?” or a food that he really doesn’t like to eat.
- Say “No” for your child to imitate and shake your head from side to side. Help your child repeat back “no” or shake his head. Then, switch back to the one you know he likes: “Do you want bubbles?” and help him say “yes” for that one.
- Once you’ve practiced helping him say “no”, try to get him to answer without your help. If he still says “yes”, say “yes, yes paper” and hand him the uninteresting object. He will probably be confused because that wasn’t really what he wanted. When he discards it or hands it back to you, say “oh! No, no paper” and switch back to offering the preferred object.
- Keep practicing saying “no” for your child to imitate until he can say it without your help.

## Yes/No Questions Step Three: Yes/No About Basic Wants and Needs

### Description:

Before moving on to this step, make sure your child can answer “Do you want \_\_\_” with either yes or no depending on if she actually wants it (make sure she’s not just saying yes to everything). The next thing we will do is start expanding that to other types of questions about her basic wants and needs.

### Activities:

Start introducing other questions about your child’s basic wants and needs. You can ask questions like “Can I have that ball”, “Do you need help?”, “Are you ready?”, etc. Try to make sure you’re only asking questions that have a yes/no answer possibility but keep switching around the type of question you ask. If you always ask “do you want \_\_\_” questions, your child will be able to answer those but will struggle when you change it to “would you like \_\_\_” or “how about another \_\_\_”. Try asking each question a variety of ways until your child is able to answer them all consistently.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will answer “yes” or “no” to a variety of questions about her basic wants and needs about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If you’ve worked on this for a while and your child still isn’t getting it, try moving on to the next step anyway and come back to this later. Some kids have more success with step 4 than by following this approach.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Answers yes/no to questions about wants and needs</b>							

## Teaching Yes/No Questions, Step Three

## Yes/No about Basic Wants and Needs



Your child is able to answer “yes” or “no” to the basic question of “do you want \_\_\_” but has trouble with more complex yes/no questions. The next thing we will do is start expanding that to other types of questions about her basic wants and needs. Try this activity at home to help your child learn to answer other types of yes/no questions.

- Start introducing other questions about your child’s basic wants and needs. You can ask questions like “Can I have that ball”, “Do you need help?”, “Are you ready?”, etc. Try to make sure you’re only asking questions that have a yes/no answer possibility but keep switching around the type of question you ask. If you always ask “do you want \_\_\_” questions, your child will be able to answer those but will struggle when you change it to “would you like \_\_\_” or “how about another \_\_\_”. Try asking each question a variety of ways until your child is able to answer them all consistently.
- When you ask each question, pause for a moment to see if your child will answer the question on her own. If she doesn’t, model the correct answer for her (“yes” or “no”) and have her imitate it back to you.
- After you’ve done this for a while with a particular question, try simply nodding or shaking your head instead of saying the word “yes” or “no” for your child. Then, try doing nothing at all and see if your child can answer the question on her own.

## Yes/No Questions Step Four:

Is this a \_\_\_?

### Description:

Once your child can answer yes/no questions about his basic wants and needs, try asking questions about what things are called. This is sometimes a good thing to try if children aren't getting yes/no in the first few steps. For some children, this approach makes more sense than the other way around.

### Activities:

For this activity, show your child an object or a picture and say "Is this a \_\_\_?" Use the correct name for the item sometimes and say the wrong word other times. Help your child answer with either "yes" or "no". You may have to demonstrate it several times for your child before he's ready to do it on his own.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child will answer "yes" or "no" to "is this a \_\_\_?" questions about 80% of the time. If you skipped ahead to this step, go back and try the other steps again. If you've done all the steps, continue to encourage your child to answer yes/no when you ask him these questions throughout his day.

### Modifications:

If your child is struggling with this, try using the "yes" and "no" concepts in another way. You could get out a simple puzzle and try to put a piece in the wrong spot. Say "no" every time it's wrong and say "yes" whenever you find the right hole. Or, you could look at pictures of familiar people and say "Where's \_\_\_?" Then say "no" as you point to everyone else and then say "yes" when you find the right person. Keep trying little activities like that to teach the difference between "yes" and "no".

### Data Collection (Mark if he correctly answers yes/no on his own):

	Date:						
<b>Answers yes/no to questions about the names of objects/actions</b>							

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### Teaching Yes/No Questions, Step Four:

Is this a \_\_\_\_?

Look at these common objects with your child. Make sure your child knows what each one is called before continuing. If your child doesn't know these words, find some pictures or real objects in your house that your child does know what they're called. Point to a picture and say "Is this a \_\_\_?" Use the correct name for the item sometimes and say the wrong word others. Help your child answer either "yes" or "no". You may have to demonstrate this several times for your child before he's ready to do it on his own.



#### Extra Practice:

Ask your child yes/no questions about what other objects and pictures are called. You can ask questions about pictures you see in books or about real objects that you find around the house or out in the community. Ask these questions often and your child will start to get the hang of it!

## How to Teach a Child to Answer What Questions

### Rationale:

Next to “yes/no” questions, “what” questions are among the easiest there are to answer. However, some children still need to be specifically taught how to answer them. This guide will take you through a progression of easier to more difficult “what” questions and the best ways to teach a child to answer them.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be able to answer “what’s this” questions about familiar objects or pictures by 2 years of age. By 3 years, a child should be able to answer more complex “what” questions like “what do you wear on your head?”, “what do you eat?”, and “what is she doing?”. By 4 years of age, your child should be able to answer questions about function, such as “what do you do with a fork?”.

### Learning Steps:

1. What’s this?
2. What doing?
3. What do you...?
4. Function Questions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer “what’s this” questions about familiar objects and pictures on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer “what doing” questions about actions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer “what’s do you...” questions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “what do you eat”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer “what” questions about the function of objects on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “what do you do with a fork?”).

## What Questions Step One: What's This?

### Description:

The easiest “what” question for a child to answer is “what’s this?”. However, many children with language delays tend to repeat the question instead of answering. If your child seems to know what some things are called (she is able to label them or talks about them when not being asked a question), then you can teach her how to answer the question appropriately instead of repeating it.

### Activities:

Find some pictures of objects (or real objects instead of pictures) that your child is familiar with. These could be favorite toys, favorite foods, etc. Choose things that your child enjoys. Now, hold up one of the pictures and say “what’s this?” Immediately model the correct response for her by saying what that thing is called. For example, if you hold up a picture of a ball, say “what’s this? Ball.” Ideally, she will repeat the word “ball” instead of “what’s this” since that is what you said last. If not, encourage her to say “ball”. Do this a few more times with the same picture and then ask the question but don’t answer it for her. Pause for a moment and see if she says “ball”. If so, praise her and let her know exactly what you’re praising her for (tell her “ball, yes, it is a ball! You said ball”). If she doesn’t say ball, model it for her and have her repeat it. Go ahead and praise her as if she had said it herself, but act a little less excited than you would if she did it entirely by herself. Then, give her a short break by giving her something to play with or getting up to jump/run/spin around/etc. Sit back down and try it again. Model the question and the answer a few times and then give her another chance to answer. Keep doing this until she can answer “what’s this” about one picture. Once she can do that, introduce a new picture.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child can answer “what’s this” with a variety of familiar objects about 80% of the time.

### Data Collection (Mark if she answers “what’s this” questions by saying the name of the object):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “what’s this” about familiar</b>							

## Teaching “What” Questions, Step One:

### What’s This?

Look at these common objects with your child. Make sure your child knows what each one is called before continuing. If your child doesn’t know these words, find some pictures or real objects in your house that your child does know what they’re called. Hold up one of the pictures and say “what’s this?” Immediately model the correct response for her by saying what that thing is called. For example, if you hold up a picture of a ball, say “what’s this? Ball.” Ideally, she will repeat the word “ball” instead of “what’s this” since that is what you said last. If not, encourage her to say “ball”. Do this a few more times with the same picture and then ask the question but don’t answer it for her. Pause for a moment and see if she says “ball”. If so, praise her and let her know exactly what you’re praising her for (tell her “ball, yes, it is a ball! You said ball”). If she doesn’t say ball, model it for her and have her repeat it. Keep doing this until she can answer “what’s this” about one of the pictures. Then, try another one.



### Extra Practice:

Ask your child “what’s this” about other objects and pictures in books and around the house.

## What Questions Step Two: What Doing?

### Description:

The next type of “what” question you can work on answering with your child is “what doing” questions. These are questions like “what is she doing?” or “what are you doing?”.

### Activities:

Find some pictures of people performing various familiar actions. You can use the cards on the next page or print your own. Show your child one of the pictures and say “what is she doing?” If your child doesn’t answer correctly, model the correct verb and have him repeat it. Add the “-ing” on the end of the word to make it grammatically correct, but if your child just says the verb part (“jump” instead of “jumping”), that’s ok, too. At this point we just want to get the verb. We can work on the “-ing” later. Keep practicing this with one action card until he can do that one consistently. Then, add another card in and work on that one.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child can answer “what doing” questions with a variety of actions about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If your child is struggling with this, try showing him what the actions look like. Sometimes, pictures of actions just don’t do them justice since they’re not moving. So until we can get the picture-taking technology of the Harry Potter world, you will need to act those actions out yourself. If you show your child a picture of jumping, go ahead and get up and jump. Say “jump” or “jumping” while you do it. Then, have your child get up and do the action with you. This will help activate more parts of the brain while you say the word out loud. This will help with retention.

### Data Collection (Mark if he labels the verb when you ask him a what doing question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “what doing” about familiar verbs</b>							

## Teaching What Questions, Step Two:

### What Doing Questions

Point to one of the pictures and say “what is she doing?” If your child doesn’t answer correctly, model the correct verb and have him repeat it. Add the “-ing” on the end of the word to make it grammatically correct, but if your child just says the verb part (“jump” instead of “jumping”), that’s ok, too. At this point we just want to get the verb. We can work on the “-ing” later. Keep practicing this with one picture until he can do that one consistently. Then, try another picture.



### Extra Practice:

You can help your child continue to practice answering “what doing” questions by asking about what other people are doing around your child or what characters are doing in a book.

## What Questions Step Three: What Do You...?

### Description:

Now that we've worked on actions through "what doing" questions, it's time to work on questions like "what do you eat?" and "what do you wear?"

### Activities:

Find some pictures of people performing various actions that require other objects, such as a boy eating a cracker or a girl riding a bike. You can use the pictures on the next page or create your own. Show your child the picture and label what he is doing and what he is using to do that action. For example say "He is eating a cracker" or "she is riding her bike". Then, put the picture away and ask your child "what do you \_\_\_?" using the same verb that you just showed a picture of. For example, if you show a picture of a boy eating a cracker, you could say "He is eating a cracker (put pic away), what do you eat?". Then, have your child provide an object that answers that question. After your child starts to get the hang of this, put the pictures away and just ask the questions "what do you \_\_\_?".

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child can answer "what do you \_\_\_" questions about 80% of the time.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, you can try switching to "what are you \_\_\_?" instead and just ask questions about the actions that your child is currently performing. You could ask things like "what are you eating?" or "what are you riding?". If your child doesn't answer, try pointing to the object she is using to perform that action as a prompt. If she still doesn't get it, model the word for her and have her imitate it.

### Data Collection (Mark if the child provides an appropriate object to answer the question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer "what do you ___" questions</b>							

## Teaching What Questions, Step Three:

### What Do You... Questions

Show your child the picture and label what he is doing and what he is using to do that action. For example say “He is eating a cracker” or “she is riding her bike”. Then, ask your child the corresponding what question. Have your child provide an object that answers that question. After your child starts to get the hang of this, put the pictures away and just ask the questions “what do you \_\_\_\_\_?”. See if she can answer them without having pictures to look at for help.



What do you eat?



What do you sit on?



What do you ride?



What do you kick?



What do you throw?



What do you sleep on?

### Extra Practice:

You can help your child continue to practice answering “what do you...” questions by asking your child other questions like this about the function of basic objects. Do this throughout your day.

## What Questions Step Four: Function Questions

### Description:

Now comes the most difficult form of “what” questions that we will practice: function questions. These are questions like “what do you do with a fork” or “what do you use a brush for?”.

### Activities:

Show your child a picture of a common object. Ask your child “what do you do with a \_\_\_\_?”. You may have to tell your child the answer at first and have him repeat it back to you. He will probably be more likely to just tell you what it’s called at first. Have him repeat back to you the answer in a short phrase or sentence, such as “you brush your hair” or “you brush your hair with a brush”. Once your child gets the hang of it, stop telling him the answers and see if he can come up with them on his own.

### When to Move On:

Keep doing this until your child can answer “what” function questions about 80% of the time. After this, you can continue your child’s development of “what” questions by just asking random “what” questions throughout the day and helping him if he gets stuck.

### Modifications:

If your child is struggling to figure out what you do with a certain object, try handing him the actual object and watch what he does. If he uses it appropriately, describe what he’s doing. You could say “oh, you’re brushing your hair. You brush your hair with a brush. What do you do with a brush? Brush your hair”. If your child doesn’t use the object the way it’s meant to be used, show him how to use it and talk about what you’re doing.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
Answer “what” function questions							

### What Questions Step Four: Function Questions

Point to one of these pictures. Ask your child “what do you do with a \_\_\_\_?”. You may have to tell your child the answer at first and have him repeat it back to you. He will probably be more likely to just tell you what it’s called at first. Have him repeat back to you the answer in a short phrase or sentence, such as “you brush your hair” or “you brush your hair with a brush”. Once your child gets the hang of it, stop telling him the answers and see if he can come up with them on his own.



#### Extra Practice:

Help your child practice this skill with other objects by asking “what do you do with a \_\_\_\_” while holding up real objects or pointing out pictures of objects in books.

## How to Teach a Child to Answer Where Questions

### Rationale:

Children need to be able to answer a variety of questions to participate in conversation as well as classroom activities. The best way to help your child with this is to teach her one question word at a time. Once she can answer that question in a variety of different ways, you can move on to teaching other ones. Eventually you will want to mix up the types of questions you ask but for now, just stick with one. Where questions are typically the first ones I target after yes/no and “what”. This seems to be the next easiest one for kids to answer.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be able to answer a basic “where” question by pointing at the age of 2 years (For example, “Where’s the doggie?” and the child points to the dog). A child should be able to verbally answer basic where questions by 3 years (like “where are your shoes?”) and more complex where questions by 4 years (like “where do cows live?”).

### Learning Steps:

1. Where’s Your Nose?
2. Where’s the Ball?
3. Where’s the Block?
4. Where’s the Shoe?
5. Where Do You Wash Your Hands?

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about 5 different body parts by pointing to the correct body part on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s your nose?”)
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about objects immediately present or in pictures by pointing to the object on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s the ball?”)
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about objects immediately present by verbally stating the location of the object on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s the block?” “In the barn”).
- By <Date>, Child will verbally answer “where” questions about concepts not immediately present on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where do you wash your hands?” “In the bathroom”).

## Where Questions, Step One: Where's Your Nose?

### Description:

This step is simple, just ask your child to show you all of his body parts. This is a pretty common game between young children and their parents but often the parents say “show me your nose”. There’s nothing wrong with that, but if you’re trying to teach your child “where” questions, ask “where’s your nose” instead.

### Activities:

After you ask the question “where’s your \_\_\_\_?”, pause for a moment to see if your child will point to that body part. If not, point to it on your own body and see if your child will imitate you. If he still doesn’t do it, move his finger to point to the correct body part. Clap for him and get very excited, even if you had to do it for him. Try it again. Every time you ask the question, use the same prompting. First pause and see if he’ll do it on his own, then do it on yourself, then help him do it. Hopefully, after a while of you helping him, he’ll be able to do it with just the model of you pointing to your body part. Then eventually, he’ll do it on his own. This is called fading your prompts. You only provide as much prompting as he needs each time and eventually you fade until you’re not giving any prompts at all. Start by only teaching one body part at a time and keep doing this until he can point to quite a few body parts when you ask.

### When to Move On:

Move on to the next step when your child can point to 5 different body parts about 80% of the time that you ask him “where’s your \_\_\_\_”. Make sure he can do it without any help from you.

**Data Collection (Start with one body part and write it on the first line. Take data for each date that you work on that body part. When he can point to it 80% of the time, pick another body part and write it on the next line. Take data across to the right just as you did before) :**

Body Part	Date:						

## Teaching Where Questions, Step One:

### Where's Your Nose?

When we first teach children how to answer “where” questions, we just want them to point to the correct place. Ask your child where these facial features are. You can ask “where’s your nose?” and have him point to his own and then ask “where’s her nose?” and have him point to the face.

Where's your nose?

Where's her nose?

Where are your eyes?

Where are her eyes?

Where are your teeth?

Where are her teeth?

Where are your ears?

Where are her ears?

Where is your hair?

Where is her hair?

Where is your mouth?

Where is her mouth?

Where is your head?

Where is her head?



Where is your neck?

Where is her neck?

Where is your shirt?

Where is her shirt?

### Extra Practice:

You can continue asking where questions to your child and having him point to what you asked about. For example, you can ask “Where’s Mommy?”, “Where’s your ball?”, or “Where’s puppy?”. You can also ask questions about pictures in books. You can ask your child “where’s the \_\_\_\_\_” and have him point to the correct picture.

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## Where Questions Step Two: Where's The Ball?

### Description:

Now you want to move to having your child point to an object or picture when you ask a “where” question. You can do this by asking her to point to something in the room or something in a book. Start with simple words that your child knows, like “ball”, “bubble”, or her favorite food. Use the same prompting that you did in the last step.

### Activities:

First ask the question, “where’s the \_\_\_\_?” and then pause. If she doesn’t do it, point to the thing with your own finger and say “there it is!”. If she doesn’t imitate your pointing, point her finger toward the object for her and get excited for her. Celebrate every time your child points, even if you have to help her. Keep doing this until she can point to a variety of objects without needing you to help her.

### When to Move On:

Move on to the next step when your child can point to common objects about 80% of the time that you ask her “where’s the \_\_\_\_”. Make sure she can do it without any extra help from you.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this or is easily distracted, try just placing one common object in front of your child. Say “where’s the \_\_\_\_” and help her point to it. Then, reward her with something she enjoys, like a favorite toy, a hug, or tickles. Keep doing this until she can point to the object on her own. Then, put two objects in front of her and keep asking her to find the first object (This is called having a distractor). Once she can do this with one object and a variety of distractors, start over with a different object. When she can correctly find both of those objects from two choices, try putting both of the familiar objects out and switch your question until she can find each of them when you ask. (Great for children with autism!) Keep introducing new objects in this way.

### Data Collection (Mark if she points to the correct object/picture when you ask):

	Date:						
Points to Object When Asked Where Question							

## Teaching Where Questions, Step Two:

### Where's the Ball?

Ask your child “where” questions about the pictures on this page. For example, you can say “where’s the ball?” and then have your child point to the ball. You may have to move your child’s hand to point to the correct object. Then, praise your child even though you had to help her. The next time, ask again and pause to see if she’ll do it on her own. Keep helping her do it until she can do it on her own.



### Extra Practice:

You can continue asking where questions to your child and having her point to what you ask about. This is a great activity to do while reading books to your child. You can ask your child “where’s the \_\_\_\_\_” and have her point to the correct picture.

## Where Questions, Step Three: Where's The Block?

### Description:

For this activity, you will need two locations and a block (or other small object). Your two locations can be toy locations like a barn and a house, or real locations like the couch and the floor. Just make sure your child knows what these things are called. You may need to teach your child what they are called before you start this activity.

### Activities:

Take the block and place it in one of these locations. Ask your child “where’s the block?”. Your child should answer “on the \_\_\_\_\_” with the correct location. At first, you will need to help your child with this. Start by asking the question and pausing. If he doesn’t answer, point to or tap the correct location. If he still doesn’t answer, say “on the...” and pause again. If he’s not able to give the answer after that, provide him with the full response (“on the couch”) and then have him imitate you. Each time you ask the question, use the prompts as described above, pausing after each one. Hopefully, he will need fewer of those prompts as you go along. As usual, celebrate for him when he gets one, even if you need to help him.

### When to Move On:

Move on to the next step when your child can verbally answer the question with two location choices about 80% of the time. Make sure he can do it without any extra help from you.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
Says Location from Two Choices after Where Question							

**Teaching Where Questions, Step Three:****Where's the Block?**

Place a small object (like a coin or block) on top of one of these two pictures. Then, ask your child “Where's the \_\_\_?”. Help your child answer with either “the house” or “the barn”. Keep doing this until your child can answer on his own.

**Extra Practice:**

You can continue asking where questions about the location of objects in your house. Take turns putting objects in or on various locations. Then, practice asking “where is the \_\_\_?” and answering with “in/on the \_\_\_\_!”

## Where Questions, Step Four: Where's The Shoe?

### Description:

This activity is much like the last activity though your child will have more than two options. You will start with one object and move it around the room. Then, you will ask your child where it is.

### Activities:

Choose one object and place it in a location that your child can see and ask your child “where’s the shoe (or whatever object you choose)?”. Help your child give you a verbal description of where that object is. It might be on the chair, on the floor, in the kitchen, down the stairs, etc. You could also place it in different rooms in the house and have him answer with the room that it is in. Use the following prompts to help your child answer the questions and fade back as you are able to (use as few prompts each time as your child requires to get the correct answer, hopefully she will need fewer prompts as you go along):

1. Ask the question and pause
2. Point to the location of the object and pause
3. Start the response but pause before the location word (such as “on the...”)
4. Give your child the whole answer and have her imitate it back to you

Keep doing this until she can answer where questions about a variety of things that are immediately present. You can also ask questions about actions that she or others are doing. You can ask questions like “where are you washing your hands?” or “where is daddy going?”

### When to Move On:

Move on to the next step when your child can verbally answer a “where” question about things that are immediately present about 80% of the time. Make sure she can do it without any extra help from you.

**Data Collection (Mark if she says the correct location when you ask her a where question, make sure she's not just saying “over there” for every one):**

	Date:						
<b>Answer Where Questions about Things Immediately Present</b>							

## Teaching Where Questions, Step Four:

Where's the Shoe?



Your child is working on answering “where” questions about the location of objects. Try these activities at home to practice helping your child answer these questions.

Choose one object and place it in a location that your child can see and ask your child “where’s the shoe (or whatever object you choose)?”. Help your child give you a verbal description of where that object is. It might be on the chair, on the floor, in the kitchen, down the stairs, etc. You could also place it in different rooms in the house and have her answer with the room that it is in. Use the following prompts and fade back as you are able to:

1. Ask the question and pause
2. Point to the location of the object and pause
3. Start the response but pause before the location word (such as “on the...”)
4. Give your child the whole answer and have her imitate it back to you

Keep doing this until she can answer where questions about a variety of things that are immediately present. You can also ask questions about actions that she or others are doing. You can ask questions like “where are you washing your hands?” or “where is daddy going?”

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## Where Questions, Step Five: Where Do You Wash Your Hands?

### Description:

Now it's time to start asking questions about more abstract concepts, such as things that are not immediately present.

### Activities:

Start asking questions like "where do you wash your hands?" or "where do you eat dinner?". It may be helpful at first to provide your child with choices. You can offer verbal choices, like "where do you eat dinner? At the table or in the bathtub?". You could also provide your child with picture choices. You could take pictures of various places around your house and show him two or more choices when you ask the question. You can also use the pictures from the worksheets that accompany this section.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer a variety of "where" questions, including those about things that aren't immediately in front of him, with about 80% accuracy, we consider it to be mastered. Once your child can do this, keep monitoring his ability to answer those "where" questions but change your focus to teaching him other questions like "who" or "when" or move on to another skill entirely if your child was only struggling with "where" questions.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this step, try starting with some easier "where" questions about things that aren't present. For example, you could say "where is Grandma" or "where is Dad" if he knows that Grandma is usually at her house or Dad is at work. You could also incorporate toys or topics your child enjoys. For example, if your child loves animals, start with questions about where the animals live or try questions about where vehicles go if he loves things that move.

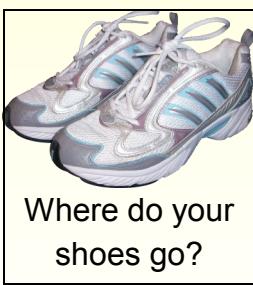
### Data Collection (Mark if he can say a location to answer a "where" question about something he can't immediately see):

	Date:						
<b>Answer Where Questions about NOT Immediately Present</b>							

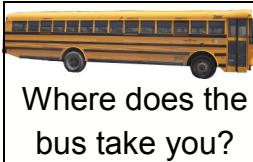
## Learning Where Questions, Step Five:

### Abstract Where Questions

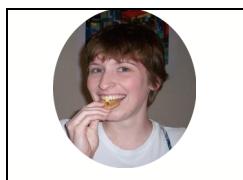
Put this paper in a plastic sheet protector and then ask your child the “where” questions. Have your child verbally answer the question and then draw a line with a dry erase marker between the question and the answer. If your child is doing really well, you can cover up the answers when you ask each question.



Where do your  
shoes go?



Where does the  
bus take you?



Where do you  
eat dinner?



