



Summer Speech News



Dear Parent(s),

As this school year comes to a close and we prepare for some well-deserved rest and relaxation, many of you have asked how you can continue to support your child's communication growth. In order to maintain the skills we have addressed during the year, there are several things that you can do at home.

- **SPEAK IN COMPLETE SENTENCES**

Sentence length should correspond to your child's listening abilities. Be sure to use correct grammar. Talk about your actions, what you are doing, what your child is doing, ask questions, and express feelings.

- **EXPAND ON YOUR CHILD'S VERBALIZATIONS**

For example: During an activity, if he/she responds with only one or two words, encourage more elaborate structures by rephrasing your child's response as a whole sentence. Encourage an appropriate speaking "rate" (often the child's automatic rate may be too fast).

- **BE A GOOD LISTENER**

For example: Help your child learn to carry on a conversation. Take turns being speakers and listeners.

- **MAINTAIN THE SPECIFIED TOPIC**

For example: Discuss with your child what the day's activity is and keep your conversation related to that topic. Help your child to stay on topic by adding at least one comment before switching to a different topic.

- **BUILD VOCABULARY AND CONCEPT SKILLS**

Describe objects in relation to category, purpose/use, color, size, shape, texture, and location.

- **READ TOGETHER**

Use books to promote "wh" question formation and responses - these activities introduce students to high-interest information in an appealing format that aids language comprehension while enriching vocabulary and background knowledge.

Here are some suggestions:

- For young children, just about every book in the "Beginner Books"/Dr Seuss series
- Books about rhymes, opposites, classification such as vehicles, tools, occupations

- Books about animals and their young, involving knowing the precise names for animals' offspring (e.g. horses have foals, cows have calves, etc), and the correct names for some common animals according to gender (horse: mare, stallion. filly, colt)
- Any books of particular interest to your child

Wordless books are also a fun way to encourage story telling!

Try checking out some of these books:

- CHALK by Bill Thomson
- The Boy and the Book by Michael Slater
- Hank Finds an Egg by Rebecca Dudley
- The Girl and the Bicycle by Mark Pett
- The Boy and the Airplane by Mark Pett
- Pancakes for Breakfast by Tomie DePaola

• TALK ABOUT WORDS AND WORD MEANINGS

As natural opportunities arise:

- Talk about such topics as "Why is Big Bird called Big Bird?"
- Talk about people being named after other people.
- Talk about why certain names might have been chosen for pets and TV characters (Cookie Monster, Sponge Bob, etc).

Try to work these conversations in around topics of genuine interest to the child.

- **Read, read, read, and read ... many books that you are using enhance vocabulary development**
 - Incorporate cloze-tasks into story-reading (Fill in the blank tasks, ex. The big bad wolf huffed and puffed and.... child fills in the blank)
 - When you read stories, recite rhymes or sing songs, include "obvious" sentence completion routines, e.g. 'Little Jack Horner sat in a ...' (corner); 'Baa baa black sheep, have you any...' (wool).
- **PLAY WITH LANGUAGE THROUGH "GAMES" SUCH AS ...**
 - **word-classification games** which might include ones such as: "See how many boys' names you can think of in one minute. Other categories that might be fun or interesting include: vehicles, games, drinks, movies, tools, toys, animals, vegetables, makes of car, sports, clothes, flowers, colors
 - **name the category** using a cloze task, for example, "red, blue, green, orange and pink are all ..."; "lions, tigers, monkeys and elephants are all ..."
 - **play pick the word that does not belong**, for example, "Which one is the odd one out?": cat dog tree mouse
 - **play "Which two words go together?"** for example: "watch pig nail clock"

- play **sentence completion** (“cloze”) games for example: “A house is a place to live- An office is a place to ...” “A nursery is a place to buy plants- A Post Office is a place to buy ...
 - play games involving **synonyms**, for instance, “Can you think of another word that means big?” “Can you tell me another word for smart?”
 - play **word-association games**, for example: “pilot goes with...”(plane), “Cab goes with...”(driver), “ship goes with...”(sailor)
 - devise simple games involving **similarities**, for example, “What is the same about a sheep and a cow?” “A train and a plane are both...”
 - play games involving **antonyms**, do this as a sentence completion (cloze) activity (e.g., “The opposite of hot is ...”) or use a question-and-answer format (e.g., “What is the opposite of hot?”), or as a confrontation naming task using pictures in which the child has to name “opposites pictures” as rapidly as they can (e.g., hot cold, wet dry, big little, fast slow, deep shallow, apart together)
 - play word games involving **differences**, for example, “What is different about a bird and a plane. They can both fly, but they are different because ...”
 - play **“What comes next?”** for example: Monday Tuesday Wednesday ... Summer Autumn Winter ...1 2 3 ...First second third ...
- **ENCOURAGE ...**
 - **Verbalizations** - Your actions should depend upon what your child asks or directs. Don’t anticipate your child’s wishes; instead require him/her to use appropriate language. This includes discouraging the use of gestures, nods, and shrugs and encouraging the use of words such as yes, no and “I don’t know”.
 - **Written Language** - Post a bulletin board for “Family News”. Encourage your family to communicate with each other by leaving notes to one another. Notes can be “written” at each child’s ability level. Keep a daily journal, especially to track a vacation. Read and discuss the journal entries and verbally expand on what is written.
- **OTHER...**

Here are some websites that have speech/language activities:

http://www.talkingmatters.com.au/resources/downloads/Cat_View/2-barrier-games

<http://www.speechiefreebies.com/>

<http://mommyspeechtherapy.com/>

<http://www.teachthought.com/literacy-2/31-speech-and-language-apps-for-ipad/>

Visit my teacher site for additional speech/language activities!

<http://www.cbsd.org/Page/4552>

Thank you very much for the time and energy you put into helping your child become a more proficient communicator. Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,
Natalia Andrews, M.S., C.C.C.,SLP