Where do you  
bake cookies?



Where do  
you swim?



at the table



on your feet



in the oven



in a swimming  
pool



to school

### Extra Practice:

Continue to ask your child “where” questions about concepts that are not present. The more you ask these questions, the better your child will get at answering them!

## How to Teach a Child to Answer Who Questions

### Rationale:

Another form of questions that children must be able to answer is “who” questions. Being able to answer these types of questions will help your child participate in school activities and will help you gain more information about the people in your child’s life. Follow these five steps to teach your child to answer “who” questions.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be able to answer basic “who” questions like “who is...” by three years old. She should be able to answer more complex “who” questions (like “who brings the mail”) by four years old. It’s ok if she gets the wrong person sometimes but she should be answering “who” questions with a person by this age, not a place or object.

### Learning Steps:

1. “Who’s This?” (Self and Caregivers)
2. “Who’s This?” (Pictures of Familiar People)
3. “Who’s This?” (Community Helpers)
4. “Who Does?” (With Picture Choices)
5. Who Questions about Things Not Present (No Picture Choices)

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “who’s this” questions, when the questioner is pointing to Child or to a familiar adult, by saying the correct name on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “who’s this” questions, when shown pictures of familiar people, by saying the correct name on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will answer “who’s this” questions, when shown pictures of community helpers, by saying the correct job/profession title on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Who’s this?” “A Policeman”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer a variety of “who” questions when given 2-4 picture choices on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Who brings the mail?” Choices: The mailman, a fireman, Grandpa).
- By <Date>, Child will answer a variety of “who” questions without picture choices on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Who made your breakfast?” or “Who drove you to school today?”).

## Who Questions, Step One:

### Who's This (Self and Caregivers)

#### Description:

To begin teaching who questions, we will start with the person that matters most to your child: himself! And you of course! We want him to be able to answer “who’s this” about himself as well as familiar caregivers.

#### Activities:

Start with simply asking “who’s this” when pointing either at your child, yourself, or another caregiver. This is the easiest type of “who” question to answer, but be prepared that it might take your child a while to learn this if he has trouble with identifying people’s names. When you ask “who’s this” and point to your child, you want him to say his name. If he doesn’t say his name, you can say it for him and have him imitate it. Then, point to yourself and say “who’s this?”. If your child doesn’t answer, say “Mommy” or “Daddy” or whatever you call yourself, say it for him and have him repeat it back to you. Keep doing this until he can spontaneously say your name, his own, and the names of other caregivers if there are any.

#### When to Move On:

When your child can name himself and familiar caregivers following a “who’s this” question about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

#### Modifications:

For some children, the concept that a person has a name is very difficult to grasp. I once worked with a child for a whole year just to get him to understand what his own name was. Some children just don’t get this concept right away. If your child is having trouble after doing this for a while (give it a good try first), move on to another skill and come back to this one later when he’s more ready.

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Answer “who’s this” with self and caregivers</b>							

## Teaching Who Questions, Step One:

## Who's This (Self and Caregivers)



To begin teaching who questions, we will start with the person that matters most to your child: himself! And you of course! We want him to be able to answer “who’s this” about himself as well as familiar caregivers. Practice this at home to improve your child’s ability to answer who questions:

Start with simply asking “who’s this” when pointing either at your child, yourself, or another caregiver. This is the easiest type of “who” question to answer, but be prepared that it might take your child a while to learn this if he has trouble with identifying people’s names. When you ask “who’s this” and point to your child, you want him to say his name. If he doesn’t say his name, you can say it for him and have him imitate it. Then, point to yourself and say “who’s this?”. If your child doesn’t answer, say “Mommy” or “Daddy” or whatever you call yourself, say it for him and have him repeat it back to you. Keep doing this until he can spontaneously say your name, his own, and the names of other caregivers if there are any.

**Who Questions Step Two:****Who's This (Familiar People in Pictures)****Description:**

Now we want your child to answer “who’s this” with pictures of familiar people. This will help her begin to generalize answering “who” questions to other people besides herself.

**Activities:**

Choose photos of people that your child comes into contact with frequently. Children that she sees on a regular basis would be good but not distant relatives that she only sees once a year. However, if you have a distant relative that is highly offended that your child doesn’t know her name, you may want to throw her picture in to practice! :-) Put a picture in front of your child and say “who’s this?” Start with pictures of you, your child, and the other caregivers that your child is able to name from the last step. When she can spontaneously name each of those pictures, start adding in other familiar people. Just as in the last step, you may need to say the name for her and have her repeat it for a while until she gets the hang of it. Once you do that for a while, try giving her shorter cues such as saying just the first sound or syllable in the name and see if she can come up with the rest of it. Keep doing this until your child is able to spontaneously name all of the pictures you have.

**When to Move On:**

When your child can name the familiar people in the pictures following a “who’s this” question about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

**Modifications:**

If your child is having trouble, start with just one picture and keep working on it until your child can do it all of the time. Then, try another picture for a while. After she can name that one consistently, start switching between the two different pictures. Slowly add in pictures this way (great for kids with autism!)

**Data Collection (Mark if she says the correct person’s name when asked the question):**

	Date:						
<b>Answer “who’s this” with pictures of familiar people</b>							

## Teaching Who Questions, Step Two:

## Familiar People in Pictures



Now we want your child to answer “who’s this” with pictures of familiar people. This will help her begin to generalize answering “who” questions to other people besides herself.

Choose photos of people that your child comes into contact with frequently. Children that she sees on a regular basis would be good but not distant relatives that she sees once a year. However, if you have a distant relative that is highly offended that your child doesn’t know her name, you may want to throw her picture in to practice! :-) Put a picture in front of your child and say “who’s this?” Start with pictures of you, your child, and other caregivers. When she can spontaneously name each of those pictures, start adding in other familiar people. Just as in the last step, you may need to say the name for her and have her repeat it for a while until she gets the hang of it. Once you do that for a while, try giving her shorter cues such as saying just the first sound or syllable in the name and see if she can come up with the rest of it. Keep doing this until your child is able to spontaneously name all of the pictures you have.

If your child is having trouble, start with just one picture and keep working on it until your child can do it all of the time. Then, try another picture for a while. After she can name that one consistently, start switching between the two different pictures. Slowly add in pictures this way (great for kids with autism!).

## Who Questions Step Three: Who's This (Community Helpers)

### Description:

Now that your child can name familiar people, try “who” questions about community helpers. These are people like firefighters, policemen, doctors, mailmen, etc.

### Activities:

Print out pictures of community helpers. You can use the pictures included or find some from the internet by doing a Google image search. Put one picture in front of your child and say “who’s this?” Have your child say the name of the community helper or say it for him to imitate if he doesn’t know. Keep working on that community helper until your child knows what it is called. Then, add in another community helper. Keep adding in community helpers as your child is ready for them.

### When to Move On:

When your child can name a wide range of community helpers following a “who’s this” question about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

This may be difficult for your child, especially if he hasn’t been exposed to community helpers before. Take some time to talk about each one and what that community helper does. You could even go visit some community helpers in person or look for them out in the community to help your child grasp the concept.

### Data Collection (Mark if he says the right community helper):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “who’s this” with pictures of community helpers</b>							

### Teaching Who Questions, Step Three:

#### Who's This (Community Helpers)

Ask your child “Who’s this?” about all of the different community helpers shown on this page. If your child doesn’t know one of them, talk about that community helper: what they’re called, what they do, who they help, etc. Keep doing this until your child can name a lot of different community helpers.



Photo Courtesy of bplanet—FreeDigitalPhotos.net

#### Extra Practice:

Help your child learn about community helpers by going to visit some of them (like taking a tour of a fire station), or finding pictures and videos online of community helpers doing their jobs. Talk about them whenever you see them!

## Who Questions Step Four:

### Who Does... (Picture Choices)

#### Description:

Now it's time to move on to some more difficult who questions. Other types of "who" questions you could ask include questions like "who do you go see when you get sick?" or "who brings the mail?". You could also ask "who" questions about recent events in your child's life, like "who brought you to school today" or "who made your breakfast". The idea is that you want to ask "who" questions that go beyond just "who's this".

#### Activities:

For this step, ask these types of "who" questions this with some picture choices in front of your child. To start, lay down two pictures of people in front of your child. These could be real people your child knows or pictures of community helpers. Then, ask a question that would be answered with one of those people. For example, lay down a picture of you and a picture of a firefighter and say "who puts out fires?" Now, as long as you haven't been lighting and putting out fires in your child's presence, she should pick the firefighter. If not, help her point to the right picture and say the name of that person. If your child really has trouble with this concept, try just putting one picture choice in front of her until she gets the idea of the activity and then add the second back in. Once your child can answer these questions with two picture choices, increase it to three choices. More choices makes it more difficult. Be prepared that this step may take a while for your child to learn. Keep increasing choices until you have 4-6 choices in front of your child and she is still able to answer them.

#### When to Move On:

When your child can answer a variety of "who" questions with 4-6 picture choices about 80% of the time, you can move on to the next step.

#### Data Collection (Mark if she picks and says the name of the correct person following the question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer "who" questions with 4-6 picture choices</b>							

## Teaching Who Questions, Step Four:

## Who Does...

Show your child these pictures and ask your child a question that starts with “who...”, such as “who puts out fires?” or “who teaches children?”. Help your child find the correct community helper and name that person. If your child is having trouble, try covering up all but a few choices until your child is able to answer those, then add more.



Who cooks food?	
Who puts out fires?	
Who catches bad guys?	
Who do you go see when you're sick?	
Who flies a plane?	
Who teaches about God?	
Who works on computers?	
Who builds buildings and roads?	
Who serves drinks on a plane?	

Photo Courtesy of bplanet - FreeDigitalPhotos.net

**Extra Practice:**

Ask other “who” questions about community helpers as well as about people that are relevant to your child, such as “who cooked your dinner?” or “who puts you to bed at night?”.

## Who Questions Step Five:

### Who Questions about Things Not Present (No Choices)

#### Description:

Now that your child can answer a variety of “who” questions with picture choices, it’s time to take away the pictures.

#### Activities:

Just ask your child random “who” questions and see if he can answer them. The more questions you ask, the better he will get at this. Try asking these questions in the car while you’re driving somewhere or while waiting in line somewhere. The great part about this step is that you don’t need any materials. However, if your child is really struggling with this, you can always bring the choices back out. You could also give verbal choices if he’s stuck on a particular question. For example, if you asked “who puts bad guys in jail” and he still can’t come up with anything, you could say “do you think it’s the police man, an astronaut, or Mommy?”.

#### When to Move On:

When your child can answer a variety of “who” questions without picture choices about 80% of the time, then he’s good to go on this skill!

#### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, try providing visuals for the activity other than the pictures you used in the last step. For example, try some “who” questions while reading a book. Find a book with familiar characters that your child knows the names of and ask “who” questions about who is doing various actions in the book. You could ask “who is jumping” or “who stole the cookie?”. This will give your child something to focus on but is less structured than the picture choices from the last step.

#### Data Collection (Mark if he says the correct person/character following a who question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “who” questions without picture choices</b>							

## Teaching Who Questions, Step Five:

### Who Questions about Things Not Present

Help your child answer who questions by practicing these questions with your child. If your child is struggling, try giving him a few choices to pick from. Then, ask again and see if he can answer without needing you to give him choices.



Who puts out fires?



Who drives a police car?



Who puts mail in the mailbox?



Who takes care of the animals at the zoo?



Who takes care of the animals on the farm?



Who drives the school bus?



Who drives a bulldozer?



Who flies a plane?



Who drives a trash truck?

### Extra Practice:

Continue asking your child other “who” questions about things that aren’t present. Keep asking and prompting until your child can answer a variety of “who” questions without needing your help. Do this at other times as well when your child doesn’t have pictures to look at. Or, ask who questions while reading books to your child.

## How to Teach a Child to Answer When Questions

### Rationale:

Children need to be able to answer a variety of questions to participate in conversation as well as classroom activities. Teaching “When” questions can be very difficult so I’ve broken it up into the four types of “when” questions that are typically asked and how to address each one.

### Age of Mastery:

A child should be able to answer “when” questions by four years but some time concepts like yesterday, today, tomorrow, and next week don’t develop until age five, so your child may struggle with some of those still. Your four-year-old should still answer your “when” question appropriately (such as with a time concept), even if he’s not completely accurate on exactly when it happened. Your child needs some work on this if you ask her “When do we read books?” and she replies with “Chicka Chicka Boom Boom”.

### Learning Steps:

1. “Time of Day” When Questions
2. “Seasonal” When Questions
3. “Holiday” When Questions
4. “Cause and Effect” When Questions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “time of day” when questions with the concepts of “morning”, “afternoon”, “evening”, “daytime”, or “nighttime” on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “When do you sleep?” “At night”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “seasonal” when questions about with the seasons of autumn, winter, summer, or spring on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “When do you build snowmen?”, “In the winter”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “Holiday” when questions with the name of a holiday on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “When do you trick or treat?” “On Halloween”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “cause and effect” when questions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “When do you eat?” “When I’m hungry”).

## When Questions Step One: Time of Day When Questions

### Description:

We're going to teach "when" questions one type at a time and an easy one to start with is "time of day" when questions. These are questions where the response is a time of day, be it a specific numeric time or a general period like "morning" or "night". Here are some examples of these types of questions:

When do you eat lunch?

When do you go to sleep?

When do you play outside?

When do you take a bath?

### Activities:

To teach these questions, start with a few picture choices for your child. For example, you could have a picture representing nighttime and one representing daytime. Then, ask your child a question about something that either happens at night or during the day and have him point to and say the correct response. For example, "when do you sleep" (at night) and "when do you eat lunch" (in the day). Then, work your way up to questions with more complex answers like "morning" or "noon". Don't worry about numeral time (like 4:00) unless your child is able to tell time. Then, you can work on things like "when does the bus come pick you up", etc.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer these time of day "when" questions with about 80% accuracy, move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if he provides the correct time of day when asked):

	Date:						
<b>Answer Time of Day When Questions</b>							

## Teaching When Questions, Step One:

## Time of Day Questions

Ask your child these “when” questions. Have your child verbally answer the question and then draw a line between the question and the answer. If your child is doing well, you can cover up the answers when you ask each question. If your child is struggling, remind him that “when” means time so we need to answer with a time word. If you want to be able to reuse this sheet, put it in a plastic page protector and draw the lines with dry erase markers.



When do you go to bed?



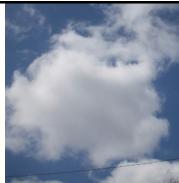
during the day



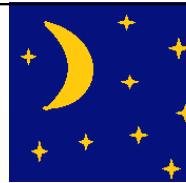
When do you ride your bike?



at night



When do you see clouds?



at night



When do you go swimming?



during the day



When do the stars come out?



during the day

## When Questions Step Two: Seasonal When Questions

### Description:

The next type of “when” questions you can teach your child includes what season something happens. For example, when do you build snowmen? In the winter of course!

### Activities:

For these questions, start by having picture choices of all the seasons in front of your child and have her choose which one is correct. You may have to talk about the seasons beforehand so she knows which one is which. Keep doing this until she can answer them without the picture cues. Here are some ideas of questions you could ask:

- When do you build snowmen?
- When do the trees and flowers bloom?
- When do the leaves on the trees turn colors?
- When does we mow the grass? (There could be a few right answers for this!)
- When are baby animals born?
- When is it the hottest?
- When is it the coldest?

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer these questions with about 80% accuracy, move on to the next type of when questions.

### Modifications:

If your child is struggling with this, you may want to spend some time learning about seasons. You could watch videos of nature during the different seasons or talk about pictures of what happens during each season.

### Data Collection (Mark if she answers with the correct season):

	Date:						
Answer Seasonal When Questions							

## Teaching When Questions, Step Two:

### Seasonal When Questions

Ask your child these “when” questions. Have your child verbally answer the question and then draw a line between the question and the answer. If your child is doing well, you can cover up the answers when you ask each question. If your child is struggling, remind her that “when” means time so we need to answer with a time word. If you want to be able to reuse the page, put it in a sheet protector and draw the lines with a dry erase marker.



When are there flowers outside?



When do you build a snowman?



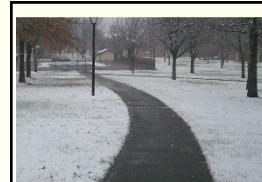
When do you wear gloves?



When do you play outside?



When do you wear a coat?



in the winter



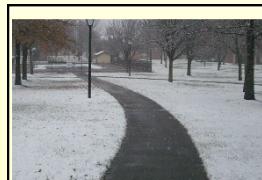
in the summer



in the winter



in the summer



in the winter

## When Questions Step Three: Holiday When Questions

### Description:

Next are questions that have a holiday for the answer. These are questions like “when do you go trick-or-treating”. Customize these questions to your family’s beliefs and the holidays that you celebrate. If you are a speech therapist working with children, keep in mind that some families don’t celebrate certain holidays (or any at all, including birthdays) so make sure you know the preferences of your family before trying these activities.

### Activities:

Again, start off with some picture choices of all the different holidays and see if your child can answer the questions using those. Make sure he knows what holiday each picture represents and what happens on that holiday. You can check this before starting by asking “what holiday is this” and “what do we do on \_\_\_\_”. Then, start asking “when” questions about things that happen on those holidays, such as “when does Santa bring presents?”. Once he can answer “when” questions about the holidays, remove the pictures and see if he can do it without using them.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer these questions with about 80% accuracy, move on to the next type of when questions.

### Modifications:

If you are working with a child who doesn’t celebrate holidays, think about other ways to ask about days when things happen. Maybe he can answer questions like “When do you stay home from school?” or “When do you go to church”. Check with his family to see if they have any traditional family celebrations or family routines and traditions that happen on certain days.

### Data Collection (Mark if he answers with the correct holiday):

	Date:						
<b>Answer Holiday When Questions</b>							

### Teaching When Questions, Step Three:

#### Holiday When Questions

Look at these pictures with your child and talk about which holiday each one represents. Talk about what things happen at each of these holidays. If you and your family do not celebrate any of these holidays, please feel free to skip them! Then, ask your child “when” questions about the various holidays. For example, you could say “when do we go trick-or-treating” or “when does Santa visit?”. Help your child find the correct holiday to answer the “when” question.



Fourth of July



Valentine's Day



Memorial Day



Christmas



Halloween



Thanksgiving

#### Extra Practice:

Keep asking your child other “when” questions about holidays or special days that occur throughout the year. You can also ask about your own family traditions, such as “when do we have family meetings” or “when do we have brunch with Grandma?”.

## When Questions Step Four: Cause and Effect When Questions

### Description:

These are the most difficult to answer because there is no set amount of possible answers. These are questions like “When do you eat? When I’m hungry”. Of course, these are open-ended questions so they could have other answers besides the one you thought of, such as “When it’s lunchtime” or “When I go to McDonalds”, or “When I’m pregnant” (because seriously, I’m pregnant as I’m writing this book and I eat all the time...not that your child will come up with that answer.)

### Activities:

For these questions, it’s hard to have picture choices available for every question so you may want to have some choices that you can give her verbally. For example, you could say “when do you wash your hands? When they’re dirty or when you’re tired?” You could also just have a collection of questions that you ask that you already have picture answers for (such as are included on the following worksheet). Start off giving those types of choices and then eventually just ask the question and see if she can answer it on her own. These will take a lot of practice so keep working at it! Keep talking about how “when” means time so we have to give an answer about time.

### When to Move On:

There are other types of “when” questions to answer but once your child can answer all of these four types with about 80% accuracy, you know she has a pretty firm grip on “when” questions. Just keep asking your child “when” questions and helping her when she gets stuck and you should be good.

### Data Collection (Mark if she answers the question with a logical answer):

	Date:						
<b>Answer Cause and Effect When Questions</b>							

## Teaching When Questions, Step Four: Cause and Effect When Questions

Ask your child these when questions that have to do with cause and effect. Help your child say the correct answer on the right side of the page and draw a line between the question and the answer. If your child is doing well with this, you can cover up the answers and see if your child can think of the answer herself. If you would like to be able to reuse this worksheet, put it in a sheet protector and draw on it with a dry erase marker.



When do you sleep?



When you're hungry.



When do you eat?



When it雪s.



When do you wash your hands?



When you're tired.



When do you build a snowman?



When they're dirty.

### Extra Practice:

Continue asking your child questions about when you do certain things and help her think of the answers. You may want to give her a few choices if it's not a question she's answered before.

## How to Teach a Child to Answer Why Questions

### Rationale:

“Why” questions can be very useful for a child. Being able to answer a “why” question can help him answer questions in class that show his knowledge and understanding of information, help him make sense of the world around him, and explain reasons for bad behavior and possibly keep him out of trouble. Here are some steps for teaching a child to answer “why” questions.

### Age of Mastery:

Children are typically able to answer “why” questions by 4 years of age. That’s why preschoolers constantly walk around asking “why? why? why?”. For the record, the author of this book holds no personal responsibility if you implement this protocol and your child starts asking “why” a million times. :-)

### Learning Steps:

1. Answering why about things currently happening
2. Answering why questions about past events
3. Answering hypothetical why questions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer why questions about events that are currently happening on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Why are you yawning?” “Because I’m tired”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer why questions about past events on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Why did you hit her?” “Because I was mad”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer hypothetical why questions about typical causes of common events on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Why do we wash our hands?” “Because they get dirty”).

## Why Questions, Step One: Answering Why About Things Currently Happening

### Description:

To start off, you will want to ask your child “why” questions about things that are currently happening. This is the least abstract form of answering “why” questions so it should be used first before more abstract forms.

### Activities:

Get out a piece of paper that says “why?” on one side and “because...” on the other. You can use the sheet on the next page or make your own. Show it to your child and explain that when you ask a “why” question, he should tell you an answer that starts with “Because”. Then, tell him he should tell you a reason. Now, give him some examples. You can say “If you’re yawning and I say ‘Why are you yawning?’, you can say ‘Because I’m tired’”. Give your child a few more examples of “why” questions and then choose something to play with your child. Get out something your child enjoys doing but make sure you will have an opportunity to talk during the activity (video games aren’t great for this). While your child is playing, ask him various “why” questions about his behavior and help him come up with an answer. For example, if he knocks down the tower of blocks, you could say “Why are you knocking that down?” Then, show him the visual aid and say “Listen, I asked you a ‘why’ question. Your answer should start with ‘because’. Why did you knock down the blocks? Because...” Then pause and see if your child can fill in the rest of the question. If not, help him out with a reason (“Because I like to see it fall”). As your child gets better at this, ask questions like this about your child’s actions throughout the day as well.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer “why” questions about current actions and events about 80% of the time, you’re ready to move on to the next step.

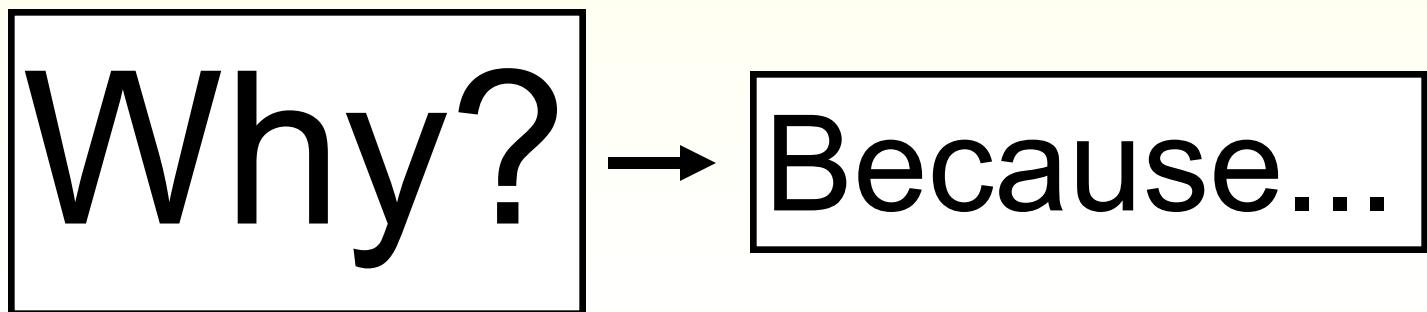
### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Answer “Why” Questions about current happenings</b>							

## Teaching Why Questions, Step One:

### Why Questions about Things Currently Happening

Show your child the word “why” on this page. Tell your child that when he hears you ask a “why” question, his answer should start with “because”. Show him the “because” on the page as well. Then, talk about the example on the page. Then, while you’re playing or talking with your child, ask him a why question and show him this page again. Say “I asked you a why question, tell me a reason that starts with because”. You will probably have to help him come up with an answer at first but the more you do this, the better he should get at coming up with an answer on his own.



Why are you eating?



Because I'm hungry.

### Extra Practice:

Keep asking your child “why” questions throughout the day. If your child forgets, remind him to start his answer with “because...” and then see if he can fill in the rest of the answer. If not, tell him the appropriate answer and have him repeat it. If you ask the same why questions throughout the day, he will begin to anticipate what those answers should be. This will help him learn how to answer.

## Why Questions Step Two: Answering Why About Past Events

### Description:

Now that your child is answering “why” questions about current happenings, you should be able to ask about past events as well.

### Activities:

Use the visual aid from the last step as well if your child needs it to help him remember to say “Because” at the beginning of his answer. Keep asking “why” questions about current happenings but also start throwing in some “why” questions about past events. Start with events that have just recently passed so they’re still fresh in her memory. For example, you could ask “why did you hit your sister?” or “why were you crying?”. See if your child can give you a reason for these actions. If not, try giving her some choices so she can process through why she did things the way she did. For example, you could say “Did you hit your sister because you were mad at her, or because you were jealous of what she had, or because you love her?”

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer “why” questions about recently past actions and events about 80% of the time, you’re ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, try asking her why she’s doing something at the moment it’s happening and then ask the same question again right after she’s done. For example, you could say “why are you crying?” while she is still crying and then as soon as she’s done ask again “Why were you crying?”. Since you just asked the question, you should already have an answer worked out that she can use. Keep doing this until you no longer have to ask the question during the task first.

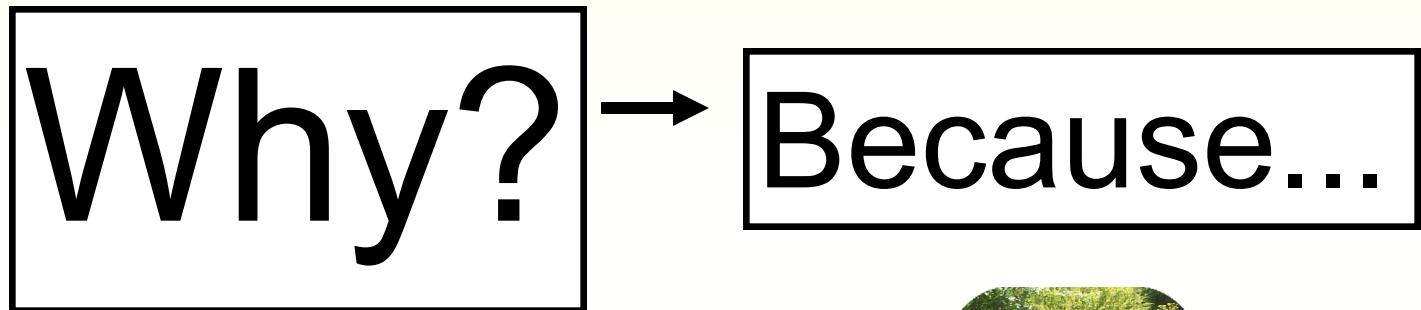
### Data Collection (Mark if she provides a logical explanation following the “why” question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “Why” Ques- tions about past events</b>							

## Teaching Why Questions, Step Two:

### Answering Why Questions About Past Events

Show your child the word “why” on this page. Remind your child that when she hears you ask a “why” question, her answer should start with “because”. Show her the “because” on the page as well. Then, talk about the example on the page. While you’re playing or talking with your child, ask her a why question about a past event and show her this page again. Say “I asked you a why question, tell me a reason that starts with because”. You will probably have to help her come up with an answer at first but the more you do this, the better she should get at coming up with an answer on her own. Start with events that just recently happened, such as something she just did. As your child gets better at this, try to move back to events that happened further in the past.



Why did you fall?



Because I was running too fast!

#### Extra Practice:

Continue asking your child “why” questions about past events throughout the day. Ask the same question throughout the day until your child can remember the appropriate answer. This will help your child catch on quicker than if you were to change the question every time.

## Why Questions Step Three: Answering Hypothetical “Why” Questions

### Description:

Now that your child is answering “why” questions about his own behaviors and motivations for them, it’s time to start asking some more abstract “why” questions. These are questions like “why do we sleep?” and “why do we wear shoes?”. They require a bit more complex thinking because they are probably things that your child hasn’t stopped to think about the reasoning behind very often.

### Activities:

Use the pictures on the next page of common actions and events and ask your child why they typically happen. You may have to tell your child the answers to these at first and that’s ok. Like I said above, chances are he’s never stopped to think about why he wears shoes outside, he just knows he is supposed to. Once he can answer all of the questions on the worksheet, start asking him other “why” questions. Ask him “why” questions about anything that comes up and try to help him come to the answer by himself. Give him little clues and hints that will help him along the way. For example, if you asked your child “why do we wear shoes?” and he couldn’t come up with an answer, you could say things like “Well, what happens if you don’t wear shoes outside?” or “Have you ever hurt your foot when you weren’t wearing shoes?”. Keep asking leading questions like that until he gets the correct answer. Or, if he’s struggling you can go ahead and tell him the answer, but make sure you come back and ask that one again sometime so he can practice the answer. You can also ask “why” questions while reading books. Read a page and then ask why something happened in the book. You can then move this into a hypothetical question as well. For example, if the character in the book is mad about something, you can say “why is he mad?”. Then, after answering that one, you can ask “why do you get mad?”.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer hypothetical “why” questions about a variety of topics, you can stop focusing on “why” questions specifically. If your child has trouble with a “why” question in the future, show him how to use references and online resources to find answers to those questions.

### Data Collection (Mark if he provides a reasonable answer to the why question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “Why” Ques- tions about hypothetical</b>							

### Teaching Why Questions, Step Three: Answering Hypothetical Why Questions

Your child is answering “why” questions about his own behaviors and motivations for them so it’s time to start asking some more abstract “why” questions. These are questions like “why do we sleep?” and “why do we wear shoes?”. They require a bit more complex thinking because they are probably things that your child hasn’t stopped to think about the reasoning behind very often. Use the pictures on this page of common actions and events and ask your child why they typically happen. You may have to tell your child the answers to these at first and that’s ok. Like I said above, chances are he’s never stopped to think about why he wears shoes outside, he just knows he is supposed to.



Why do you eat?



Why do babies cry?



Why do you take a bath?



Why do you get a Band-Aid?



Why do you go to the zoo?



Why do you sleep?

#### Extra Practice:

Once your child can answer all of the questions on this worksheet, start asking him other “why” questions. Ask him “why” questions about anything that comes up and try to help him come to the answer by himself. Give him little clues and hints that will help him along the way. For example, if you asked your child “why do we wear shoes?” and he couldn’t come up with an answer, you could say things like “Well, what happens if you don’t wear shoes outside?” or “Have you ever hurt your foot when you weren’t wearing shoes?”. Keep asking leading questions like this until he gets the correct answer. Or, if he’s struggling you can go ahead and tell him the answer, but make sure you come back and ask that one again soon so he can practice the answer.

## How to Teach a Child to Answer How Questions

### Rationale:

Children need to be able to answer a variety of questions to participate in conversations as well as classroom activities. Here are some guides for teaching your child to answer “how” questions.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be able to answer basic “how” questions by 4 years of age.

### Learning Steps:

1. Quantity “how” questions
2. Quality “how” questions
3. Extent “how” questions
4. Procedural “how” questions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will answer quantity “how” questions about up to 10 items on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “How many are there?” “Eight”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer quality “how” questions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “How does it feel?”, “wet”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer extent “how” questions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “How happy are you?” “Very happy”).
- By <Date>, Child will answer procedural “how” questions on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “How do you wash your hands?”).

## How Questions Step One: Quantity “How” Questions

### Description:

The first type of “how” question we will work on is about quantity. These are questions like “how many sandwiches do you have?” or “how much soup is there?”. Answers to these questions are either specific numbers or other quantity words like “a little”, “a lot”, etc.

### Activities:

Find some small objects that you have more than one of. These can be toy cars, food, game pieces, etc. Put one down in front of your child and say “how many \_\_\_ are there?”. Have your child count and tell you there is one. Now, place a few more in front of your child and ask again. Help him count again and tell you the correct number. Make sure you don’t place more objects out than your child is able to count. Keep doing this until your child can tell you the correct number every time you say “how many”. You may have to keep practicing this a while before he starts to get it. Once he can do specific number, switch to “how much” questions about things that don’t necessarily need to be counted with specific numbers. For example, you would say “how many sandwiches” but you would say “how much soup”. The answer to a “how much” question would be “a little”, “a lot”, or some other quantity word that’s not a specific number.

### When to Move On:

Keep asking your child “how many” and “how much” questions until he can correctly answer the questions about 80% of the time. Then you’re ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, you can start by asking “how many” and then immediately starting to count. This will get your child in the habit of counting when he hears “how many.” You may want to wait to address this skill until your child is able to count fairly well, at least to about 10.

### Data Collection (Mark if he answers the question appropriately with a number or quantity word):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “How” Ques- tions About Quantity</b>							

## Teaching How Questions, Step One:

### Quantity How Questions

Help your child answer these basic “how” questions about quantity by asking the question to the left of each set of objects. Then, have your child count the objects and tell you the specific number. Write it on the line to the right of the set. If you want to be able to reuse the page, put it in a sheet protector and write the number with a dry erase marker.

How many bananas are there?



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How many apples are there?



---

How many bugs are there?



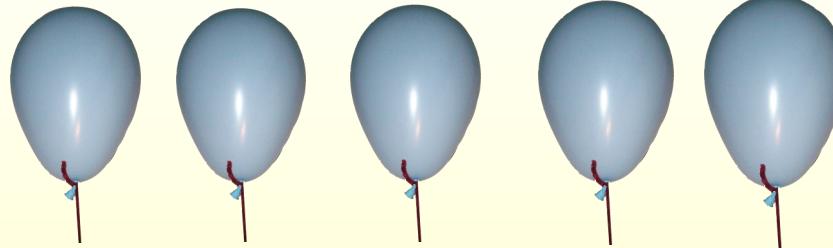
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How many balls are there?



---

How many balloons are there?



---

### Extra Practice:

Once your child can do specific number, try asking some “how much” questions about things that don’t necessarily need to be counted with specific numbers. For example, you would say “*how many sandwiches*” but you would say “*how much soup*”. The answer to a “how much” question would be “a little”, “a lot”, or some other quantity word that’s not a specific number.

## How Questions Step Two: Quality “How” Questions

### Description:

Quality “how” questions are all about using your 5 senses to gain information about what’s going on around you. These are questions like “how does it feel?” or “how does it taste?”.

### Activities:

Find one object that you would like to describe. Show it to your child and ask “how does it \_\_\_(feel, smell, look, sound, taste)?” Choose one sense to use at a time for this. Have your child think of all the words she can to describe that object using that sense. Use the worksheet on the following page to circle the descriptors that match that object. You can slide the sheet into a page protector and write on it with a dry erase marker so you can use it again. Or, make your own list using the adjectives that your child comes up with. If your child is stuck and needs some help, start giving her choices of descriptors that might fit. For example, you could say “is it bumpy or smooth?”. Then, let her pick which one fits the object best.

### When to Move On:

When your child can use at least 3 descriptors to describe any object using any sense, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this, you may need to go back and teach some more descriptors. Perhaps your child’s descriptive vocabulary is a little behind. Use the guide for teaching descriptors to get you started.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child is able to use 3 descriptors to describe with one sense):

	Date:						
<b>Use 3 Descriptors to describe an object using 1 sense</b>							

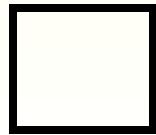
## How Questions Step Two: Quality “How” Questions

Find one object that you would like to describe. Show it to your child and ask “how does it \_\_\_(feel, smell, look, sound, taste)?” Choose one sense to use at a time for this. Have your child think of all the ways she can to describe that object using that sense. Use this worksheet to circle the descriptors that match that object. You can slide the page into a sheet protector and write on it with a dry erase marker so you can use it again. Or, make your own list using the adjectives that your child comes up with. If your child is stuck and needs some help, start giving her choices of descriptors that might fit. For example, you could say “is it bumpy or smooth?”. Then, let her pick which one fits the object best.

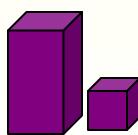
### How Does It Look?



What color is it?



What shape is it?



What size is it?

### How Does it Smell?



good



bad



sweet



sour



salty

### How Does it Taste?



good



bad



sweet



sour



salty



chewy



soft

### How Does it Feel?



soft



hard



bumpy



smooth



hot



cold

### How Does it Sound?



quiet



loud



high



low

## How Questions Step Three: Extent “How” Questions

### Description:

Now we’re going to use “how” to ask about the extent of something. For example, you can ask “how excited are you?” or “how hot is it outside?”. These are all questions that will be answered with a range of severities or intensities.

### Activities:

Find chances throughout the day to ask extent “how” questions about what your child is experiencing. You can ask your child about his emotions (“how sad are you right now?”) or about things he is feeling (“how wet is your swimsuit?”). Help your child to answer with a severity or intensity, like “very sad, a little sad, not sad” or “very wet, a little wet, or not wet”.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer extent “how” questions about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

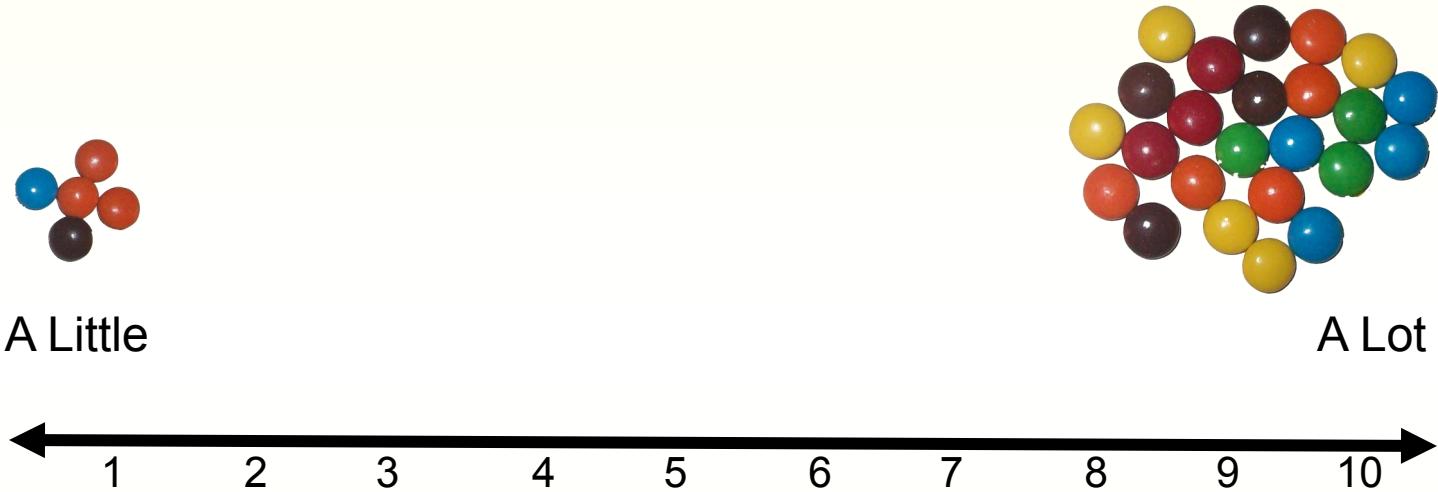
### Data Collection (Mark if your child can answer the question with an intensity/severity):

	Date:						
<b>Answer extent “how” ques- tions</b>							

### Teaching How Questions, Step Three:

#### Extent How Questions

Now we're going to use "how" to ask about the extent of something. For example, you can ask "how excited are you?" or "how hot is it outside?". These are all questions that will be answered with a range of severities or intensities. Find chances throughout the day to ask extent "how" questions about what your child is experiencing. You can ask your child about his emotions ("how sad are you right now?") or about things he is feeling ("how wet is your swimsuit?"). Help your child to answer with a severity or intensity, like "very sad, a little sad, not sad" or "very wet, a little wet, or not wet". You can use this severity rating scale to help your child answer these questions.



#### Extra Practice:

Continue asking your child "how" questions throughout the day that require an answer about how much or how little. Help your child come up with the correct answers.

## How Questions Step Four: Procedural “How” Questions

### Description:

The last type of “how” questions that we will work on is procedural “how” questions. These are questions that ask how something is done. The answer will be a procedure for how to do it.

### Activities:

Use the pictures on the next page or make pictures of your own that represent a complex but familiar series of events. This could be something like brushing your teeth, washing your hands, building a sand castle, etc. Show your child one picture and ask her “how do you \_\_\_\_\_?”. Help her form her answer with a statement about what you do first (“First, you...”), some statements about what happens next (“Next, you...” or “then, you...”), and then a statement about what you do last (“Last, you...” or “Finally, you...”). Using words like “first”, “then”, and “last” will help your child organize her thoughts better and make sure everything comes out in a logical manner. Make sure your child also includes all of the important steps to the task.

### When to Move On:

When your child can answer procedural “how” questions about 80% of the time, you are done working on “how” questions with your child. Just keep monitoring the skill to make sure she is continuing to answer them in appropriate ways.

### Modifications:

Some children with language delays have trouble with this part due to the high amount of organization that the task requires. If your child is having trouble with this, keep working on it! This is a great way to improve her mental organization and practice using and developing those great language skills. You may want to provide pictures that represent each step so she can visually see all of the parts to the answer. Then, have her tell you what happens based on these steps. You can even take pictures of her performing the actions so it is more meaningful.

### Data Collection (Mark if she can describe how to do something following the question):

	Date:						
<b>Answer procedural “how” questions</b>							

## Teaching How Questions, Step Four:

### Procedural How Questions

Show your child one of these pictures and ask her “how do you \_\_\_\_?”. Help her form her answer with a statement about what you do first (“First, you...”), some statements about what happens next (“Next, you...” or “then, you...”), and then a statement about what you do last (“Last, you...” or “Finally, you...”). Using words like “first”, “then”, and “last” will help your child organize her thoughts better and make sure everything comes out in a logical manner. Make sure your child also includes all of the important steps to the task.



How do you wash your hands?

How do you brush your teeth? How do you get ready for bed?



How do you put on your shoes and socks?



How do you make a bowl of cereal?

### Extra Practice:

Ask your child other procedural “how” questions throughout the day. If your child is struggling to include all of the steps, have your child explain what she’s doing while she’s doing it. Then, go back and review the steps once she’s done. You can even take pictures of her doing it so she can use them for reference later.

## How to Teach a Child to Ask a Question With Good Word Order

### Rationale:

For many children with language delays, it can be very confusing to figure out how to ask a question appropriately. As adults, we change the word order of a sentence to turn it into a question. For example, instead of saying “you do have three apples”, we would ask a question as “do you have three apples?” Often, children with language delays will miss this subtle word order shift and will simply ask the question without changing the word order. Their questions may sound like “I can have one?” or “you are eating cookies?”. This can make their message difficult to follow and, if they don’t get the right intonational patterns, you may not even know that they’re asking a question.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be able to ask a variety of questions with correct word order by 4 years of age. It is very typical for children younger than this to use incorrect word order when asking questions and that is perfectly OK. However, if they’re doing it past 4 years, it’s time to give them a little extra help.

### Learning Steps:

1. Collect an inventory of incorrect question structures
2. Imitate and practice correct question structures
3. Correct question structures in conversation

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will imitate questions with correct word order during structured therapy activities on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correct word order in a question he has just asked when prompted by an adult on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will ask questions with correct word order on 80% of observed opportunities during 5 minutes of conversation on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Word Order Step One: Collecting an Inventory of Incorrect Question Structures

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is identify which structures your child is having trouble with. We will do this by collecting an inventory.

### Activities:

Take a week to listen for times that your child asks a question with the incorrect word order. Every time you hear one, write it down. You can jot notes on your smart phone or just keep a small pad of paper with you and write them down when you hear them. I've also had parents call their landline house phone and leave a voicemail message of what it was so they could write it down when they got home. However you need to do it, just keep a list. I recommend doing this for a week or so because it may take a while to change your mindset so that you catch them. As parents, we tend to interpret what our children say and may not notice when they use incorrect word order. Once you have a pretty good-sized list, go through it and see if you can figure out a few different types of questions that your child keeps having trouble with. Maybe she has trouble asking "do" questions, like "do you have \_\_\_\_" or "do you want to \_\_\_\_". Or maybe, she has trouble with "is" questions, like "is she coming" or "what is she eating?". Look through the list and come up with some patterns. Choose the most common question forms to target during step two.

### When to Move On:

When you have a nice list of incorrect question structures and you've chosen a few to target in the next step, you're ready to move on.

### Data Collection:

<b>Question Forms we will Target in the Next Step:</b>	
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## Word Order Step Two: Imitating and Practicing Correct Question Structures

### Description:

Now that you've chosen a few question structures to target, you will want to have your child imitate and practice those structures during a game or activity.

### Activities:

Think of a game or activity that would give your child multiple opportunities to ask questions with that structure. You may have to create your own game that provides opportunities. Play this game while having your child imitate the correct question structure over and over again. Make sure he has many chances to practice the question. Here are some ideas of how you can do this for various question forms:

- **Do Questions:** Play Go Fish with your child! On each turn, your child will need to ask "do you have a \_\_\_?".
- **Is Questions:** Take turns asking each other about what people are doing in pictures. Each turn, someone asks "is he \_\_\_-ing?" and the other person must answer. Do this before each turn in a board game or while doing something else fun.
- **Mixed Does and Is:** Play 20 questions. Tell your child you're thinking of something and have him practice asking questions to figure out what it is. Help him form the questions correctly.
- **Are Questions:** Get out a car or other vehicle and a few other toys. Tell your child you're thinking of a place to go. Have your child ask "are you going \_\_\_" until he guesses correctly.

### When to Move On:

When your child can ask the target question structures correctly in this game/activity about 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if he asks the question correctly during the activity):

	Date:						
<b>Ask questions in game with correct word order</b>							

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## Word Order Step Three: Correct in Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child has practiced asking the questions with the correct form, we want her to start saying them correctly in every-day conversational speech.

### Activities:

Start listening for your child's questions in conversational speech. When you hear your child ask a question with incorrect word order, rephrase the question for her and have her repeat it back to you. I recommend focusing on one question form at a time when doing this. Start by only correcting the question structures you've been targeting during the game activities in step two.

### When to Move On:

Once your child is able to ask a question using one of the target question structures you used during the last step with about 80% accuracy during conversation, you are ready to introduce a new question structure. Keep doing this for any other question structures that your child is having trouble with.

### Modifications:

If you have fixed all of the structures that you were able to identify patterns for (like "do questions" and "is questions") but your child still has a few random questions here and there that she mixes up, you don't necessarily need to go back through every step in this process for those. If there are just a few errors here and there, try starting with this step and correct them in conversation when you hear them. If your child doesn't respond to this, then you can go back and teach each specific question using these steps but she should be able to make improvements by just correcting those sporadic errors in conversation.

### Data Collection (Mark if she asks the question form correctly in conversation):

	Date:						
<b>Ask questions in conversation with correct word order</b>							

# Speech Sound Guides

## How to Teach a Child A Single Sound

### Rationale:

If your child is difficult to understand, you will want to start by teaching him to say one sound at a time. This is the easiest way to improve your child's speech skills. This guide will show you how to teach a single sound.

### Age of Mastery:

Here is an overview of which sounds are expected to be learned by which ages. When choosing sounds to teach your child, start with the younger sounds that he has trouble with first.

### Learning Steps:

1. Sound in Isolation
2. Sound in Syllables
3. Sound in Single Words
4. Sound in Sentences
5. Sound in Structured Conversation
6. Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in isolation on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in non-sense syllables on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in single words on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in sentences on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in structured conversation on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce the \_\_ sound in conversational speech on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

Source: [Linqusystems](#)

Sound	Age	Sound	Age
p.....	3 yrs	t.....	5 yrs
m.....	3 yrs	r.....	6 yrs
h.....	3 yrs	l.....	6 yrs
n.....	3 yrs	ch.....	7 yrs
w.....	3 yrs	sh.....	7 yrs
b.....	4 yrs	j.....	7 yrs
k.....	4 yrs	s.....	8 yrs
g.....	4 yrs	z.....	8 yrs
d.....	4 yrs	v.....	8 yrs
f.....	4 yrs	th.....	8 yrs
y.....	4 yrs	zh.....	8 yrs

## Single Sound Step One (Pg 1 of 4): Sound in Isolation

### Description:

The first step to teaching your child a new sound is helping her say the sound all by itself. We call this “saying the sound in isolation” and it means just the sound, not a word or syllable that contains the sound, but just the sound. For example, if you want to teach your child to say “sock”, “sun”, and “soup”, you should work on the “sssss” sound.

### Activities:

Tell your child that you’re going to work on learning a new sound. Show her the letter and say the sound that goes with it. You can say “G says /g/”. Then, use the cues below to help your child figure out how to make the sound on his own. If these cues don’t work for your child, think about how you make the sound and see what other cues you can come up with. What are your lips and tongue doing? How does it feel?

#### /b/

To produce the /b/ sound, use the following cues with your child.

- Watch My Mouth (this will help her see what your lips are doing)
- Put your lips together
- Make your lips pop
- Make your voice hum/Turn your voice on

Help your child push her lips together with her fingers if she’s having trouble getting them closed

#### /p/

If your child is having trouble with /p/, use the same cues as for /b/ but you will not tell her to turn her voice on. You can have her whisper the sound if she’s making it sound like a /b/ instead of a /p/.

#### /w/

To make the /w/ sound, have your child start by saying “oo” like in “boo” and then slowly move the lips apart to say “uh”. It should sound like “ooooooh”.

#### /m/

The /m/ sound is produced by pushing the lips together and humming. Have your child hold her lips closed and then ask her to hum or turn her voice on. The mouth should not open at all during this sound, all of the air should come out of the nose.

**Continued on Next Page**

## Single Sound Step One (Pg 2 of 4): Sound in Isolation

### Activities cont.:

#### /f/

Use these cues to get your child to say the /f/ sound:

- Bite your bottom lip (use a mirror to help your child see what he is doing)
- Hold your lip there and blow

You may need to have your child use his finger to keep his lip in the right place.

#### /v/

To produce the /v/ sound, use the same cues as /f/ except that you will need to have your child hum or turn his voice on. If your child is struggling with this, try having him hum a tune while biting his bottom lip with his top teeth. If your child is struggling to hold his lip with his teeth, have him use his finger to keep it in place.

#### “th”

To produce the “th” sound, have your child place his tongue between his teeth and blow. There are actually two versions of this sound, one with the voice on (like the word “the”) and one with the voice off (like the word “thumb”). Have your child hum if it’s the voiced one.

#### /t/

To produce the /t/ sound, have your child tap his tongue right behind his top, front teeth. If your child is having trouble figuring out where to put his tongue, use these techniques to show him the right place:

- Touch the spot right behind the top, front teeth with a popsicle stick or sucker. Then tell him to put his tongue in the same spot.
- Put a sticky food, like peanut butter or marshmallow cream, on the spot right behind his top, front teeth. Then, have him lick it off. When you are describing that spot again, call it the sticky spot.

#### /d/

To produce the /d/ sound, you can use the same cues as the /t/ sound, but your child will need to turn his voice on. Tell him this is the loud one.

**Continued on Next Page**

## Single Sound Step One (Pg 3 of 4): Sound in Isolation

### Activities cont.:

#### /n/

For the /n/ sound, your child will need to put her tongue in the same spot as the /t/ sound (see the cues mentioned for /t/). This time though, your child will hold the tongue in that spot while she hums or turns her voice on. If she is having trouble turning her voice on, have her hum a tune while holding her tongue in that position.

#### /s/

For the /s/ sound, have your child put her tongue in the same place as /t/ (use the placement cues from /t/) but then blow air out. We call this the snake sound! If your child is sticking her tongue out too far, look in a mirror and tell her to keep her tongue behind her teeth. You can practice smiling so that his teeth are touching and there is no place for the tongue to peak out.

#### /z/

For the /z/ sound, use the same cues as /s/ but this time your child will need to hum or turn her voice on. You can have her practice turning her voice on by humming a tune while saying the /s/ sound.

#### /l/

For the /l/ sound, have your child slowly move her tongue up to the /t/ spot and back down again. While she's doing this, have her hum or turn her voice on.

#### “y”

To produce the “y” sound, have your child start by saying “ee” like in “bee” and then slowly open the mouth to say “uh”. It should sound like “eeeeuuuuhh”.

#### “sh”

I call this the quiet sound. To make this sound, have your child form her lips into a little circle and blow. If your child is saying /s/ instead of “sh”, ask her to pull her tongue back towards the back of her mouth.

#### “zh”

This is the sound heard at the end of the word “beige”. This one isn’t very common in our language but it’s produced the same way as “sh” except with the voice humming or turned on. We don’t usually focus on this one too much.

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## Single Sound Step One (Pg 4 of 4): Sound in Isolation

**Activities cont.:****“ch”**

This sound is produced by saying “t” and “sh” quickly together. This one is pretty difficult so don’t get frustrated if he can’t say it!

**“j”**

The “j” sound is made by saying the “d” sound and the “zh” sounds very quickly together. This may be another one that is best worked on by a speech-language pathologist

**“r”**

See the next section on teaching /r/.

**/k/**

To produce the /k/ sound, your child will need to get his tongue to the very back of his mouth. If your child is having trouble finding the right place for his tongue, use some of these placement cues:

- Get a small sucker (like a dum-dum) or a popsicle stick. Gently push down the front of your child’s tongue so that it cannot rise up to say a “t” sound. You can also push his tongue back slightly with the sucker or stick to move the tongue backward. Show him this on yourself first so he doesn’t get scared.
- Have your child lay on his back while saying this sound. Gravity may help him drop his tongue back.
- Using your thumb, gently push up and back on the soft spot on the bottom of your child’s chin. This may get the tongue back to the right position.
- Have your child make a growly sound in the back of his throat like a dinosaur. Then, practice shortening it up so it sounds more like a /k/ sound.

**/g/**

The /g/ sound is produced the same way as the /k/ but with the voice turned on.

**/h/**

The /h/ sound is produced by making puffs of air at the back of the mouth. Have your child pretend to pant like a dog to make this sound.

**When to Move On:**

When your child is able to produce the sound in isolation about 80% of the time, move on!

**Data Collection (Mark if your child can say the sound by itself):**

	Date:						
<b>Sound in Isolation</b>							

## Single Sound Step Two: Sound in Syllables

### Description:

For this step, you will help your child put the sound at the beginning of non-sense syllables.

### Activities:

Use the sound spider included on the next page. Write the consonant sound on the spider's body on the next page. Help your child say just the sound in the middle. Then, pair that sound with the vowel on each leg. Trace your finger along the line and model the correct syllable (slowly) for your child. Start at the top left and go down. Then, go down the right side. For example, if your child's target sound was "b", you would have your child imitate each of the following syllables: "buh", "bah", "baa", "beh", etc. If your child uses the wrong consonant sound, start back over at the sound by itself and start the syllables over again with "\_uh". Once your child can do that, try moving the sound to the end of the syllable. Say the vowel first and then move to the consonant. For example, if your sound was /b/, you could say "uhb", "ahb", "aab", etc. Make sure your child can do these forward and backwards before you move on.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to imitate the sound when paired with a vowel about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

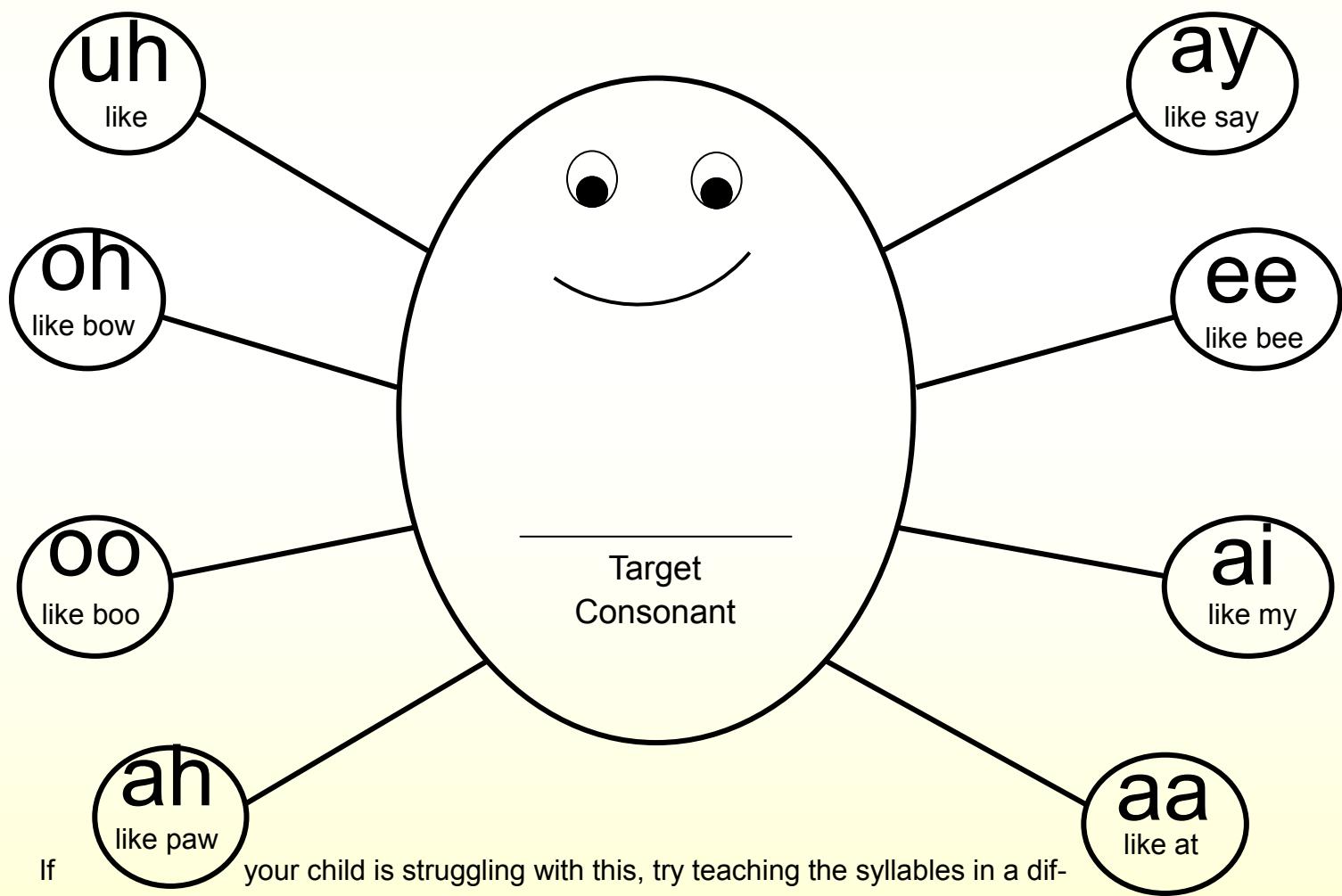
If your child is struggling with this, try teaching the syllables in a different order. Try putting the vowels before the consonant first or try teaching different vowels that then ones on the spider. Try short vowels like "ih", "eh", and "ah" instead of long vowels like "ee". Some children benefit from trying things in a different order so be flexible and keep trying till you find something that works. You can also try moving on to the next step and seeing if she's ready to skip to words. Some children don't need to work on this step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says the consonant sound correctly when paired with a vowel):

	Date:						
<b>Imitate consonant paired with a vowel</b>							

## Single Sound, Step Two: Sound in Syllables

We are working on helping your child put this new sound in non-sense syllables. Write the consonant sound that your child is learning on the spider's body. Help your child say just the sound in the middle. Then, pair that sound with the vowel on each leg. Trace your finger along the line and model the correct syllable (slowly) for your child. Start at the top left and go down. Then, go down the right side. For example, if your child's target sound was "b", you would have your child imitate each of the following syllables: "buh", "bah", "baa", "beh", etc. If your child uses the wrong sound, start back over at the sound by itself (no vowels with it) and then start the syllables over again with "\_uh". Once your child can do this, try moving the sound to the end of the syllable. Say the vowel first and then move to the consonant. For example, if your sound was /b/, you could say "uhb", "ohb", "oob", etc. Make sure your child can do these forward and backwards.



If your child is struggling with this, try teaching the syllables in a different order. Try putting the vowels before the consonant first or try teaching different vowels than ones on the spider. Try short vowels like "ih", "eh", and "ah" instead of long vowels like "ee". Some children benefit from trying things in a different order so be flexible and keep trying till you find something that works.

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### Single Sound Step Three: Sound in Single Words

**Description:**

For this step you will help your child put the sound in single words.

**Activities:**

Eventually, you will want your child to be able to say the sound when it is at the beginning, middle, or end of the word, but I would recommend starting with just one position. Try a few words and see which is easiest for your child, when it's at the beginning, middle, or end. Then, create a list of words with the sound in that position. You can find pictures of those words on Google image search, in magazines, or by drawing them yourself.

I also have another eBook which is an All-In-One Articulation Program and Materials Kit. You can purchase this kit and receive a PDF with all of my articulation cards along with everything else you would need to do articulation therapy, including a speech screening tool and flashcards for each speech sound. You can check out this program by clicking the link below.

[Click Here to Check Out my All-In-One Articulation Program and Materials Kit](#)

Once you have all your words picked out, put them all together on one page so your child has his own word list. You can make practicing these words fun by having your child say a few before taking each turn in a game or between fun activities like throwing a ball. Once your child can say the words in that position, try moving the sound to a different position in the word and creating a new word list.

**When to Move On:**

When your child is able to say the sound in single words about 80% of the time in any word position (beginning/middle/end), you are ready to move on to the next step.

**Modifications:**

This step may take a while so be patient. If he is stuck with certain words, try a different group of words or switch the sound to a different position in the word (beginning, middle, or end). Keep trying and keep practicing until he can say any word with that sound!

	Date:						
<b>Say sound in any single word</b>							

## Single Sound Step Four: Sound in Sentences

### Description:

For this step you will help your child put the words you practiced before into whole sentences.

### Activities:

For each word on your child's word list, have her create a sentence using that word. For example, if the word is "ball", she could say "I have a blue ball" or "I like to throw the ball".

Remind your child to slow down and take her time on these sentences. She will need to think very hard to get the sound right on the target word. You can start off by having your child imitate sentences like this from your model first. This will help her get the idea of how to create sentences about a word. I recommend not putting the target word at the beginning of the sentence because then she will always try to put the target sound at the beginning of the sentence instead of on the correct word. Have her imitate sentences until you think she's ready to make some of her own. Then, ask her to come up with a sentence about the target word. I like to use the cue "what could we say about a \_\_\_\_". If she has trouble, give her two choices and have her pick which sentence she likes the best.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to say the sound in sentences about 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this step, try having him start with simple, repetitive sentences like "I see a sock", "I see a sun", etc. This will help make the transition to sentences a little easier.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child says the target sound correctly in a sentence):

	Date:						
<b>Say sound in any sentence</b>							

## Single Sound Step Five: Sound in Structured Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can use the sound in sentences, we want him to start using it with a few sentences together. We call this “structured conversation”.

### Activities:

Give your child a prompt that will encourage him to speak a few sentences together. When you give him the prompt, say “remember to use your good \_\_\_ sound the whole time!”. Here are some ideas of prompts you can use to get him started:

- Tell me all of the steps you need to do to brush your teeth.
- Tell me about your last birthday party.
- Tell me about recess today.
- How do you play your favorite game?
- What happened in your favorite movie?

You will need to gently remind him when he forgets to use his target sound during these activities.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to say the target sound correctly in these structured conversations about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if he says the target sound correctly in structured conversation):

	Date:						
<b>Say sound in any structured conversation</b>							

## Single Sound Step Five:

### Sound in Structured Conversation

We are working on helping your child start using a new sound when speaking with a few sentences together. We call this “structured conversation”. Give your child one of the prompts below that will encourage him to speak a few sentences together. When you give him the prompt, say “remember to use your good \_\_\_ sound the whole time!”. Here are some ideas of prompts you can use to get him started. Make sure he uses his good \_\_\_ sound the whole time. Remind him if he forgets.



Describe all of the steps to washing your hands.



Describe all of the steps to getting ready for bed at night.



Describe all of the steps to brushing your teeth



Tell me about your last birthday party.



Tell me about the last meal you had.



Tell me about the last time you went to recess.



Tell me about the last place you went.



Tell me about the coolest animal you ever saw.

#### **Extra Practice:**

Start reminding your child to use the new sound he's learning in conversational speech as well. You don't have to stop him every time he says it wrong, but start pointing it out so he notices the sound. You can do this nicely by saying something like "Oh, I hear our sound! Let's practice it!"

## Single Sound Step Six: Conversational Speech

### Description:

Now that your child can use the sound in structured conversation, we want to increase her skills so that she is using the sound all the time. You may find that she's already doing this by now or you may need to work on it some more. If you need to keep working on it, here are the steps.

### Activities:

Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying the new sound in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for her good \_\_\_ sound during that time. If your child says the sound incorrectly, give her a gentle reminder and help her fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about the sound until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using this sound on her own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind her every once in a while during conversation and you don't need to make it a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when she's in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to say the target sound correctly in all conversational speech about 80% of the time, then you can consider your child to have mastered this sound. Just monitor her production of the sound and remind her if she starts to slip up again. You can start working on a new sound or skill at this point.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says the sound correctly in conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Say sound in any conversational speech</b>							

## Single Sound Step Six: Conversational Speech

Your child has been learning a new sound and now we want to increase her skills so that he is using the sound all the time. Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying the new sound in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for her good \_\_\_ sound during that time. If your child says the sound incorrectly, give her a gentle reminder and help her fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about the sound until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using this sound on her own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind her every once in a while during conversation and you don’t need to make it a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when she’s in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill. You can use this visual aid below to remind your child to think about his sound. Put this on the table in front of her during “speech time” and simply tap on the picture whenever she starts to forget about his sound. Tell her that this should be her reminder to start using the good sound again.



## How to Teach a Child the /r/ Sound

### Rationale:

The /r/ sound is a bit more difficult to teach than other sounds because it takes quite a bit of muscle control to master and there are so many different variations of /r/ to work on. This guide will be very similar to the last guide but it will be specific to working on /r/.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be able to say /r/ by 6-7 years old but most public schools won't be working on the /r/ sound until 7 or 8. Those rules are set by the state departments of education and there is nothing your child's school can do about that. I don't recommend waiting until 8 years old to work on /r/ though as it is easier to fix when they are a bit younger. You can seek speech therapy from a speech-language pathologist in private practice or work on it at home using these steps. Keep in mind that some children may be too young to work on this sound though as their tongue muscles may not be developed enough to make the sound correctly. If you try this with a younger child and he's not able to do it, take a break and come back to it when he's a little bit older.

### Learning Steps:

1. Find an Easy /r/
2. Practice the Easy /r/
3. Slowly Work in Other /r/ Sounds in Single Words
4. Use /r/ in Sentences
5. Use /r/ in Structured Conversation
6. Use /r/ in Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will correctly produce single words with vocalic /r/ and intervocalic /r/ on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly produce single words with prevocalic /r/ and /r/ blends on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly produce /r/ in sentences on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly produce /r/ in structured conversation on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly produce /r/ in conversational speech on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## /r/ Sound Step One: Find an Easy /r/

## Description:

For most children who are having trouble with the /r/ sound, you will find that they can say a few words with a fairly decent /r/ already, before you even start therapy. The easiest way to teach /r/ is to start with those easy words and expand their ability to make that good /r/ into other words. If you can't find any easy /r/ words, your child may not be ready to work on /r/ or may require a speech therapist.

## Activities:

You need to figure out which words your child says with a better /r/ than others. There are a few ways to do this:

- Listen to your child while he talks normally and listen for good /r/s (or at least ones that sound better than the rest). It may only be a single word that you catch here or there that sounds good but see if you can find it. Write down any words that you hear that you think “that /r/ sounded pretty good”. Once you have a list of several words, have him say the words back to you and see which one or two sound the best.
  - You can also probe for specific words that sound good. You will want to try a variety of different words to see which ones sound better or worse. You can use the word list on the next page to run through a wide variety of /r/ words or make your own word lists by including all of these different /r/ sounds:

/ar/ like "car"    /or/ like "more"    "ear" like "deer"    "air" like "bear"    "er" like "were"    "ire" like "fire"	
intervocalic /r/ (between two vowels)	pre-vocalic /r/ (at the beginning of a word)
/r/ in blends: br, tr, dr, fr, gr, kr, pr	/r/ together like "girl"

## When to Move On:

Keep looking until you find one word that your child can say really well or a few that he says pretty well.

### **Data Collection (Write down the words you find here):**

<b>Words with easy /r/ for my child</b>	
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## /r/ Sound, Step One:

### Find an Easy /r/

Try having your child say these words for you and listen for the /r/ sound. Circle the words that either have a good /r/ or at least sound like a better /r/ than the rest. If you hear one that sounds really good, star that one.

#### -ar Words

armor  
archer  
garden  
garbage  
car  
star

earring  
gears  
weird  
clear  
steer

crab  
shrub  
trees  
train  
dress  
drop

#### -or Words

organ  
order  
doorway  
gorgeous  
more  
score

iron  
Ireland  
wires  
fire hydrant  
tire  
liar

frighten  
friend  
present  
prize  
brain  
broom

#### -air Words

airplane  
Aaron  
Merry-Go-Round  
airshow  
bear  
stair

early  
earn  
burn  
kernel  
butter  
baker

Initial /r/ Words  
rain  
really  
raisin  
roaring  
room  
run  
rock

/rl/ Words  
girl  
pearl

#### /r/ Blends

#### -ear Words

earphones

grandma  
grapes  
crane

After you've gone through this list, go back to the words that your child said with good /r/ sounds and try other words that are similar. Try words with the same type of /r/ that have the same sound before the /r/ or the same sound after the /r/ and see if you can find a pattern of which /r/ words are easiest for your child. Use that list for the next step.

---

## /r/ Sound Step Two: Practice The Easy /r/

### Description:

Now that you know which /r/ words are easier for your child, it's time to practice that /r/.

### Activities:

There are two ways to make /r/ and if your child is producing some words with good or better /r/ sounds, then she already has a preferred way to make it. Get out a flashlight and shine it in her mouth while she says the easy /r/ word. Have her make the /r/ sound as long as she can while saying the easy word. You should either see her tongue tip go up or her tongue tip go down. Look at your own tongue in the mirror first to get a reference point. If you raise your tongue tip up and curl it back, you will see the little flap or piece of your tongue that holds it to the bottom of your mouth. If you see that in your child's mouth, then she is scooping her tongue like a bowl to make the /r/ sound. She is pulling the tip of her tongue up and back to make the /r/ sound. If you don't see that, then her tongue tip is down and he is making his tongue like a mountain to make the /r/ sound. She is bunching her tongue in the back of his mouth with the tongue tip down and back as well. Whichever way she's doing it, explain to her what her tongue is doing and see if she can hold the /r/ out in that easy word again to feel for where her tongue is. You can say things like "Do you feel how your tongue is bunched up in the back of your mouth?" or "Do you feel how the tip of your tongue is curling up and back?". Have her think about her tongue while she's saying his easy /r/ word(s). Have her keep saying that word over and over again until she feels exactly where her tongue is and what it's doing. Have her explain to you what her tongue is doing to make that sound.

### When to Move On:

Keep practicing the easy /r/ words while talking about what your child's tongue is doing until she gets a good feel for it. Once she is able to describe what her tongue is doing, move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she can describe her tongue position for /r/):

	Date:						
<b>Describe her natural tongue position for /r/</b>							

### /r/ Sound Step Three: Slowly Work in Other /r/ Sounds in Words

#### Description:

Now that your child understands how to make the good /r/, you will want to practice other /r/ sounds in single words.

#### Activities:

After practicing the easy /r/ word(s) for a while, start trying other /r/ words. Start with words that are as similar to the original word as possible, even if you need to make up words. For example, if your child can say “garbage” really well, try words like “garb”, “garp”, “carb”, etc. When first starting, you want to choose words with the same type of /r/ sound (“ar” in this case) and very similar consonants on either side of that /r/ sound. Practice those few words until he can do them pretty well, then add a few more that are slightly more different from the original word. Keep doing this until your child can produce all words with that type of /r/ sound (“ar” in this case). Keep in mind this may take several weeks for your child to be able to produce those words correctly. Have patience and celebrate the small victories and slow progress he is making. Once he can do all words with that /r/ type (ar, or, ear, dr, r-, etc.), try a different type of /r/. Try having him say several different /r/ words again and see which ones sound the best. Since he’s been practicing that good /r/, he should be better able to say some other /r/ sounds that he did before. When you find another /r/ that sounds pretty good, work on words with that type of /r/ until he is able to say that one well, also. Keep introducing new /r/ sounds slowly and systematically based on which one is easiest for your child at that moment. If you purchased the premium version of this e-book, there are lists of /r/ words in the back for you to use as well as handouts to send home. Keep in mind, this will probably take many months to get all of the /r/ sounds under your belt so be patient and keep celebrating the little victories. Keep motivating your child by telling him how far he’s come. You can even keep a chart of how many of the /r/ sounds he’s learned so he can see his progress and how much farther he has to go.

#### When to Move On:

Keep working until your child can say all of the different types of /r/s in single words. When he can do all of these with 80% accuracy, you’re ready to move on:

/ar/ like “car”    /or/ like “more”    “ear” like “deer”    “air” like “bear”    “er” like “were”    “ire” like “fire”

/r/ between two vowels, /r/ at the beginning of a word, /br/, /tr/, /dr/, /fr/, /gr/, /kr/, /pr/, and /rl/

#### Data Collection:

	Date:						
<b>Can produce /r/ in all single words</b>							

## /r/ Sound Step Four: Use /r/ in Sentences

### Description:

Now that your child can say /r/ in single words, you will want to move on to sentences.

### Activities:

Put together a word list for your child of /r/ words. This can be pictures of /r/ words or the word written out. Try to make sure there is a variety of different /r/ sounds represented on the list. For each word on your child's word list, have her create a sentence using that word. For example, if the word is "rabbit", she could say "I have a rabbit" or "I like to pet the rabbit".

Remind your child to slow down and take her time on these sentences. She will need to think very hard to get the /r/ sound right on the target word. You can start off by having your child imitate sentences like this from your model first. This will help her get the idea of how to create sentences about a word. I recommend not putting the target word at the beginning of the sentence because then she will always try to put the target sound at the beginning of the sentence instead of on the correct word. Have her imitate sentences until you think she's ready to make some of her own. Then, ask her to come up with a sentence about the target word. I like to use the cue "what could we say about a \_\_\_\_". If she has trouble, give her two choices and have her pick which sentence she likes the best.

### When to Move On:

Keep working until your child can produce /r/ in sentences with about 80% accuracy. Then, move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this step, try having her start with simple, repetitive sentences like "I see a rock", "I see a rabbit", etc. This will help make the transition to sentences a little easier.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says the /r/ correctly in each sentence):

	Date:						
Can produce /r/ in sentences							

## /r/ Sound Step Five: Use /r/ in Structured Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can use the sound in sentences, we want him to start using it with a few sentences together. We call this “structured conversation”.

### Activities:

Give your child a prompt that will encourage him to speak a few sentences together. When you give him the prompt, say “remember to use your good /r/ sound the whole time!”. Here are some ideas of prompts you can use to get him started:

- Tell me all of the steps you need to do to brush your teeth.
- Tell me about your last birthday party.
- Tell me about recess today.
- How do you play your favorite game?
- What happened in your favorite movie?

You will need to gently remind him when he forgets to use his /r/ sound during these activities.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to say the /r/ sound correctly in these structured conversations about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark every time he says an /r/ in these structured conversation activities):

	Date:						
<b>Can produce /r/ in structured conversation</b>							

## /r/ Sound Step Five:

### Use /r/ in Structured Conversation

We are working on helping your child to use the /r/ sound when speaking with a few sentences together. We call this “structured conversation”. Give your child one of the prompts below that will encourage him to speak a few sentences together. When you give him the prompt, say “remember to use your good /r/ sound the whole time!”. Here are some ideas of prompts you can use to get him started:



Describe all of the steps to washing your hands.



Describe all of the steps to getting ready for bed at night.



Describe all of the steps to brushing your teeth



Tell me about your last birthday party.



Tell me about the last meal you had.



Tell me about the last time you went to recess.



Tell me about the last place you went.



Tell me about the coolest animal you ever saw.

### Extra Practice:

Start reminding your child to use the /r/ sound in everyday conversational speech as well. You don't have to stop him every time he says it wrong, but start pointing it out every once in a while so he notices the sound.

---

## /r/ Sound Step Six: Use /r/ in Conversational Speech

### Description:

Now that your child can use the sound in structured conversation, we want to increase her skills so that she is using the sound all the time. You may find that she's already doing this by now or you may need to work on it some more. If you need to keep working on it, here are the steps.

### Activities:

Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying the new sound in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for her good /r/ sound during that time. If your child says the sound incorrectly, give her a gentle reminder and help her fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about the sound until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using this sound on her own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind her every once in a while during conversation and you don't need to make it happen during a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when she's in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill.

### When to Move On:

When your child is able to say the /r/ sound correctly in all conversational speech about 80% of the time, then you can consider your child to have mastered this sound. Just monitor her production of the sound and remind her if she starts to slip up again. You can start working on a new sound at this point.

### Data Collection (Mark every time she says an /r/ in conversation):

	Date:						
Can produce /r/ in conversational speech							

## /r/ Sound Step Six: Conversational Speech

Your child has been learning the /r/ sound and now we want to increase her skills so that she is using the sound all the time. Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying the /r/ sound in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for her good /r/ sound during that time. If your child says the sound incorrectly, give her a gentle reminder and help her fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about the sound until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using the /r/ sound on her own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind her every once in a while during conversation and you don’t need to make it happen during a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when she’s in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill. You can use this visual aid below to remind your child to think about her sound. Put this on the table in front of her during “speech time” and simply tap on the picture whenever she starts to forget about her sound. Tell her that this should be her reminder to start using the good sound again.



## How to Teach a Child A Class of Sounds

### Rationale:

If your child is struggling with learning to say a lot of sounds, you may want to teach your child a whole class of sounds at a time instead of teaching him one at a time. A class of sounds are several sounds that are all produced the same way. Below are some examples of classes of sounds and when children should be able to produce them.

### Age of Mastery:

Back Sounds: /k/ and /g/ Children who have trouble with this class will produce these sounds at the front of their mouths. They will say /t/ for /k/ and /d/ for /g/. Children should be able to say /k/ and /g/ by 3 or 4 years of age.

Long Sounds: /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, “th”, “sh”, “zh”

Children who have trouble with this class will often replace them all with short sounds. They will say /p/ for /f/, /b/ for /v/, /t/ for /s/, /d/ for /z/, etc. Children should be able to produce long sounds (even if they use the wrong one, like /f/ for “th”) by 4 years old.

Consonant Blends: /sp/, /br/, /kl/, etc.

Children who have trouble with this class will drop out one of the sounds in the blend. Children should be able to produce two-consonant blends (even if one or both sounds is wrong, like “twee” for “tree”) by 5 years old.

### Learning Steps:

1. Auditory Discrimination
2. Say the Class of Sounds in Words
3. Say the Class of Sounds in Sentences
4. Catch Your Child in Conversation

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will discriminate between back sounds and front sounds (or long sounds and short sounds) by pointing to the picture heard on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce back sounds (or long sounds) in single words on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce back sounds (or long sounds) in sentences on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce back sounds (or long sounds) in 5 minutes of conversational speech with fewer than 3 errors on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Class of Sounds Step One: Auditory Discrimination

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is help your child hear the difference between the class of sounds that she should be saying and the types of sounds that she is using instead. Choose one of the classes mentioned before, like long sounds, back sounds, or blends, and go through all of these steps using that sound class. Once your child masters it, you can go back and teach another class.

### Activities:

To do this, you will need to come up with some pairs of words that are exactly the same except that one has the correct sound and one has the sound that your child is saying instead. For example, if your child is having trouble with long sounds and says /t/ for /s/, you would want to come up with some pairs like “toe” and “sew”, or “tent” and “sent”. Notice how every sound in those pairs is the same except for the target sound. Choose several different examples from the sound class you are trying to target. For example, if you’re targeting long sounds, don’t just use pairs of words with /s/ and /t/, do some with the other long sounds as well. Once you have picked some of these pairs, you will need to make cards for each word. You can either print out pictures you find on google image or draw your own. Place two pictures in front of your child from the same pair. Tell your child what each picture is called and then have him close his eyes. Hide a penny (or a piece of candy) under one of the pictures. If it sticks up and is obvious to your child, use two paper cups and put the cards on top of the cups and the candy/penny under one. Then, have your child uncover his eyes and tell him which picture to look under. For example, if you had “two” and “shoe” out, you could say “look under ‘shoe’”. Make sure you exaggerate the target sound when you say it. If she looks under the wrong picture, say “Oh listen, that word has a long (or short) sound” and exaggerate the sound for her again. Keep doing this until your child can correctly pick the right picture each time. Your child may be able to do this right away or it may take several weeks. Keep at it!

While you’re doing this, point out the target sounds when you hear them, but your child doesn’t need to say the sounds yet at this point.

### When to Move On:

When your child can choose the right picture based on what you said at least 80% of the time, then she can hear the difference and you’re ready to move on.

### Data Collection:

	Date:						
Hear the Difference Between the two sounds							

## Class of Sounds Step Two: Say the Class in Words

### Description:

Once your child can hear the difference between the target class of sounds and the sounds he uses instead, it's time to start having your child say those sounds in single words.

### Activities:

Put two words from a pair in front of your child again, but this time, inform your child that he will have to tell you which picture to look under. Have your child close his eyes and then you hide the penny (or candy) under the picture with the target sound, that's the one you're trying to teach him, not the one he currently says instead. Have your child open his eyes and this time have him tell you where to look. Your child will probably say the word with the error sound first so repeat the word back to your child and look under that picture. (For example, if you're doing long and short sounds with the pair "two" and "shoe", hide it under the "shoe". When your child tells you to look under "two", say "Two. Ok, I'll look under "two". Oh, it's not under two"). Then, have your child guess again. If he says the error sound word again, repeat his error back to him, and then model the correct pronunciation of the word. In our example, you would say "you said 'two' but it's not there. Do you mean, ssshhhoe?" Then, help your child say the word with the correct sound so you can look under that picture.

Once your child can do this, try having your child label a picture of a word with the target sound by just showing him the picture and saying "what's this?" Once he can do this consistently, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### When to Move On:

When your child can say a variety of sounds from the class in single words about 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step. If you're working on back sounds, your child should be able to say both /k/ and /g/ before moving on. If you're working on long sounds, your child should be able to say at least some of the long sounds and should attempt to make long sounds on some of the harder ones. For example, "th" is a harder one, so if he says "f" or "s" in place of "th", that's ok for now. We just want him to be making long sounds. For blends, he should be able to say two sounds together, even if they're not always the right ones. Again, some of those sounds (like /r/ and /l/) are harder. "Twee" for "tree" is perfectly acceptable at this point. However, "tee" or "wee" is not. Get it?

### Data Collection (Write if the child can say the target sound in a single word when you say "what's this?"):

	Date:						
<b>Say the class in single words</b>							

## Class of Sounds Step Three: Say the Class in Sentences

### Description:

Now that your child is able to produce the class of sounds in single words, you are ready to move on to having your child say the class in single sentences.

### Activities:

Take only the cards that have the target class of sounds in them (so, take all of the short sounds out of your deck of pairs so that you just have the long sounds, or grab only the back sounds). Mix them up. Show your child a card and have her tell you what it's called. Make sure she uses the long sound. Then, have her imitate a short sentence with that word in it. For example, if the word is "shoe", you could have her say "I put on my shoe". Try not to put the word at the beginning of the sentence because it will challenge her more to stick the sound in the middle. Keep doing this until your child can imitate your short sentences. Keep in mind this may take a while, I usually do this part with my kids for a minimum of 1-2 weeks, sometimes much longer. Once your child can do that, have your child come up with sentences on her own. Have her create a sentence using the word. Keep working on this and helping your child use the target class of sounds in the target word as well as other words in the sentence. This part will probably take at least another several weeks to master. It gets very tricky when you start expecting your child to use the class of sounds throughout a sentence as opposed to just in the target word. Keep practicing and have patience. If your child needs a little motivation to keep going, try tracking her percentage of correct pronunciations on a graph so she can see the line going up. This helps my kiddos to see how far they've come and how much farther they need to go before moving on or getting a fun reward (like going out to eat or getting a week vacation from speech).

### When to Move On:

When you can show your child a word and she can create a sentence using that word (and use the class of sounds correctly in that target word and other words within the sentence) about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says the sounds from that class correctly in all parts of a single sentence):

	Date:						
<b>Says all sounds from that class in sentences</b>							

## Class of Sounds Step Four: Catch Your Child in Conversation

### Description:

Once your child can produce the sounds correctly in sentences, you will want to help him remember to use it all of the time in conversational speech.

### Activities:

Here are a couple of tips you can try to help encourage your child to use that class of sounds in conversational speech. At first, make sure you don't correct your child all the time. You can either choose a few errors here and there to target or you can choose just one time of the day that you tell your child will be "speech time" and you will remind him during that time but not after that. As your child gets better at this, you can start increasing the amount of time or the frequency with which you correct your child. This will prevent you and your child from getting burnt out.

- If you hear your child say a sound from that class incorrectly, repeat your child's error back to him as a question. For example, if your child says "where's my two?" (instead of shoe) you can say "your two?" See if your child can fix it back to shoe. If not, say "Oh, do you mean shoe? Where's your ssshhhhoe?" Then, have your child say the sentence again using the long sound correctly.
- Point out the class of sounds when you hear them in his own or someone else's speech. Say "Oh, I heard a long sound there! 'Ssshhhhoe'. Did you hear that?".
- Come up with a cue with your child that you can use to remind him to use that class of sounds. This could be touching your mouth or something else. During "speech time", use that cue to remind your child.

### When to Move On:

When your child is using the class of sounds correctly in conversation about 80% of the time, then he's mastered that class and now you just need to remind him if he ever forgets.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with a certain sound within this class but is getting the rest of them, you can go back and try teaching your child that sound specifically using the guide for teaching a single sound.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses sounds from that class correctly in conversation):

	Date:						
Says all sounds from that class in conversation							

## Class of Sounds, Step Four: Conversational Speech

Your child has been learning a new class of sounds and now we want to increase his skills so that he is using those sounds all the time. Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying the new sounds in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for his good

sounds during that time. If your child says those sounds incorrectly, give him a gentle reminder and help him fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about the sound until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using these sounds on his own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind him every once in a while during conversation and you don’t need to make it a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when he’s in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill. You can use this visual aid below to remind your child to think about his sounds. Put this on the table in front of him during “speech time” and simply tap on the picture whenever he starts to forget about his sounds. Tell him that this should be his reminder to start using the good sounds again.



## How to Teach a Child Not to Mumble

### Rationale:

So what do you do with the child who knows how to say all of her sounds correctly, but in conversational speech she mumbles and doesn't articulate well? I hear this question from parents and teachers all the time! My favorite description of this is "Mush Mouth". I'm not sure who came up with that description but I hear it from teachers a lot. Diagnosis: Mush Mouth. Probably not a technical term. This technique will provide you with a straight forward way to help teach your child not to mumble. Make sure that you complete each of these steps but be patient, each step may take many sessions or even weeks to master. Practice makes perfect!!

### Age of Mastery:

By three years of age, your child should be understood about 75% of the time by a stranger. By four years, that goes up to 75-90% and by 5 years of age it should be above 90%. Any child older than 5 should be understood almost all of the time. If your child is not understood by strangers as well as she should be but she isn't making any consistent errors that you can find (like "oh, she never says her /k/ or /g/ sounds"), then she may be a mumbler. Try these steps and see if it improves.

### Learning Steps:

1. Mumbling Awareness
2. Mumbling Practice
3. Create a Cue
4. Practice Using the Cue
5. Generalize the Cue

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will identify mumbled vs. clear speech in another speaker (not herself) on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will demonstrate mumbled and/or clear speech upon request when describing scenes from pictures on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will use clear speech (reduce number of sound substitutions or omissions) when given a specific, non-verbal cue on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, 80% of Child's sentences during a spontaneous speech sample will be found intelligible by an unfamiliar listener with no more than 2 non-verbal cues as needed on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Fixing Mumbling Step One: Mumbling Awareness

### Description:

The first thing you need to do is teach your child what it means to mumble. Tell your child that you want to talk to him about mumbling. Ask first if he knows what it means to mumble. If he can give you a good definition, then you're already on your way! If not, tell him that when people mumble, they don't say all of their sounds right so it's hard to understand them. They might talk too quietly, leave sounds out, slur words together, etc. Basically, define mumbling for your child by describing what he does when he is mumbling.

### Activities:

Tell your child you're going to play a game where he has to tell you if you are mumbling or not. For this, you may want to write some sentences on cards beforehand so you don't run out of things to say. On each turn, read a sentence for your child. Speak very articulately on some sentences and on others, mumble it all together. If your child bores of this quickly, you could play a board game while you do this and say one sentence before each turn in the game. Practice this until your child can identify when your sentences are mumbled or not. To make it more fun, you could even give your child a buzzer (like from the game Taboo) or a bell and have him sound it every time you are mumbling. At the time that I'm writing this, there is an i-device app called "[Bang! Buzzer](#)" that is literally just a buzzer that makes various sounds. It's quite fun!

### When to Move On:

When your child can identify mumbling in someone else's speech with about 80% accuracy, move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if he can tell when you're mumbling):

	Date:						
<b>Identify Mumbling in Someone Else's Speech</b>							

## Fixing Mumbling Step Two: Mumbling Practice

### Description:

Now it's your child's turn to mumble. Wait, she was already doing that! That's ok, we need to make sure she can demonstrate the difference. This may be the only time she's encouraged to mumble!

### Activities:

Have your child practice reading sentences or describing pictures in books using mumbled speech or not-mumbled speech. Give the not-mumbled speech a name like "clear speech", "good speech" or "articulate speech". If your child is too young to read, show your child pictures (such as photos you've taken, photos from the internet, or pictures in books) and have her create a sentence about what's happening in the picture. Before your child says her sentence, tell her to either use her mumbled speech or clear speech (or whatever you're calling it). Keep practicing this until your child is able to speak sentences clearly on command.

### When to Move On:

When your child can demonstrate both mumbling and clear speech with about 80% accuracy, move on to the next step. It's very important that she can do the clear speech part, we need that for the next few steps.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble with this step, you may want to back up and try just saying single words or simple phrases like "my ball" with clear speech. Have her focus on saying every sound in the word or phrase. Then, you can work your way up to having your child speak longer phrases and sentences clearly. Talk about how when we use our clear speech we have to be very careful to say every sound, to slow down, and to speak loudly enough to be heard.

### Data Collection (Mark if she can demonstrate mumbled or clear speech when you ask):

	Date:						
Demonstrate Mumbled and Clear Speech							

---

## Fixing Mumbling Step Three: Creating a Cue

### Description:

Now that your child knows how to produce clear speech on command, you need to create a visual cue that you can use to remind your child when he starts mumbling. This will help you in the next few steps as you teach your child to generalize not mumbling to other settings.

### Activities:

For younger children, try finding a picture cue like a picture of a boy speaking or a picture of a mouth. You want something that will clearly remind your child to use clear speech. Tell your child that when you show him this cue, he needs to remember to use his clear speech. For an older child, invite him to think of a good cue with you. Tell him that you want to come up with a visual cue that you can give him to remind him not to mumble that won't embarrass him if he's in front of other people. Ask him what he thinks the cue should be first. If he can't think of anything, offer up some suggestions like touching your mouth, pulling on your ear, or raising your eyebrows. Try to make it something that anyone could do so that you can easily transfer this to other adults in your child's life, like teachers (example: touching the necklace you always wear won't be an effective cue for your child's male teacher to use).

### When to Move On:

Once you have come up with a cue and your child can reliably tell you that the cue means he should use his clear speech, you're free to move on to the next step!

### Data Collection (Write when you have agreed on a cue):

<b>Our Cue Is:</b>	
--------------------	--

## Fixing Mumbling Step Four: Practicing the Cue

### Description:

Now that you've both agreed on a cue. It's time to practice using it. Practice just at home in a structured environment for now. You don't want to try it someplace super distracting to start with. That would be too overwhelming for your child.

### Activities:

Sit down with your child and tell her you're going to practice using the cue. Remind your child that every time she sees the cue, it means she's mumbling and she needs to use her clear speech. Tell her that she can catch you mumbling as well using the same cue (make sure you do some mumbling on purpose also so it doesn't seem like you're just picking on her). If your child is pretty talkative, you can have her just tell you about something that happened recently. Some popular topics are "what did you do at recess today?" or "tell me about your last birthday party". If your child doesn't readily start conversations with you, try having her read you a simple book or describe what's happening in pictures. You could also play a game or play with your child's favorite toy as long as it's not something that will prevent her from talking (like video games). Every time your child starts to mumble, use the cue. At first, your child may not always catch the cue so you can give gentle reminders like "oh look, I'm doing the cue!". After a while, your child shouldn't need you to say anything, you should just be able to use it silently.

### When to Move On:

Once your child responds to the cue about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

At this point, you may have to go back and practice the clear speech if she's not able to do it every time she sees the cue. Make sure she remembers how to use clear speech and then try the cue.

### Data Collection (Mark if she switches to her clear speech after you give her the cue silently):

	Date:						
<b>Switch to Clear Speech After the Cue</b>							

---

## Fixing Mumbling Step Five: Generalizing the Cue

### Description:

Now that your child understands the cue, it's time to start using it other places.

### Activities:

Tell your child that you're going to start using the cue other places and then just use it every once in a while around the house when you hear him mumbling and see if he picks up on it. Just like in the last step, you may have to point it out at first until he gets used to looking for it. You don't need to use it every time he mumbles because you don't want him to get frustrated or mad at you, but just start off slow and build your way up. Once it is successful for you, you can also start teaching other adults in your child's life to do this. You can show teachers, other parents/grandparents, caregivers, etc. Teachers will be especially grateful to have a technique that they can use to get your child to speak more clearly without embarrassing him in front of his classmates.

As I said before, be patient because each of these steps may take a while to master. The key is to try to keep it fun and not make it feel like you're punishing your child for doing something wrong. You just want to make it easier for others to understand him! You can even talk to him about why he thinks it might be important to not mumble and have an open discussion about the benefits of speaking clearly. I know it sounds cheesy, but sometimes children really just need to talk through something with an adult to guide their discovery. Once your child is motivated to change the behavior on his own, it will make it so much easier for you to work with him on it.

### When to Move On:

Once your child is able to respond to the cue and change his speech about 80% of the time in a variety of contexts, you will probably notice that he catches himself and fixes it on his own more and more frequently. You can talk to him about looking for cues that other people don't understand him (like looking confused) and encourage him to use his clear speech when he notices those cues as well.

### Data Collection (Mark if he switches to clear speech when you give the cue in a variety of settings or with a variety of adults):

	Date:						
<b>Switch to Clear Speech After the Cue</b>							

## How to Fix Final Consonant Deletion

### Rationale:

What is final consonant deletion? This is the term we've given to the process when children leave off the final sounds of all words. For example, "cat" would be "ca" and "dog" would be "do". Final consonant deletion is very common in young children, but some kids don't outgrow it when they should. These children need additional help to start including those final sounds so they can be understood by others. No final sounds can make a message very difficult to understand.

### Age of Mastery:

Children should be no longer using final consonant deletion past the age of 3 years. If your child is younger than that and is doing some final consonant deletion, it's no big deal. But once she turns three, it's time to step in and help her out. If your child is young 3-6 years (ish), then keep in mind that there are some sounds that your child shouldn't be expected to be able to say yet. While working on this skill, make sure your child is including a final consonant but if the appropriate final consonant is too difficult, she can replace it with a different final consonant. We just want to make sure she's putting something there.

### Learning Steps:

1. Auditory Discrimination
2. Final Consonants in Words
3. Final Consonants in Sentences
4. Final Consonants in Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will discriminate between words without final consonants and words with final consonants by pointing to the picture heard on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce final consonants in single words on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce final consonants in sentences on 80% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will produce final consonants in 5 minutes of conversational speech with fewer than 3 errors on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Final Consonant Deletion Step One: Auditory Discrimination

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is help your child hear the difference between words with final consonants and words without final consonants.

### Activities:

To do this, you will need to come up with some pairs of words that sound exactly the same except that one has a consonant on the end and the other one doesn't. For example, you could use "key" and "keep" or "no" and "nose". Keep in mind you are thinking about how the words sound, not how they are spelled. You want to choose word pairs that sound exactly the same regardless of spelling. A word pair like "boa" and "boat" would not work because the first parts of those two words are not pronounced the same. Once you have picked some of these pairs, you will need to make cards for each word. You can use the cards on the following page or make your own. Place two pictures in front of your child from the same pair. Tell your child what each picture is called and then have him close his eyes. Hide a penny (or a piece of candy) under one of the pictures. If it sticks up and is obvious to your child, use two paper cups and put the card on top of the cup and the candy/penny under it. Then, have your child uncover his eyes and tell him which picture to look under. For example, if you had "key" and "keep" out, you could say "look under 'key'". Make sure you exaggerate the final sound if it has one. If he looks under the wrong picture, say "Oh listen, that word doesn't have a sound at the end (or does have a sound at the end)" and say the word for him again. Keep doing this until your child can correctly pick the right picture each time. Your child may be able to do this right away or it may take several weeks. Keep at it!

### When to Move On:

When your child can choose the right picture based on what you said at least 80% of the time, then he can hear the difference and you're ready to move on.

### Data Collection (Mark if he picks the right picture each time):

	Date:						
<b>Hear if there is a final sound or not</b>							

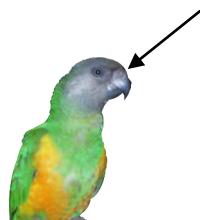
---

### Final Consonant Deletion Step One: Auditory Discrimination

We are working on helping your child hear the difference between words with final consonants and words without final consonants. To do this, you will need to use the following pairs of words that sound exactly the same except that one has a consonant sound on the end and the other one doesn't. Cut out these pictures to make individual cards. Place two pictures in front of your child from the same pair. Tell your child what each picture is called and then have him close his eyes. Hide a penny (or a piece of candy) under one of the pictures. If it sticks up and is obvious to your child, use two paper cups and put the card on top of the cup and the candy/penny under it. Then, have your child uncover his eyes and tell him which picture to look under. For example, if you had "bee" and "beak" out, you could say "look under 'beak'". Make sure you exaggerate the final sound if it has one. If he looks under the wrong picture, say "Oh listen, that word doesn't have a sound at the end (or does have a sound at the end)" and exaggerate the sound for him again. Keep doing this until your child can correctly pick the picture you say each time.



bee



beak



bike



bye



boat



bow



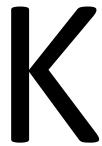
boot



"boo!"



cake



"kay"



cow



couch

## Final Consonant Deletion Step Two: Final Consonants in Words

### Description:

Once your child can hear the difference between words with and without final sounds, it's time to start having your child say those final sounds in single words.

### Activities:

Put two words from a pair in front of your child again, but this time, inform your child that she will have to tell you which picture to look under. Have your child close her eyes and then you hide the penny (or candy) under the picture with the final consonant. Have your child open her eyes and tell you where to look. Your child will probably say the word with or without the final consonant so repeat the word back to your child and look under that picture. ("Key. Ok, I'll look under "key". Oh, it's not under key"). Then, have your child guess again. If she says the word without the final sound again, say "you said 'key' but it's not there. Do you mean, keeP?" Then, help your child say the word with the final consonant at the end so you can look under that picture.

Once your child can do this, try having your child label a picture of a word with a final consonant by just showing her the picture and saying "what's this?"

### When to Move On:

Once your child can say single words with final consonants about 80% of the time when you ask her "what's this?", you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is having trouble getting this, try doing some drill and practice with the word pairs. Put both words in front of your child and model them for her. Say both words with an exaggerated final sound on the one: "Key, keeP, key, keeP". Then, have your child say the words back and forth using the correct final consonant or not, depending on which picture she's pointing at. Do this for all word pairs to give her tons of great practice.

### Data Collection (Mark if she says the final consonant when labeling single pictures):

	Date:						
<b>Say final consonants single words</b>							

## Final Consonant Deletion, Step Two: Final Consonants in Words

Cut these words out and group them into pairs (two words that sound alike except for the final sound). Put two words from a pair in front of your child and tell her that she will have to tell you which picture to look under. Have your child close her eyes and then you hide a penny (or candy) under the picture with the final consonant. Have your child open her eyes and tell you where to look. Your child will probably say the word with without the final consonant so repeat the word back to your child and look under that picture. ("Play. Ok, I'll look under "play". Oh, it's not under play"). Then, have your child guess again. If he says the word without the final sound again, say "you said 'play' but it's not there. Do you mean, pla**N**E?" Then, help your child say the word with the final consonant at the end so you can look under that picture.

Once your child can do this, try having your child label a picture of a word with a final consonant by just showing her the picture and saying "what's this?"



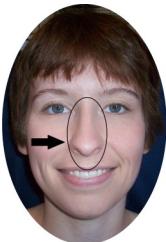
plane



play



no



nose



sew



soap



tie



time



treat



tree



purse



purr

## Final Consonant Deletion Step Three: Final Consonants in Sentences

### Description:

Now that your child is able to produce the final consonants in single words, you are ready to move on to having your child say final consonants in simple sentences.

### Activities:

Collect only the cards from the previous steps that have final consonants. Mix them up so you don't have the same sound back to back to back. Show your child a card and have him tell you what it's called. Make sure he includes the final consonant. Then, have him imitate a short sentence with that word in it. For example, if the word is "keep", you could have him say "I keep my hat on". Try not to put the word at the beginning of the sentence because it will challenge him more to stick the target in the middle. Keep doing this until your child can imitate your short sentences. Keep in mind this may take a while, I usually do this part with my kids for a minimum of 1-2 weeks, sometimes much longer. Once your child can do that, then you want to have your child come up with sentences on his own. Have him create a sentence using the word. Keep working on this and helping your child use the final consonant in the target word as well as any other words in the sentence. This part will probably take at the very least another several weeks to master. It gets very tricky when you start expecting your child to use final consonants throughout a sentence as opposed to just in the target word. Keep practicing and have patience. If your child needs a little motivation to keep going, try tracking his percentage correct on a graph so he can see the line going up. This helps my kiddos to see how far they've come and how much farther they need to go before moving on or before getting a reward like going out to eat at a restaurant or getting a week-long vacation from speech work.

### When to Move On:

When you can show your child a word and he can create a sentence using that word (while including final consonants in all words in the sentence) about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on.

### Data Collection (Mark if he uses all final consonants in single sentences):

	Date:						
<b>Includes all final consonants in sentences</b>							

## Final Consonant Deletion, Step Four: Final Consonants in Conversational Speech

### Description:

Once your child can produce final consonants correctly in sentences, you will want to help her remember to use them all of the time in conversational speech.

### Activities:

Here are a couple of tips you can try to help encourage your child to use final consonants in conversational speech. At first, make sure you don't correct your child all the time. You can either choose a few errors here and there to target or you can choose just one time of the day that you tell your child will be "speech time" and you will remind her during that time but not after that. As your child gets better at this, you can start increasing the amount of time or the frequency with which you correct your child. This will prevent you and your child from getting burnt out.

- If you hear your child leave off a final consonant, repeat your child's error back to her as a question. For example, if your child says "Can I key it?" (instead of keep) you can say "key it?" See if your child can fix it back to keep. If not, say "Oh, do you mean keeP? Can I keeP it?" Then, have your child say the sentence again using the final consonant correctly.
- Point out the final consonants when you hear them in her own or someone else's speech. Say "Oh, I heard a final consonant (or end sound) there! 'KeeP'. Did you hear that?".
- Come up with a cue with your child that you can use to remind her to use final consonants. This could be touching your mouth or something else. During "speech time", use that cue to remind your child.

### When to Move On:

When your child is using final consonants correctly in conversation about 80% of the time, then she's mastered that process and now you just need to remind her if she ever forgets.

### Data Collection (Mark if she uses final consonants in conversational speech):

	Date:						
Says all final consonants in conversation							

### Final Consonant Deletion, Step Four: Final Consonants in Conversational Speech

Your child has been working on saying the sounds at the ends of words and now we want to increase her skills so that she is using those sounds all the time. Choose a time with your child when you will work on saying final consonants in conversational speech. During your “speech times” (or whatever you choose to call it), you will sit down with your child for a short time (start shorter and build your way up) and either talk about whatever your child wants to talk about or play something that will promote communication during the activity. Let your child know that you will be listening for her good end sounds (or whatever you’re calling them) during that time. If your child forgets to say the final consonant, give her a gentle reminder and help her fix the error. Then, move on. Once your time is up, then you can stop reminding your child about final consonants until the next time you do “speech time”. Start off with short sessions and build your way up to more sessions throughout the week that last longer. Pretty soon, your child should start using final consonants on his own in conversation and you can get to the point where you just need to remind her every once in a while during conversation and you don’t need to make it a structured time frame. Having the shorter sessions at first will help make it less frustrating for your child though when she’s in the beginning stages of generalizing the skill. You can use this visual aid below to remind your child to think about her end sounds. Put this on the table in front of her during “speech time” and simply tap on the picture whenever she starts to forget. Tell her that this should be her reminder to start using her end sounds.



# Social Skill Guides

## How to Teach a Child to Understand and Follow Directions

### Rationale:

Do your child's language delays make it difficult for him to follow your directions? This can make it very hard to get through your daily routines and get through errands without meltdowns and problems. Children need to be able to follow directions at home as well as at school to be able to participate in classroom activities and complete teacher-directed activities.

### Age of Mastery:

By 2 years of age, children should be able to follow simple one-step directions, especially if a visual cue is given, like gesturing or pointing to what needs to be done. Children should be able to follow two-step related directions by 4 years of age (like "find your shoes and put them on"). By 5 years old, they should be able to follow three-step directions as well.

### Learning Steps:

1. Make a List of Common Directions
2. Take Pictures of Those Directions
3. Teach the Directions
4. Work the Directions into Daily Routines
5. Fade the Picture Cue
6. Work on Multiple Step Directions

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will follow familiar one-step directions with picture cues in the therapy setting on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

\*\* You could also choose a few directions that you want to focus on and write just those into the goal. This is good for children with autism or low cognition who will need additional time and support to learn to follow directions.

- By <Date>, Child will follow familiar one-step directions with picture cues in the classroom setting on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will choose follow familiar one-step directions without picture cues in the classroom setting on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will follow unfamiliar one-step directions <choose setting> on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will follow two-step directions <choose setting> on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will follow three-step directions <choose setting> on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Following Directions Step One: Make a List of Directions

### Description:

The first thing you need to do is come up with a list of common directions that you give your child. You will use these for the rest of the steps in this activity.

### Activities:

Throughout the course of a day or a week, write down all of the directions that you commonly give your child. Take notes on your phone or on a piece of paper you carry around with you. Try to capture the meaning of the direction in as few words as possible. For example, if you give your child the direction "Honey, would you mind going to get your shoes for me please?", just write down "get shoes". That will be the direction you will give your child while teaching her these directions. You may have a list of directions like "come here", "stop", "go", "walk", "stand up", "sit down", "stay here", "hold my hand", "don't put that in your mouth", etc.

### When To Move On:

When you have a list of the most important directions you give your child, you can move on to the next step.

### For Speech-Language Pathologists:

If you are working on this in a school setting, you will want to choose common school directions to follow. Think about directions that you often give during your speech therapy sessions ("sit down", "say this", "look at me", "do this"). Then, go down to your child's classroom and listen to all of the directions that the teachers give in there. You may have to talk to the teachers about shortening their directions for this child if their directions are too long. I also like to use the data I collect from listening to classroom teachers to know what vocabulary words to target for kids. I use these directions to make a list of common classroom nouns and verbs that I should target when teaching the child new vocabulary. For example, if the teacher says "sit in your chair", I may want to teach "sit" and "chair" to the child.

### Data Collection (Write which directions you will target):

Which Directions Will You Target?	
-----------------------------------	--

## Following Directions Step Two: Take Pictures of the Directions

### Description:

The next thing you will need to do is collect pictures of the directions you chose.

### Activities:

Choose about 15-20 of the most common directions. You'll want to start by just teaching your child a few of those, but you may as well make all of the pictures now so you have them when you need them. Now you'll need to create a visual cue for each direction. You can do this in a couple of ways. One idea is to take pictures of your child doing each of those things and print them out with the direction written on or under the picture. You could also use the pictures provided on the following pages of some random directions. Another way to do it is to go on Google image search and find pictures of other kids or people doing those actions. Finally, you could always just draw stick figures on a card for each direction, though depending on your artistic abilities and your child's ability to decipher your drawings, you may be better off with real photos. :-) Once you print the directions off, cut them out so each direction is on its own card.

### When To Move On:

When you have pictures for each of the directions you would like to give, move on to the next step

### Data Collection (Choose 5 of the picture cards to start with, write them here):

<b>Which 5 of the picture cards will you target first?</b>	
--	--

## Following Directions Cards



sit down



clap hands



touch hair



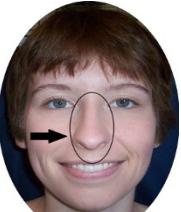
touch teeth



touch eyes



touch ears



touch nose



touch mouth



touch knee



touch arm



be quiet



touch hand



touch foot



wash hands



touch finger



touch thumb



stand up



stomp feet



lie down



put on

## Following Directions, Step Three: Teach the Directions

### Description:

Your child will need to be taught what each of these cards means. You can do this by playing Simon Says using the cards. For those of you who don't know, Simon Says is a game where one person is chosen to be the leader, "Simon", and everyone else must do what Simon Says. However, the leader must say "Simon Says" before each direction is given. If the leader does not say "Simon Says" and the followers complete the direction anyway, they lose. With young children, I disregard that last part about losing. I just always say "Simon Says" and then after a while we switch and let someone else be leader. For that matter, you don't even have to say Simon Says, just tell your child it's a game and he'll probably be happy.

### Activities:

While you're playing a game of Simon Says or just sitting down with your child, tell your child the 5 directions you chose to target first. Each time you give a direction, show your child the picture along with saying the direction out loud. At first, you will need to help your child do each one until she is able to do it on her own. After she completes the action, whether she did it on her own or you had to help her, clap and get very excited for her. This will help reinforce that she's doing something great! Once your child can do the 5 you targeted first, start introducing some of the other picture cues and directions.

### When To Move On:

When your child can follow all of your directions using the picture cues about 80% of the time, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

Many children with autism won't understand the whole "game" aspect of making this fun. For these children, you will want to find something that they really enjoy so they have something to work for. For example, if your child really likes that toy that lights up, hide it for a while before you do this activity and every time your child follows a direction (even if you have to help her do it), give her the toy as a reinforcer. If your child isn't very motivated by objects, you may have to try giving her a small bit of her favorite food or drink after each direction.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child follows the direction when you say it and show her the picture cue):

	Date:						
<b>Follows direction with picture cue</b>							

## Following Directions, Step Four: Working Directions into Daily Routines

### Description:

Once your child can follow the set of directions during these games and play sessions with you, you will want to start using the directions during your daily routines.

### Activities:

Throughout your daily routine, if you need to give your child one of the directions you've been working on, show him the picture card as you do. Then, help him complete the direction and get excited for him just as you did before. For children with autism or children that have a lot of trouble with this, you may need to give a small reinforcer after they complete the direction until they get the hang of it. You may want to consider hanging a set of the direction pictures from your belt loop so that you have them nearby. At my school, I had a set of picture directions on a ring that was clipped to my belt with one of those retractable keychains so I could whip it out whenever necessary. Keep doing this until your child can follow these directions with the picture cue throughout your daily routine (that may take a while, be patient!)

### When To Move On:

When your child is able to follow the directions about 80% of the time using the picture cues in his daily routine, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### For Speech-Language Pathologists:

You will probably need to get your child's classroom teacher involved at this point. It doesn't do you a whole lot of good to teach these directions if the classroom teacher won't help work on carry-over in the classroom. See if your teachers will keep these picture cues close by so they can use them. They also may want to carry around a small reinforcer to reward the child if he doesn't respond to verbal praise well enough to generalize this skill.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child follows the directions within his daily routine):

	Date:						
<b>Follow directions in routine with pics</b>							

---

## Following Directions, Step Five: Fade the Picture Cues

### Description:

Once your child can follow the directions with the picture cue, you will want to fade the use of the picture so that your child can follow the verbal direction without needing a picture.

### Activities:

To do this, try giving the direction verbally first without using the picture. Pause for a moment and see if your child will do it. You can try nudging her in the right direction or making a small gesture toward the desired action. If your child is not able to do it, give the direction again but this time use the picture. Try a variety of different cues, such as laying your hand on your child, pointing at what she needs to do, etc. Vary your reinforcement so that when your child follows the direction with fewer cues, you give more praise and get more excited for your child than when you have to give her a lot of help. If you keep doing this long enough, your child should be able to follow the directions without needing too many additional cues.

### When To Move On:

When your child is able to follow the directions about 80% of the time without picture cues and without a whole bunch of extra prompting, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

Some children become very dependent on prompts from adults when learning to follow directions. This is especially true for children with autism. If your child is having trouble learning to do this without the pictures, you may need to be creative with the way you fade your prompting. First, try using a different gestural prompt every time. For example, if you want your child to sit, try tapping the chair, pointing to the chair, pushing lightly on her shoulder, etc. Then, make sure you get *really* excited if she does it without needing to use the picture. If she's working for cars, for example, give her the whole pile of cars if she does it by herself and just one car if she needed the picture.

### Data Collection (Mark if she follows the directions without needing any additional cues):

	Date:						
<b>Follow directions without</b>							

---

## Following Directions, Step Six: Work on Multi-Step Directions

### Description:

Once your child is able to follow single-step directions using this method, you can use the same approach to teach multiple-step directions.

### Activities:

For this, you will want to do the following directions Simon Says game with two pictures and teach him how to follow both parts of the direction. Try using the “First, Then” board included on the following page. If you’re working on two-step directions, put one picture under “First”, and another picture under “Then”. As you say the direction (“First sit down, then put on your shoes”), tap the word first, then the first direction. Then, tap the word “then” and tap the second direction. Then, leave the board out in front of him so he can see what steps to follow. Keep working on this until he can do it with the picture cues and then follow the same procedure for fading off the visuals and working it into daily routines. If you are working on three-step directions, put a picture under first, next, and last.

### When To Move On:

When your child is able to follow multiple-step directions about 80% of the time without picture cues, then you have completed work on following directions. You may need to continue to remind your child to follow your directions throughout his daily routine, but he should at least understand the directions at this point. Selective hearing is a whole other issue!

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can follow 2-step or 3-step directions with and without cues):

	Date:						
<b>Follow multi-step directions without pictures</b>							

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### Following Directions, Step Six: Work on Multi-Step Directions

Play “Simon Says” with your child using two following directions pictures (see previous page) and teach him how to follow both parts of the direction. If you’re working on two-step directions, put one picture under “First”, and another picture under “Then”. As you say the direction (“First sit down, then put on your shoes”), tap the word “first”, then the first direction. Next, tap the word “then” and tap the second direction. Then, leave the board out in front of him so he can see what steps to follow. Keep working on this until he can do it consistently with the picture cues and then work on fading off the visuals and working it into daily routines. If you are working on three-step directions, put a picture under first, next, and last.

# First      Next      Last



1

2

3

#### **Extra Practice:**

Ask your child to follow other multi-step directions throughout the day and help him through the different steps. Have your child repeat back all steps of the direction before he starts to follow them to make sure he understood.

## How to Teach a Child Do Pretend Play

### Rationale:

It is very important for children to learn how to do pretend play. There is a strong connection between being able to pretend that a toy is something real and being able to use a word to represent the real thing. The two skills (playing and using language) go hand in hand. Most children develop the ability to do pretend play just as easily as they develop language. For some children though, both are very challenging. Learning how to play is something that is very difficult for children with autism or severe developmental delays to do. So how do you teach a child how to pretend play if she's not learning it on her own? Well it all starts with teaching her how to imitate your play. For this one you will need at least one other person, so find a buddy!

### Age of Mastery:

Children typically begin to engage in basic pretend play that is centered around themselves (pretending to fall asleep or drinking from a cup) around 17-19 months. By 22 months, children are typically able to engage in pretend play on someone/something besides themselves (such as feeding a baby doll) and can combine 2 toys in pretend play. By 24 months, children are typically able to act out more complex pretend play about daily routines, such as playing house.

### Learning Steps:

1. Choose a Toy/Action and Choose a Reinforcer
2. Assisted Imitation
3. Independent Imitation
4. Performing the Action During Play

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will imitate a simple pretend play action with physical assistance as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will independently imitate a simple pretend play action on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will independently imitate a simple pretend play action during play on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will spontaneously demonstrate a pre-taught simple pretend play action at least 2 times during 5 minutes of play on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Pretend Play Step One: Choose a Toy/Action and a Reinforcer

### Description:

The first thing you need to do is plan the activity. Make sure you do this before sitting down with your child so that you and your partner (another adult or responsible child) will have a plan.

### Activities:

First, plan what play skill you will choose. Keep in mind that actions performed on yourself should be easier for your child to pick up than actions performed on something else. For example, pretending to feed himself with a spoon will be easier than walking a robot. You should also limit yourself to actions that can be completed with only one prop or toy. Another way to choose a play skill to teach is to use toys that your child is already highly interested in. For example, if your child loves cars but only lines them up, the pretend play skill of driving a car would be a great choice for him. You can also watch other children to see what they are doing with toys. I would choose younger children for this model though as your child's play skills will be more similar to a child who is younger than he is. Just pick one action for now and complete all steps in this guide for that action. You can always teach another action later.

The next thing you will need to prepare is the reinforcement for your child. If your child responds well to verbal praise and excitement, then you may only need to get excited and tell your child he did a good job. However, most of our kids need something a little more tangible. If that's the case, offer something physical as a reward, such as a favorite toy, a piece of favorite food, or a drink of something delicious. Use whatever you think will motivate your child to keep doing this.

### When To Move On:

Once you've chosen one skill to target and you know what reinforcer you'll use, you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Write down what you and your partner decide to target):

<b>Pretend Play Action I will Target:</b>	
<b>Reinforcer I will Use:</b>	

## Pretend Play Step Two: Assisted Imitation

### Description:

Now that you've chosen the target skill and the reinforcer, you will want to help your child imitate the skill. This is where it comes in handy to have a partner but if you're all by yourself, just do the best you can!

### Activities:

Sit down with your child and one other adult. It doesn't matter what role each of you plays and you should probably switch places from time to time, but I will call the adults "Adult 1" and "Adult 2". Adult 1 sits in front of the child and Adult 2 sits behind her. Adult 1 and the child have the same or a similar toy. Adult 1 should also have some sort of reinforcement that the child really wants, such as food, a preferred toy, a hug, or a tickle. Adult 1 picks up the toy, says "do this", and then does one simple pretend action with the toy. That might be holding a phone up to his ear, making an animal walk into a barn, or giving a baby a bottle. Then, Adult 2 reaches from behind the child and moves the child's hands/arms to do the same thing with the toy as Adult 1. It should look like Adult 2 is helping the child imitate Adult 1's action. As soon as the action is completed, Adult 1 says "Good Job! You \_\_\_\_\_" (describe the action or say "did this") and immediately gives the child the reinforcement. Keep in mind that throughout all of this, Adult 2 remains silent. No talking! This makes it seem more like the child is doing it on his own. Now, do the whole thing again. Do this for as long as your child's attention span lasts but no longer. You don't want this to be a battle. You can always come back to it later and try again. Shorter, more frequent sessions often work better.

### When To Move On:

Keep doing this until your child doesn't resist you and you've done it enough times that you think your child is starting to get the hang of it. I recommend trying this on at least 3 different occasions. If the child starts to imitate the action on his own, Adult 2 should back off right away. If the child resists strongly, don't physically force her to do the action if you feel like it would hurt her. A little resistance is ok if you can gently guide the child to do it anyway, but if she's resisting with all her might and you're afraid you might hurt her, don't stress about it. You can always come back and work on this later when she's a little older and more compliant.

### Data Collection (Mark which days you practice this skill and how much she resists you):

	Date:						
Days we practiced this skill							

## Pretend Play Step Three: Independent Imitation

### Description:

Once your child is able to imitate this action with an adult behind him to facilitate, it's time for the adult to back off and let the child shine!

### Activities:

Sit down with your child and perform the same procedure as the last step. After doing this a few times, Adult 2 should pause before helping your child and see if the child will imitate the action on his own after given the prompt "do this". If the child does it on his own, he should get A LOT of the reinforcement. If not, Adult 2 goes ahead and helps him like before and he is reinforced like before. If your child continues to need Adult 2 to help him, Adult 2 should start using less helpful prompts. For example, if Adult 2 starts by taking the child's hand, picking up the phone, and holding it to his ear, then he should back off to just holding the child's wrist and moving his hand to the phone. The child should then pick up the phone on his own and Adult 2 can just use the wrist to move his arm in the right direction. This is less helpful than the previous prompt so the child has to do more on his own. Once the child is able to do that pretty well, Adult 2 could move to just holding the elbow. Then, Adult 2 could fade to just tapping the elbow to get the child started. Then eventually, Adult 2 shouldn't prompt at all. This is called "fading a prompt".

### When To Move On:

When your child is able to imitate the action when you say "do this" about 80% of the time without needing someone to help him or touch him to get him started, you are ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child gets too reliant on having Adult 2 there to prompt him through it and you think he is capable of doing it on his own, have Adult 2 leave and see if the child will do it on his own.

### Data Collection (Mark if he imitates the action all by himself):

	Date:						
<b>Independently Imitate the Ac- tion</b>							

## Pretend Play, Step Four: Performing the Action During Play

### Description:

Once your child is able to imitate the action on her own, we want to work on actually using the skill during play.

### Activities:

Sit down with your child when she is playing with the object that you have used to teach her pretend play. You may have to stage this by bringing the toy to your child if she doesn't independently choose it and that's ok. Just make sure that you and your child are playing with the toy in a natural play area. For example, you may have trained your child to imitate this action at the table but now you should move to the floor where she commonly plays with her toys. Start by having her imitate the skill as before by saying "do this" as you perform the action. The difference, is that now you're in a more natural play environment. For example, if you're playing with cars, your car may be driving down a road instead of just across the table. Once she is able to do that, start demonstrating the action again but this time, don't say "do this". See if you can get her to imitate the action without you prompting her to do so. You may have to give her a little physical prompt like you did before to get her going. This will be very similar to when she's playing around other children. We want her to imitate their play skills without being told to. Once she can do that, we would like for her to just do that skill on her own during play. From time to time, come up behind your child while she is playing with that toy and physically help her perform the action without prompting her. This will remind her that she can do it, too.

### When To Move On:

With all of this practice, your child should start doing this skill on her own, though it may take some time. When she is doing the action in play on her own at least 2 times during 5 minutes of playing with that toy, you can consider this action mastered and move on to another action. Keep in mind that your child may forget this skill while learning a new one so come back to it often.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child does the action by herself during play):

	Date:						
<b>Spontaneously Perform the Action in Play</b>							

## How to Teach a Child to Take Turns with Others

### Rationale:

One of the most critical social skills you can teach a young child is to take turns with others. Not only does this help him learn how to play and engage in social games with other children appropriately, but it is also the very foundation of conversational skills. Think about any conversation you have with another adult. There is a give and take and you each take turns talking and listening. Have you ever been in a conversation with someone who kept talking over you and wasn't very good at taking turns? Even as adults, we can tell the people who have trouble with turn-taking and it can be very distracting. Teaching your child to take turns well now will help him throughout life.

### Age of Mastery:

Children typically begin to exhibit verbal turn-taking by 2 years of age. By 4 years of age, they can take turns during play and play cooperatively with others.

### Learning Steps:

1. Teach the Skill
2. Practice "My Turn"
3. Answer "Whose Turn is it?"
4. Take turns with a Peer

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will give what he is playing with to someone else who says "my turn" or "can I have a turn?" on 4 of 5 observed opportunities with gestural cues as necessary (holding out a hand) on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will request a desired object from a peer by saying "my turn" or "can I have a turn?" on 4 of 5 observed opportunities with adult proximity as needed on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will correctly label whose turn it is during a game or cooperative play when asked "whose turn is it?" on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will take at least 4 turns with a peer during a game or cooperative play with one adult reminder as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Taking Turns, Step One: Teach The Skill

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is teach your child the rules about taking turns. When you're doing this, adapt your language to whatever level is most appropriate for your child.

### Activities:

Tell your child that if she wants something that someone else has, she needs to ask for a turn. She can do this by saying “my turn” or “May I have a turn” (choose whichever one is appropriate for your child’s language level). If your child isn’t speaking yet, you can still work on this skill by having her pat her chest as the sign for “my turn”. Or, if she is using a communication device, she can push “my turn” on her talker to complete the same activities. Demonstrate this skill with another person if you have someone available. Give the other person something to play with and then say “my turn”. Have the other person immediately hand over the toy. It is helpful if this is a sibling or another child as it will be more meaningful for your child than an adult. However, if you only have two adults, it’s still good to demonstrate. You can also use a social story or poster to teach this to your child. Take pictures of your child handing over a toy kindly. Then write scripts like one or more of the following:

- When I play with my friends, we take turns. When it’s my turn, I can say “May I have a turn?”
- If I want something my friend has, I can say “my turn”.
- When someone asks me for a turn, I give them a turn with what I’m playing with. I can wait quietly for a few minutes and then ask for a turn again.

Be sure to adapt the language you use to what your child will understand. You can use the social picture on the next page as an example.

### When To Move On:

Once you’ve gone over this material with your child, you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Make notes of how you talked about this with your child):

	<b>Date:</b>
<b>When/How I taught this skill</b>	

### Taking Turns Step One: Teach The Skill

Tell your child that if she wants something that someone else has, she needs to ask for a turn. She can do this by saying “my turn” or “May I have a turn” (choose whichever one is appropriate for your child’s language level). If your child isn’t speaking yet, you can still work on this skill by having her pat her chest as the sign for “my turn”. Or, if she is using a communication device, she can push “my turn” on her talker to complete the same activities. Demonstrate this skill with another person if you have someone available. Give the other person something to play with and then say “my turn”. Have the other person immediately hand over the toy. It is helpful if this is a sibling or another child as it will be more meaningful for your child than an adult. However, if you only have two adults, it’s still good to demonstrate. You can also use a social story or poster to teach this to your child. Use this example to show your child or make your own!



When I play with my friends, we take turns.

If I want something my friend has, I can say “my turn”.

Pictures Courtesy of <http://www.mycutegraphics.com/>

## Taking Turns, Step Two: Practice “My Turn”

### Description:

Next, you will want to help your child practice asking for a turn and giving up what he's playing with when someone else asks for a turn. This can be very difficult for some children so have patience!

### Activities:

Take turns with your child by asking for turns with a toy. You can start with the toy first and help him say, sign, or use a talker to say “my turn” or “may I have a turn” to request what you have. Once he does, give him the toy and then wait about 30 seconds. Then, ask for a turn using the same language that you had your child use. Make sure your child knows that when you say “my turn”, he needs to give you a turn. You may have to physically take it away from him at first but as you do this more and more, he should begin to understand the idea that he will eventually get it back so it's ok to give it up for a short while. Then, help your child say “my turn” or “may I have a turn?” to get it back. After he starts to get the hang of it, you can also practice having him wait a few moments between giving someone for a turn and asking for it back. Once he is comfortable doing this with you, have him practice with other people and start asking for a turn using different words than the ones you originally taught him. For example, if you started with “my turn”, move to saying things like “can I have a turn?” or “can I play with that?”. Try to think of things that other children may say to him when they come up to him at school or on the playground.

### When To Move On:

Once your child can verbally request a turn and give up the toy when you request a turn back about 80% of the time, he is ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

If your child is on the autism spectrum or is having trouble learning to give up an item, try rewarding him for giving it up (even if you have to take it) by offering him hugs, tickles, or a favorite food.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child requests and gives up an item appropriately):

	Date:						
Request and Give Up Item							

## Taking Turns, Step Two: Practice “My Turn”



We are working on helping your child practice asking for a turn and giving up what he's playing with when someone else asks for a turn. Here's what you can do to help:

- Take turns with your child asking for turns with a toy. You can start with the toy first and help him say, sign, or use a talker to say “my turn” or “may I have a turn” to request what you have.

Here's How Your Child Should Ask For a Turn: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Once he does, give him the toy and then wait about 30 seconds. Then, ask for a turn using the same method described above. Make sure your child knows that when you say “my turn”, he needs to give you a turn. You may have to physically take it away from him at first but as you do this more and more, he should begin to understand the idea that he will eventually get it back so it's ok to give it up for a short while.
- Then, help your child say “my turn” or “may I have a turn?” to get it back. After he starts to get the hang of it, you can also practice having him wait a few moments between giving someone for a turn and asking for it back.
- Once he is comfortable doing this with you, have him practice with other people and start asking him for a turn using different words than the ones you originally taught him. For example, if you started with “my turn”, move to saying things like “can I have a turn?” or “can I play with that?”. Try to think of things that other children may say to him when they come up to him at school or on the playground.

**Modifications:** If your child is on the autism spectrum or is having trouble learning to give up an item, try rewarding him for giving it up (even if you have to take it) by offering her hugs, tickles, or a favorite food.

### Taking Turns, Step Three: Answer “Whose Turn Is It?”

#### Description:

Now that your child understands the give and take of turn-taking, it's time to teach her how to predict whose turn it is and whose will be next. This will help her make sense of the back and forth we practiced in the next step.

#### Activities:

Create a visual cue (or use the one on the next page) that indicates “my turn”. Show it to your child and tell her that whoever has the picture gets to take a turn. Start a turn-taking activity again, like playing with a ball or playing a game, but this time, move the picture each time it switches to someone else's turn. Before a turn switch, put the picture in front of the next person (you or your child at first). Then, ask your child “whose turn is it?”. You will need to help her the first several times. You can prompt by saying “Is it Mommy's turn or Sarah's turn?” If she doesn't know, point to the picture and say “Look, Mommy has the picture, so it's Mommy's turn. Whose turn is it? Mommy's Turn”. Then, help her say “Mommy's turn, it's my turn.” and then take your turn. Then, pass the picture to your child and ask the question again. If she doesn't know, prompt her with , “Look, you have the picture...” just like before. Keep doing this until she can tell you whose turn it is pretty consistently. Then, take the picture away and do it again until she can tell you whose turn it is without needing to rely on the picture cue.

#### When To Move On:

Once your child can tell you whose turn it is about 80% of the time without the picture, you are ready to move on to the next step.

#### Data Collection (Mark if your child can tell you whose turn it is without using the picture):

	Date:						
<b>Answer “Whose Turn Is It?”</b>							

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### Taking Turns Step Three: Answer “Whose Turn Is It?”

We are working on teaching your child how to take turns. Use this picture as a visual of whose turn it is. Pass it around to the person whose turn it is so that it will remind your child. You can do this with just two people or with a whole group of people. At the beginning of each turn, pass the picture to the correct person and ask your child, “whose turn is it?”. Your child should say “my turn”, “your turn” or the name of the person whose turn it is (“Sally’s turn”). If your child has trouble, remind him/her to look for the picture to see whose turn it is. Once your child gets better at this, you can try it without using the picture visual.



## “It’s my turn!”

### Extra Practice:

Once your child can familiar people, see another child for her to practice with. Seek out friends at play dates or at play places or parks. Tell the other child that your child is learning to take turns and ask if she will help her practice.

do this with you and if you can find an-

## Taking Turns, Step Four: Take Turns with A Peer

### Description:

Now it's time for your child to put all of this into action.

### Activities:

For this part, you will need to find another child. If there aren't any other children in your house, you can always schedule a play date with your friends' kids or go to a park or play-place where there may be opportunities to take turns on something. Explain to the other child or parent involved that your child is learning to take turns and ask if they will help him practice. Slightly older children, especially the girls, love helping out little ones so they will be more patient and helpful if you explain what's going on ahead of time. Help your child say "my turn" or something similar to ask for a turn from the other child. Then, help him give up what he is playing with when the other child says "my turn" or something similar in return. This will probably be much harder than doing it in the staged scenarios you've been practicing in so be prepared to help your child a lot at first. The more you do it, the more likely your child will be to start doing this on his own. Keep practicing until all you need to do is stand nearby or give your child gentle reminders from time to time when he forgets.

### When To Move On:

Keep helping your child during these real interactions until he doesn't need your reminders anymore. Keep trying to back off the amount of prompting you're giving your child so that he requires less and less each time. When your child is taking turns without your prompts about 80% of the time, you can stop directly working on it. Just monitor and give him some reminders if he slips up from time to time. As he gets older, you will want to remind her of these same rules for taking turns in conversation as well.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can take turns with another child without prompts):

	Date:						
<b>Take turns with a peer without prompting</b>							

## How to Teach a Child to Self-Calm from a Meltdown

### Rationale:

As much as you hate to see it in your own child, every child throws tantrums and has meltdowns, sometimes in the middle of the grocery store. This can happen even more if your child has a language delay and doesn't understand or can't communicate what she wants. Your job as a parent is not to prevent your child from ever getting upset. We've seen those kids, we call them "spoiled" and they have a long road ahead of them because they aren't always going to get their way. Instead, your job as a parent is to teach your child how to deal with getting upset. In particular, it can be extremely helpful to teach your child calming strategies to calm herself down. There are many calming strategies that you can teach your child to get through those awful meltdowns faster and without requiring you to bribe your child with ice cream and toys to make it stop. This process may take a while, especially if you have a child who can really let it rip, but have patience and keep working on it. It will get better.

### Age of Mastery:

I don't have any specific data on how old children are before they are typically able to self-calm, but I would say, if your child needs this then it's never too early to start. Ok, maybe this wouldn't work on an infant so that would be too early, but if your child understands some language and can imitate your actions, you might as well give this a try. We taught it to 3-year-olds with developmental delays at the preschool I worked at and had success so you might, too!

### Learning Steps:

1. Don't Give In
2. Identifying Calm Vs. Upset
3. Teaching Calming Strategies When Calm
4. Make a Calming Strategy Board and Practice
5. Practice Calming Strategies When Your Child is Upset

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will identify calm vs. upset in pictures of himself or other children on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will demonstrate four calming strategies when calm with minimal adult prompting as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will choose a calming strategy from a board when upset with minimal adult support as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will choose and use a calming strategy when upset with minimal adult support as needed on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Self-Calming Step One: Don't Give In

### Description:

If this method is going to work at all, you HAVE to stop giving in to your child's meltdowns. Seriously, this is VERY important so listen well. If you try to teach your child these calming strategies but you eventually give in after he's been screaming for 5 minutes (even if you only give in sometimes), the calming strategies will NEVER be as effective as throwing that tantrum so the tantrums will never stop and the calming strategies will never work. You have to stop giving in!! I know this can be so hard to do because you don't want to see your child hurting and you don't want to cause a scene in whatever public place you may happen to be, but this is crucial. If your child starts throwing a fit about something, you CANNOT give in, even if you were just about to change your mind anyway. Your child will feel like the tantrum worked to get him what he wanted and the next tantrum will be even bigger.

### Activities:

Here's what you should do at this point if your child is tantruming:

- Remain calm, don't show any emotion to your child. If you have to walk away so you can compose yourself, do that. If you need to tag in your spouse to handle the problem because you're too emotional, do that.
- Try to wait the tantrum out for a bit. See if it goes away on its own if you don't give it much attention. Just monitor your child for safety and make sure that your child doesn't put himself in any dangerous situations (like throwing a tantrum in the knife aisle at Bed, Bath, and Beyond). If he does, calmly move him away from the danger without making a big deal out of it.
- Remove your child from the situation. Carry him out of the store (if you can do so safely) or back to his room. Try to isolate him from any attention he may get for the tantrum. If you can't move your child, try removing the situation as best as possible. Remove any toys or distractions from the area, turn off the lights, and remove all people from the area as well. Stay in a place where you can keep an eye on him but taking away all the attention may be enough for it to subside.
- Wait till it passes. Because it will. Eventually, your child will tire and that's when he will need a hug. Be there with his hug when he's ready for it and have faith that the rest of these steps will make these tantrums better. (But again, don't give in to what he wanted, even after the tantrum stops).

### When To Move On:

You can move on to the next step whenever you're ready, but make sure you've given this whole "not giving in" thing enough time that your child knows you mean business.

## Self-Calming Step Two: Identifying Calm Vs. Upset

### Description:

The first thing you need to do is teach your child the difference between being calm and being upset. You will want to do this with your child when she is calm.

### Activities:

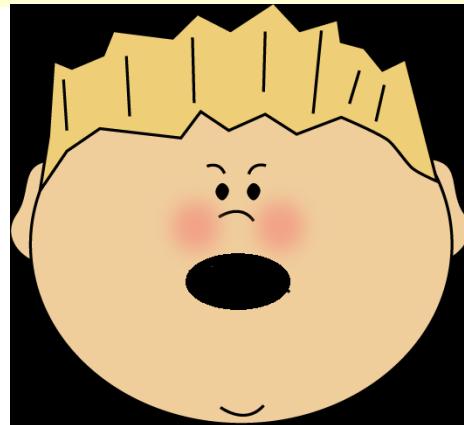
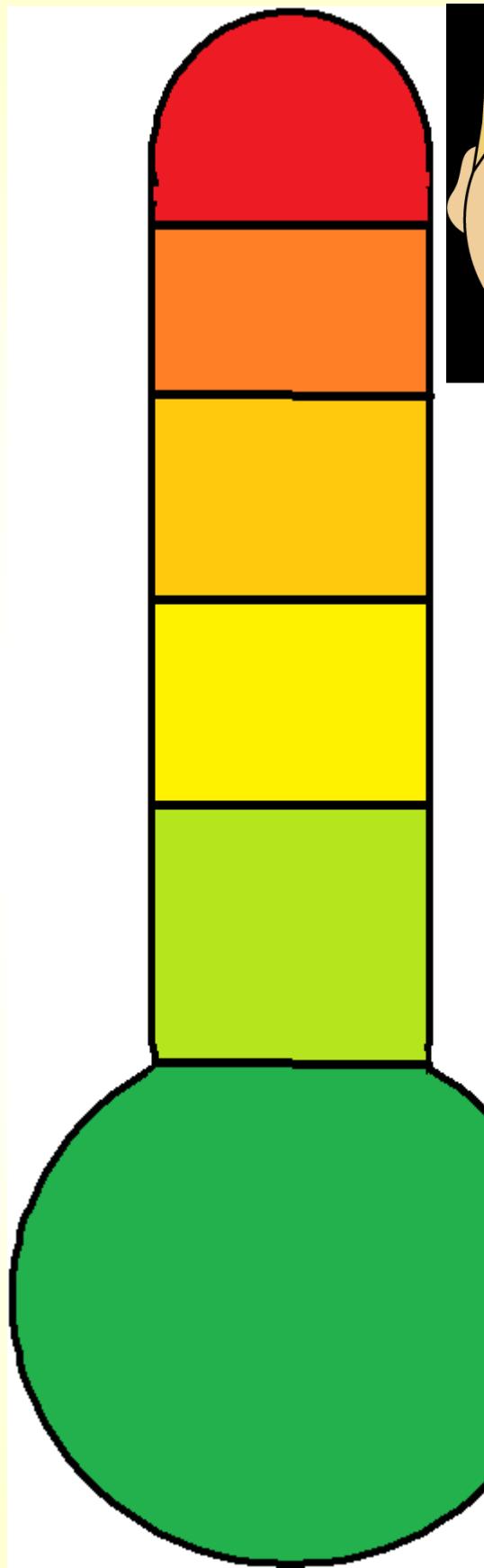
I like to use a mood thermometer for this. A mood thermometer has a happy face at the bottom, an angry face at the top, and sometimes a few faces in between indicating someone who is on their way up or down the continuum. Show your child the thermometer and say “when we are happy and calm, we are down here at the bottom”. Explain to your child that she is calm right now and show her where she is. You can even show her pictures of other children who are calm and happy. Then, tell her that when we are not happy, we are the top of the thermometer. We are upset. Show her pictures of children who are upset. You can type “child tantrum” into Google image search and get some pretty great upset children. Have her help you figure out which children look calm and which children look upset. You can also talk about some emotions in between, such as sad or scared. These often will lead to being upset if not dealt with early. Those will be the best times to try some calming strategies with your child. Keep working on labeling these emotions until your child is starting to understand them. You can even label her own emotions when you see them. For example, if your child is starting to get upset, show her the thermometer and say “You look sad” while pointing to the sad face. Just help her understand what those emotions look like and how they feel. I’ve even had some parents take pictures of their children displaying different emotions and use those to show their children. Be creative and talk about emotions a lot. You can use the mood thermometer on the next page to show your child an example of all this.

### When To Move On:

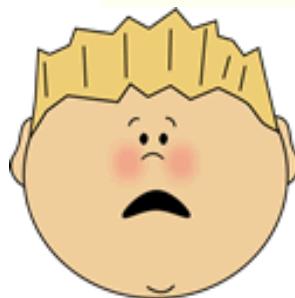
Once your child can identify calm and upset/mad in pictures of other children about 80% of the time, then you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can tell you if a child in a picture is calm or upset):

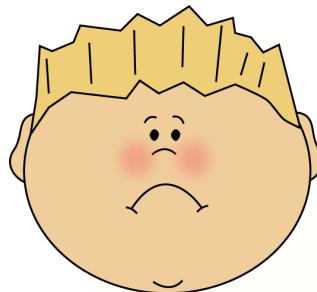
	Date:						
<b>Identify Calm Vs. Upset in Pictures</b>							



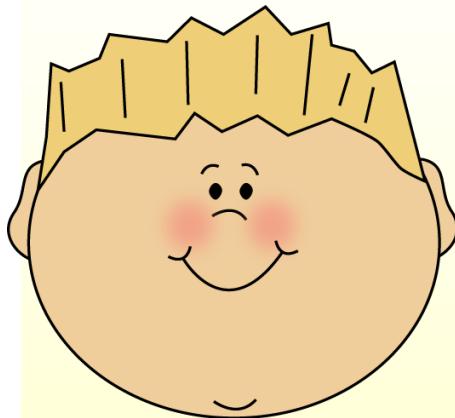
**Angry/Mad**



**Scared/Anxious**



**Sad**



**Calm/Happy**

Graphics From: [www.mycutegraphics.com](http://www.mycutegraphics.com)

## Self-Calming, Step Three: Teaching Calming Strategies When Calm

### Description:

Think about your child when he's in the middle of a tantrum. Do you think then would be a good time to teach him a new skill? Probably not, I'm guessing he wouldn't be listening very well at that point. So the best time to teach calming strategies is while your child is already calm. It sounds counter-productive but we'll get to the actual calming part later.

### Activities:

Try a bunch of the calming strategies on the following pages with your child and see which ones he seems to do well with or he seems to like the most. Keep trying them until you get about four that your child can do fairly well. Show him how to do each calming strategy and then have him do it with you. After you've practiced them several times, have your child do them by himself so you can see which ones he's learning the best. This will help you pick your four.

### When To Move On:

Once you have picked four of these strategies that seem to work well for your child, go ahead and move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

Feel free to use other calming strategies with your child as well. If there is already something that helps to calm him down, you should definitely use that one! You can also look at the things he tries to calm himself down and see how you can adapt them into something more appropriate (this is especially helpful for children with autism). Let's say your child rocks back and forth when he gets upset. You could create a calming strategy that incorporates rocking, such as sitting in a rocking chair or galloping around the room. These things may be more effective than just rocking on the floor like he's currently doing. Try several different variations and strategies until you find what works best for your child! Once you do find something that works, you may want to take a picture of your child or someone else doing that strategy so you have a good visual to use.

### Data Collection (Describe the 4 strategies you will try):

	1	2	3	4
Which Strategies Work For My Child				

## Self-Calming Strategies

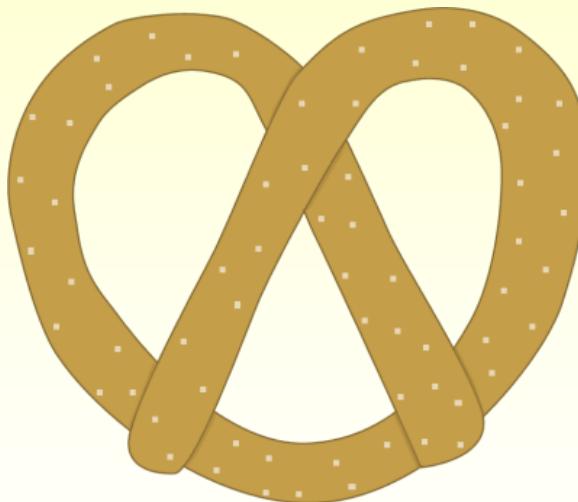
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Graphics By: [www.MyCuteGraphics.com](http://www.MyCuteGraphics.com)



### The Balloon:

Have your child hold his hands in front of his mouth like holding a small balloon. Tell your child to blow up the balloon. As he blows, he spreads his hands apart to pretend the balloon is getting bigger. Once the balloon is as big as it can get, your child claps his hands together to “pop” the balloon.



### The Pretzel:

Have your child fold herself into a pretzel and squeeze. Have her wrap her legs together and fold her arms across her chest like she's hugging herself. When she is as twisted as she can possibly get, have her squeeze hard.



### Take A Walk:

Have your child take a walk to cool off. Sometimes just walking around a bit can help.



### Be a Bunny:

Have your child pretend to be a bunny. He can get down on the ground like a bunny or just sit on his bottom. Have him breathe like a bunny does in short, quick breaths. Don't let your child do this too long or he might get dizzy but a little bit of shallow breathing can bring his breathing back under his control. Follow this up with some long deep breaths, like hissing like a snake.

## Self-Calming Strategies

Graphics By: [www.MyCuteGraphics.com](http://www.MyCuteGraphics.com)



### Write A Letter:

Have your child “write a letter” about why she’s mad. Get out a piece of paper and a big fat crayon. Have your child scribble violently all over the paper. This should release some tension. If your child is older, you may actually be able to get her to write down why she’s mad. When she’s done, have your child read it to you or just crumple the paper and throw it away.

# A B C

# 1 2 3 4

### ABCs and 123's

Count or Sing the ABCs: Have your child count as high as he can or sing/say the alphabet. Many times this is enough to bring the breathing back under control to quell the tantrum.



### Hug A Stuffed Animal or Pillow:

Have your child pick a pillow or stuffed animal to hug. Tell her to squeeze it hard so she can get all of that upset out. She could also tell her stuffed animal why she’s upset.

## Self-Calming, Step Four: Make a Calming Strategy Board and Practice

### Description:

Choose the four strategies that work best for your child (and feel free to use your own if you find something that works for your child) and put them together on a board. It's best if you get some sturdy poster board for this as it may be thrown across the room in anger at first.

### Activities:

Cut out the pictures from the worksheet or make your own and put the four pictures (with descriptions) on the board. You could even take pictures of your child doing the strategies and use those for the pictures. You should also put the mood thermometer on the board so you can use it to show your child. While your child is still calm, show her the board and say "this is what we will use when we are upset. When your body is red (point to the red on the thermometer) and you are upset, we will use these calming strategies to make your body green and help you calm down." Have your child practice each of the calming strategies while she's calm so you know she can do them. You could also pretend to be upset at some point and go over to the board to show her how to use it. Role playing is great for young children and those with language delays.

### When To Move On:

Once your board is ready to go and your child is able to demonstrate each of them about 80% of the time when you ask her to (when she's calm), you can move on to the next step. Make sure she's very comfortable doing these when calm.

### Modifications:

Need some calming strategies on the go? Try making a smaller version that you can take with you. You can make a mood thermometer that's the size of a bookmark to stick in your purse and you could scale down the pictures so that they could be printed, hole punched, and put on a key ring. Then, you'll just need to pull out that key ring to have the strategies ready for your child.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can demonstrate the strategies when calm):

	Date:						
Demonstrate 4 Strategies							

---

## Self-Calming, Step Five: Practice Calming Strategies When Upset

### Description:

Now that your child knows the strategies, it's time to put them into action.

### Activities:

The next time your child starts to get upset, try to catch it before he gets completely out of control mad. Say "Your body doesn't look green, let's get our calming board". Bring him the calming board and show him where he is on the thermometer. Label his emotion for him by saying "You are upset" or "you are mad". Then, ask him to pick a calming strategy to try. In an ideal world, he'll remember his training and pick a strategy so you can help him through it. More likely though, he will be so mad about it that he will refuse to choose and possibly even try to cause harm to you or your board. Remain calm, this too will pass. If he doesn't want to pick a strategy, you pick one for him and demonstrate it. Don't force him to do it with you, just calmly demonstrate it along side him. Then, wait a minute or two and try that whole process again. Eventually, he should calm down enough to be able to do a strategy. However, the first several times you try this, it may take a while, especially if he's just now getting used to you not giving in to his tantrums. Just keep trying it every few minutes until he's ready to do one with you. If you stay calm, that will bring him down even faster. If your child continues to tantrum after trying this several times, you can try leaving the room or removing him from the environment so he doesn't get any more attention for the tantrum. Once you can tell he's starting to de-escalate, you can come back in and start doing calming strategies near him again. Over time, your child should be more willing to do this during a tantrum. If you do it consistently with him, he will get to the point where you can say, "You look like you need to calm down, why don't you go pick a strategy. When your body is green again, we can talk (or I can give you a hug)". Then, he should be able to go calm himself down using the strategies you have practiced so many times. Keep in mind it may be a long way down the road before he can do this on his own, but that's the overall goal. Once your child is calmed after a tantrum, talk with your child calmly about what happened and what you can do to solve the problem. Now is the time to work through the problem, now that he's calm.

### When To Move On:

When your child can choose a strategy and take himself through it to calm down about 80% of the time, then our job is complete! You'll have to help him do the strategies at first though.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child can choose and use a strategy when upset):

	Date:						
<b>Choose and Do to Calm</b>							

## How to Teach a Child to Stay on Topic

### Rationale:

Many children with language delays tend to have trouble staying on topic. Their conversations may wander aimlessly from one topic to another without enough transition for the listener to follow. This can cause listeners to become disinterested and not want to interact with that person anymore. If your child is doing this, it can impact her social interactions as well as her ability to be understood by the adults and children in his life.

### Age of Mastery:

By 5 years old, your child should be able to have a logical conversation with you and by 6 years of age, your child should be able to announce topic shifts so that the listener can follow.

### Learning Steps:

1. Create a Visual
2. Practice Using the Visual
3. Practice Topic Maintenance Without the Visual
4. Remind During Conversational Speech

### Sample IEP Goals:

- By <Date>, Child will maintain a topic of conversation for 5 turns with an adult using visual cues as necessary on 80% of opportunities on 3 consecutive days.
- By <Date>, Child will maintain a topic of conversation for 5 turns with an adult without a visual cue in a structured therapy setting on 80% of opportunities on 3 consecutive days.
- By <Date>, Child will maintain a topic of conversation for 5 turns with a peer without a visual cue in an unstructured conversation on 80% of opportunities with one adult reminder as necessary on 3 consecutive days.

\*\* For these goals, choose a number of turns that seems appropriate for the child you are working with. There is nothing magical about 5 turns. Take baseline data of how many turns the child typically takes before losing track and then set a goal for a number higher than that. If the child also likes to talk at length, you could set a number of minutes that the child will maintain the same topic. Again, use your baseline data to guide what you will set the goal for.

## Topic Maintenance Step One: Create a Visual

### Description:

The first thing you will need to do is create a visual that will help your child remember to keep on topic while you're practicing.

### Activities:

You can use the example included or create your own. The point is to have a picture of something in front of your child that has several of the same thing in a row. For younger children, I like to use a train with many cars or an ice-cream cone with many scoops. If your child is older and thinks that is too childish, you can create something less cartooney, such as just drawing lines on a piece of paper. Whatever you choose, make sure it has at least as many objects as the number of turns you expect your child to be able to take. For example, if you want your child to take 5 conversational turns without losing his train of thought, you need a train with at least 5 cars (did you see what I did there??). I recommend giving your child a few choices if you're going to make your own visual aid so that it will be motivating to him. Make sure there is also a place on the page to write the topic of conversation. Also, I like to put these in a plastic page protector so I can write on them with dry erase markers and use them again.

### When To Move On:

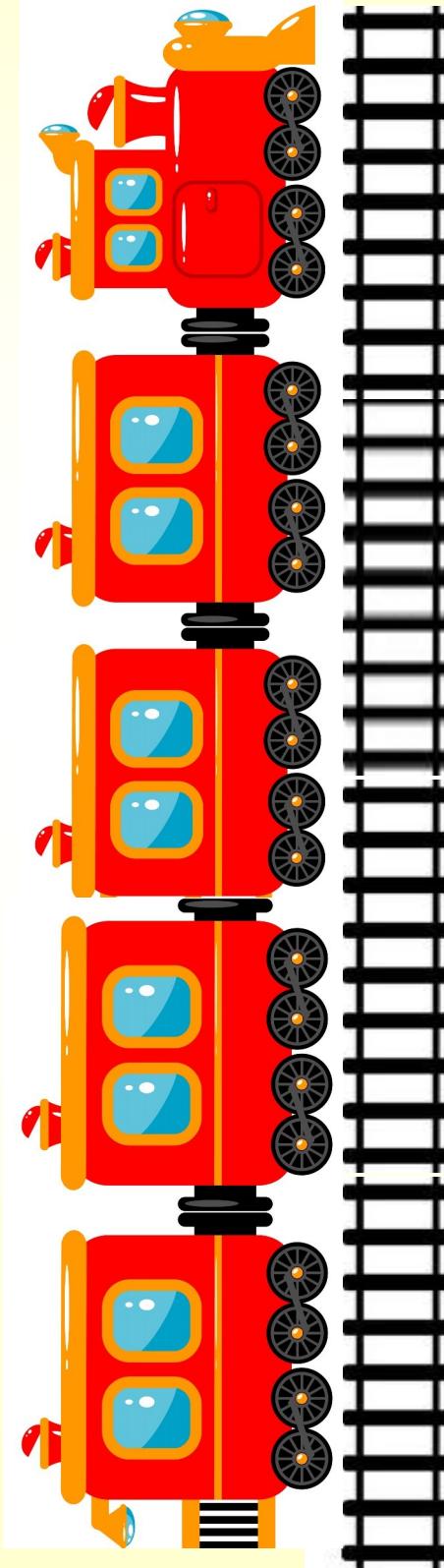
Once you have the visual ready, you can move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Describe the visual you will use with your child):

<b>What Visuals I will Use With My Child:</b>	
---	--

Decide on a topic of conversation with your child. At first, choose topics he enjoys. As he becomes better at topic maintenance, you can begin to choose topics that interest him less. Show your child the train and remind him that each of the train cars represents what we say about that topic. If you say something that isn't about the topic, then the train car falls off the track. Try to keep all of the train cars on the track. If your child is struggling, write what he says above each train car and then discuss whether they are about the topic or not.

## Topic Maintenance, Step One: Create a Visual



Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**Extra Practice:** Once your child begins to understand this analogy, you can begin to use it in other settings as well. For example, when your child changes the subject unexpectedly, you can say something like "Wait a minute! We were talking about pizza. You changed the topic. Did your train fall off the track?"

## Topic Maintenance, Step Two: Practice Using the Visual

### Description:

Now that you have your child, teach her how to use it.

### Activities:

Decide on a topic of conversation with your child. At first, choose something that your child enjoys and that she will be able to talk about for a long time. Later, you can start using less interesting topics to give her a challenge. Write the topic at the top of the page. If your child can't read, you may want to draw a quick picture of it as well so she will remember what she's supposed to be talking about. Show your child the visual and tell her that each section on the visual represents one thing she can say about the topic. For younger children, you can use an analogy with the visual aid to teach her to stay on topic. For example, if you're using the train visual, you can tell her that if she says something that isn't about the topic, then that train car falls off the track. Tell her to try to keep all the train cars on the tracks. Now, start the conversation about the topic. You can start with an open-ended question that will get her started, like "what is it that you like about \_\_\_\_". Then, write down (in a word or two) what she said above the first train car. Next, respond to what she said with your own question, comment, etc. When it's her turn to talk again, write down what she says over the second train car. Keep going like this until she either says something off-topic or makes it to the goal number of turns. If she says something off-topic, stop her and say "Wait a minute! We're talking about \_\_\_\_ but you just said something about pizza! Was that about our topic?" Help her answer "no" and ask her to think of something else to say about the topic instead. If she's insistent, tell her that she can tell you about pizza after you're finished and jot yourself a note so you don't forget to ask her about it later.

### When To Move On:

When your child can take the target number of turns without getting off topic 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Data Collection (Mark if she takes the number of turns you would like her to take without getting off topic):

	Date:						
Take __ turns on topic							

## Topic Maintenance, Step Three: Practice Without the Visual

### Description:

Now that your child has the hang of it, try taking away the visual to see if he can do it without.

### Activities:

This step of the process is very similar to the last step but you will tell your child that he has to do it without looking at the train or visual aid. Start off by holding the visual on a clipboard or book so that he can't see it but so you can still write on it. Complete the activity the same way as the last step including writing everything down, but don't show your child unless he gets off topic or makes it to the target number of turns. Then, turn the picture around and show him what he said. This will help him process and think about the conversation that just happened. For example, you will be able to show him "you said all these things about boats, and then you said something about pizza. Let's see if we can get one more thing about boats to finish it out." (On a side note, can you tell I'm pregnant and hungry while writing this one? My topic maintenance is not the best right now as I keep bringing everything back to food, also!) Once you've been doing this for a while, try to fade how much you need to use the visual aid.

### When To Move On:

When your child can take the target number of turns without getting off topic and without using the visual about 80% of the time, you're ready to move on to the next step.

### Modifications:

This step may take some time for your child to master. Continue to have patience and keep practicing this over and over again. The more frequently you do this, the more comfortable he will become with staying on topic and it will become more natural. Your conversations at first may seem choppy and unorganized and that's ok. At this point we just want thoughts that are on the main topic. We can work on organizing them later.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child takes the target number of turns while staying on topic without needing to look at the visual aid):

	Date:						
Take __ turns on topic without visual							

## Topic Maintenance, Step Four: Remind During Conversation

### Description:

Now that your child can hold a conversation with you and stay on topic in a structured setting, you will want to start reminding her to do it all of the time. Since you've worked on the skill by itself so many times, simple verbal reminders should work for your child.

### Activities:

Start listening for times during conversation that your child strays off topic. When you hear them, stop her and say "wait a minute, we were talking about horses but you said something about McDonald's. Did you stay on topic or did your train fall off the track?" Help her come back to the topic and remind her that when you're done talking about horses, she can change the topic to McDonald's. You can even help her transition to that topic when you're done with the current one. Try just using these verbal reminders to keep her on track for a while. If this doesn't seem to be helping, you can go back to the visual aid and show her periodically to remind her what she's supposed to do. Keep in mind that it may take a while before she's always able to stay on topic, but she should be getting gradually better with all of your hard work.

### When To Move On:

When your child stays on topic during regular conversation for the target number of turns about 80% of the time, you don't need to worry about listening for it all of the time anymore. Just remind her whenever things get way out of hand because you will definitely notice huge topic shifts that don't make sense. Keep in mind that very young children aren't typically able to stay on topic for too terribly long, so have reasonable expectations and don't expect your 3-year-old to stay on topic for 20 turns or anything ridiculous like that.

### Data Collection (Mark if your child stays on topic during conversational speech):

	Date:						
<b>Stay on topic for __ turns in conversation</b>							

## How to Use a Social Story to Help a Child with a Language Delay

### Rationale:

Learning new skills, especially language skills, can be a challenge for children with a language delay. We struggle daily to teach them the basic skills they need to succeed in life. One strategy for teaching new concepts that can be incredibly helpful for a child with a language delay, is the use of social stories. A social story is a custom book that you put together and read with your child that explains and illustrates exactly how a certain task or series of tasks is done. This book uses language that your child understands and includes pictures to help get the point across. It's often used to show a child how to do something or to redirect a child from a behavior that you don't want them to do. We will go over two uses in particular, which are using a social story for a daily routine and using one to teach social interactions.

### Age of Mastery:

You can use social stories with children at just about any age! I've used social stories with children as young as 1 year old all the way up through older children. This technique works great for children with autism, cognitive delays, language delays, behavior problems, Down Syndrome, and many more. If you're having trouble teaching your child something, try making a social story about it!

### Learning Steps:

1. Social Stories for Daily Routines
2. Social Stories for Social Interactions

### Sample IEP Goals:

\*\* IEP goals for this technique will target the specific skill that you are trying to teach with the social story. You do not need to write a specific goal for using the social story, you will just use social stories as a therapy tool to reach a goal for a specific language skill. Here's a few examples of goals you may use a social story for:

- By <Date>, Child will independently participate in the school arrival routine by hanging up his coat/backpack, signing in, and sitting down at the table on 3 consecutive days.
- By <Date>, Child will independently complete all 5 steps of the hand-washing routine (water on, soap, rinse, water off, dry hands) with no more than one reminder as needed on 3 consecutive days.
- By <Date>, during 10 minutes of play, Child will initiate an interaction with a peer using appropriate words at least 1 time with no more than one adult reminder as needed on 3 consecutive data collection days.
- By <Date>, Child will verbally respond to a peer's play initiation on 75% of observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days.

## Social Stories, Step One (Pg 1 of 2): Social Stories for Daily Routines

### Description:

Every day there are certain routines that we follow that help us get through the day. For most people, there is a specific order that they get ready in the morning, complete their showering tasks, attack tasks at work, and even enjoy free time. Children with language delays often don't understand these routines and can end up feeling completely confused and out of control. Imagine if everything that happened to you throughout the day seemed to have no order and suddenly you were being asked to do something you really didn't like to do without even knowing why. This is how our kids can feel! By helping our children understand the routines that they will follow every day, we can bring some order to their lives and make sense of the chaos around them.

### Activities:

Think about a routine that your child has a particularly hard time with. Maybe it's getting ready in the morning or getting ready for bed (those are the two I hear the most!). You can create a social story for that routine and share it with your child. Here's what you need to do:

1. Write a list of all of the steps involved with this routine. If your child is very young, you may want to just focus on the main steps, whereas an older child could handle more detailed steps. For example, if you're doing the morning routine, your list may look like this: get up, change clothes, eat breakfast, brush teeth, get backpack ready.
2. Take pictures of your child doing all of these steps. You may have to stage the picture, such as putting the backpack on your child and then taking a picture really quickly before she takes it off again. That's ok!
3. Create a book on your computer or by hand using those pictures. Put one picture on each page and write a simple "I..." sentence that describes each one. Make sure your sentences state what your child will do instead of what she won't do. For example, your sentences may look like these:
  - "When Mom wakes me up in the morning, I get out of bed"
  - "Then, I get dressed."
  - "Next, I eat breakfast."

**Continued On Next Page...**

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## Social Stories Step One (Pg 2 of 2): Social Stories for Daily Routines

### Activities cont:

4. Once your book is created, read it with your child several times before that routine comes up again. When the routine comes up, before the routine, read the book to your child again one more time, and then walk her through the steps page by page. For example, you will read the first page, and then help your child do that step. Then, you will read the next page. When you get to a page that your child doesn't enjoy, show her what's coming up so she knows it won't last forever. You may even want to purposefully plan a fun page right after the page she doesn't like. For example, you could say "first brush your teeth, then we get to read a book!" Keep doing this every time the routine comes up until your child can do it on her own without you needing to walk her through each page.

### When To Move On:

Make sure you do the steps to this task in order and take time on each one so you have a great product by the end. Read it to your child often at times other than when that routine is actually taking place. If your child continues to struggle with the part of her routine described in the book, you should still be reading the book at different times of the day. Also, keep using the book to help her through the routine until she can do it by herself. After you've been doing this for a while, you may be able to encourage her to go get the book herself and walk herself through the routine. However, at first, you will have to be there with the book reading each page and helping her do the step that was just described.

### Data Collection:

Come up with a goal about the target behavior you want your child to demonstrate. Maybe you want her to be able to complete the whole teeth-brushing routine by herself, or you want her to be able to make her bed independently. Whatever it is, set your goal for that. Keep data on how many times your child is able to complete this task independently. When she can do it independently 3 times in a row, you don't need to keep reading the stories anymore unless your child forgets and you need to revisit the book.

	Date:						
<b>Child completes routine independently?</b>							

## Social Stories, Step Two (Pg 1 of 2): Social Stories for Social Interactions

### Description:

Another area that is difficult for many children with language delays is navigating social interactions. Our children don't understand why people do and say the things they do and they don't understand what is expected of them during social interactions. This is especially true of children on the autism spectrum but these children are helped greatly by having the rules laid out for them very explicitly. Keep in mind though that your child doesn't necessarily have autism just because he has problems with social interactions. Many children with language delays struggle with social interactions. This approach can help all of them!

### Activities:

Social stories can teach your child scripts for how to interact with other children or even adults. Follow these steps:

1. Choose a social interaction to target. You can get ideas for this by taking your child to a park or playground and watching him interact with the other children. What types of things does he do or say that don't seem normal for a child his age? Which behaviors cause the other children to become disinterested? You can also watch other children your child's age and see what types of social interactions they commonly engage in. Choose one skill or situation that your child seems to be lacking skills in. Here are some ideas to start with: Introducing oneself, asking to join someone else's play, asking someone else to join his play, staying on one topic of conversation, maintaining an interaction with another child, not getting stuck on one topic of conversation (allowing another child to choose the topic), etc.
2. Determine the rules that typically govern that social interaction. You can do this by watching typical children engaging in that interaction or just think about how children normally engage. Try to list out step-by-step what would be expected of your child during this interaction. This may seem difficult at first but after you've done a few you will start to think this way automatically. Just make sure you're writing it similarly to how children interact, not how adults interact. For example, when a child introduces himself, he doesn't come up to another child and shake his hand while saying "Hello, my name is Charles. How are you doing this evening?" He probably says something more like, "I'm Paul, what's your name?" Here's an example to get you started:

Asking to Join Play: Go up to a child or group of children, stand a few feet away. Smile and say "hi, I'm \_\_\_\_". Wait for them to respond. Ask the children what they are doing. Wait for them to respond. Ask if you can play, too. If they say "yes", ask them how you can help/join or play along with them the same way they are playing. Don't change the game or add ideas right away.

**Continued On Next Page...**

## Social Stories Step Two (Pg 2 of 2): Social Stories for Social Interactions

### **Activities cont:**

3. Break the rules out into individual steps and take pictures of your child doing these things. This may be difficult if you don't have other children around to use as stand-ins, but you can always substitute adults or stuffed animals if you need to.
4. Create a book with one picture per page and a simple "I..." statement on each page that describes what your child will do. Here are sentences based on the example from before:
  - Page 1: If I want to play with other children, I walk up to them and stand far enough away that a grocery cart would fit between us.
  - Page 2: Then, I smile and say "Hi! I'm Johnny." I wait for them to respond.
  - Page 3: When they are done speaking, I say "What are you guys doing?"
  - Page 4: When they are done telling me what they are doing, I say "Can I play, too?"
  - Page 5: If they say "no", I say "Ok" and walk away. I can find someone else to play with.
  - Page 6: If they say "yes" that I can play with them, I can say "How can I help?" or "What can I do?" and play with them in the same way they were already playing. I don't try to change the game as soon as I join. I play their way.
5. Read the book with your child several times before the social interaction comes up again. You can also role play the situation with your child's stuffed animals or other familiar people. Have him practice saying his lines. Then, read it again right before you expect that your child will be in that situation.
6. When your child is in the middle of that interaction again, help your child remember what to do by prompting him or suggesting things he could say. If the social interaction takes a different turn than his script, you may have to help him improvise as well. Afterwards, talk with him about how it went and what he could do better next time.

### **When To Move On:**

Come up with a goal about the target interaction you want your child to engage in. Keep data on how many times your child is able to complete this task independently. When he can do it independently 3 times in a row, you don't need to keep reading the story anymore.

### **Data Collection:**

	Date:						
<b>Child completes interaction independently?</b>							

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**E**

<b>A</b>	Early Communication Skills.....	23	
Actions, Imitation.....	43-49	Elicitation Techniques.....	284-286
Adjectives.....	112-121	Expanding Vocabulary Skills.....	92-97
Ages for Speech and Language Skills.....	11-17	<b>F</b>	
"And", Conjunction.....	199-205	Final Consonant Deletion.....	318-325
Answering Questions.....	212	Finding, Words.....	122-134
Articles, A and The.....	190-198	Fricatives, Stopping.....	306-311
Articulation Approach.....	283-295	Following Directions.....	327-335
Asking Questions w/Good Word Order....	278-281	Fronting of Back Sounds.....	306-311
Assessment, Parents.....	9	<b>G</b>	
Assessment, SLP.....	10	Grammar Skills.....	135
<b>B</b>	<b>H</b>		
Babies, Promoting Speech/Language.....	24-34	He, Pronouns.....	169-179
Behaviors, Calming Strategies.....	349-357	Help!.....	21
Blend Reduction.....	306-311	Homework Notebook.....	8
<b>C</b>	How Questions.....	269-277	
Calming Strategies.....	349-357	<b>I</b>	
Choosing Skills to Start With, Parents.....	9	Imitating Actions.....	43-49
Choosing Skills to Start With, SLPs.....	10	Increase Length of Utterance.....	206-211
Class of Sounds, Teaching Them.....	306-311	Infants, Promoting Speech/Language.....	24-34
Conjunction, And.....	199-205	Informal Assessment.....	10
Conversation, Staying on Topic.....	358-363	Introduction, Parents.....	6
Copyright, Copy Permissions.....	2	Introduction, SLP.....	7
<b>D</b>	Irregular Plurals.....	153-161	
Data Collection.....	17-20	<b>J</b>	
Descriptors.....	112-121	Jump Start a Late Talker.....	65-74
Developmental Checklists.....	11-17		
Directions, Following Them.....	327-335		
Dynamic Assessment.....	10		

---

**Index**

---

Q	
<b>L</b>	Questions.....212
Late Talker, How to Jump Start.....65-74	Questions, Asking w/Good Word Order...278-281
Late Talker, Sign Language.....75-91	Questions, How.....269-277
Leaving Off Final Sounds.....318-325	Questions, What.....222-230
Length of Utterance, Increase.....206-211	Questions, When.....253-261
Location Words.....98-111	Questions, Where.....231-241
Loss for Words.....122-134	Questions, Who.....242-252
<b>M</b>	Questions, Why.....262-268
Maintaining a Topic.....358-363	Questions, Yes/No.....213-221
Mean Length of Utterance (MLU).....206-211	<b>R</b>
Mumbling, How to Stop It.....312-317	/r/, Teaching the Sound.....296-305
<b>N</b>	Refusing to work.....21
Name, Responding To.....50-56	Responding to Name.....50-56
New Word, How to Teach.....58-64	Responding to Sound/Voice.....35-42
Notebook, Homework.....8	<b>S</b>
<b>P</b>	's, Possessive.....136-143
Past Tense Verbs.....180-189	-s, Plural.....144-152
Phonology Approach.....306-311	Self-Calm from Meltdown.....349-357
Play, Learning to Pretend.....336-340	She, Pronouns.....169-179
Play, Taking Turns.....341-348	Sign Language.....75-91
Plural -s.....144-152	Social Skill Guides.....326
Plurals, Irregular.....153-161	Social Stories.....364-368
Positional Concepts.....98-111	Sound Elicitation Techniques.....284-286
Possessive 's.....136-143	Sounds, Final Consonant Deletion.....318-325
Present Progressive “-ing”.....162-168	Sounds, Stop Mumbling.....312-317
Pronouns, He and She.....169-179	Sounds, Teaching a Class of Sounds.....306-311
Progress Monitoring.....17-20	Sounds, Teaching One Sound.....283-295
	Sounds, Teaching /r/ Sound.....296-305

---

## Index

W

---

<b>S, cont.</b>	What Questions.....	222-230	
Spatial Concepts.....	98-111	When Questions.....	253-261
Speech Sound Guides.....	282	Where Questions.....	231-241
Starting Out, Parents.....	9	Who Questions.....	242-252
Starting Out, SLPs.....	10	Why Questions.....	262-268
Staying On Topic.....	358-363	Word Order in Questions.....	278-281
Stopping of Fricatives.....	306-311	Word Retrieval Skills.....	122-134
Stuck, not making progress.....	21	Word Webs.....	92-97

T

Teach a new word.....	58-64	Yes/No Questions.....	213-221
Teaching a Class of Sounds.....	306-311		
“The”, Articles.....	190-188		
Topic Maintenance.....	358-363		
Turn-Taking.....	341-348		
Troubleshooting Problems.....	21		

U

Use Longer Sentences/Utterances.....	206-211
--------------------------------------	---------

V

Verbs, Past Tense.....	180-189
Vocabulary Guides.....	57
Vocabulary, Word Webs.....	92-97
Vocabulary Words, Teaching a New One....	58-64



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