

Creating A Learning Rich Environment for Language Delayed Preschoolers: Tutorial for Parents and Professionals

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Overview

- This presentation provides suggestions on how to facilitate further language development in language delayed/impaired preschoolers at home in conjunction with existing outpatient, school, or private practice based speech language services.
- It discusses parental implementation strategies as well as lists useful materials, books and websites of interest.
- Direct Target Audience
 - Parents
 - Caregivers
 - Clinical Fellows (CFY's)
 - Graduate Speech Pathology Students
- Indirect Target Audience
 - Speech Language Pathologists
 - Psychologists
 - School Based Professionals
 - Explain and distribute this material to caregivers

The importance of daily routines!

- Narrate to help children learn what is expected during familiar activities
 - Meals, naps, car rides, supermarket, bath time
 - “We are going to the store to buy food for lunch”
 - “I need tomatoes, apples and celery. Let’s find them. Look these are tomatoes. “
- Use picture schedules as reminders for specific activities
 - “First we will do a puzzle and then we will have a snack”
- Timers to set time expectations
 - “When the bell rings we can go outside to play”
- Verbal warnings on how much time is left to play
 - “You have two minutes left”
- Change routines as the child’s language grows more sophisticated
 - Introduce more sophisticated vocabulary words
 - More complex directions to follow

The importance of Following the Child's Lead

- Take notice of what toys and activities your child is interested in
- Use his/her interest as means to expand their language abilities
 - Why is this important?
 - An activity/toy in which a child is interested in can potentially sustain their attention for longer periods of time than a non-preferred toy/activity
 - You are increasing child's communication opportunities especially their ability to spontaneously initiate conversation
- How to follow a child's lead?
 - Comment, describe, expand upon, or ask questions about their choice of a toy or activity.
 - Ask the child: "You are having a tea party with the animals. Can I join you? What should I do?"

Strategies for expanding the child's language

- Self-Talk
- Parallel Talk
- Expansions
- Extensions
- Questioning
- Use of Praise

Self-Talk

- Talk aloud, using words your child understands, about what you, the adult, are seeing, hearing, doing, or feeling when your child is next to you.
 - When you're cooking dinner with the child next to you, you might say: "I'll start by chopping the onions and mushrooms, next I will put them on the skillet to brown, finally I will add salt and pepper and stir..."
 - When you're gardening outside and the child is playing nearby, you might say, "Let me get my trowel and seeds. I am digging little holes in the ground and putting seeds inside. Now I will water the ground to keep the soil moist so the flowers can grow..."

Parallel-Talk

- Now instead of narrating about what you the adult are doing, you'll be narrating about what your child is doing/working on or what is happening to them by using simple words in the child's repertoire.
 - For example, while your child is helping you gardening, you might tell him/her: "You are doing a great job putting seeds in the ground and watering them"
- You may focus on describing the child's actions or feelings:
 - You are running so fast
 - You are feeling so happy that daddy is home
- You may focus on describing different aspects of items the child is playing with such as size, shape, texture, or attributes
 - You are playing with the green frog. The frog feels very squishy.

Expansions

- This is a strategy of adding extra words to the phrases/sentences your child is already speaking by using correct grammar forms in order to expand the child's speech and encourage further utterances
 - The child might say point and say “cat”, you might then add: “It is a big cat”, or “Yes, the cat is eating.”
 - The child might say: “daddy, ball”, you might add: “Daddy, let's play ball”.
- Make sure to speak in a loud voice with emphasis on new words to make them more salient (‘hearable’) to the child.

Extensions

- The intent of this strategy is to go beyond expansion and to actually *extend* the child's language further by adding additional information to what they are already saying.
 - Child says: “daddy, swing”.
 - Adult adds: “Sure, I swing you. Let's go to the blue swing in the backyard.”

Questioning

- Ask open ended “wh” (what, who, where, why, etc) questions related to play, daily routines, or as means of having situational choices
 - While the child is playing with the toy barn: “Where did the frog go?”
 - While running errands: “Where should we go first?”
 - During clean up: “Where does the puzzle go?”
 - Provide assistance by offering choices of activities/foods/toys
 - “Would you like to play with the train or with the car first?”

A Word About Rewards

- Oftentimes when parents work on explicitly reinforcing learning tasks with language impaired children they may need to reward the children for task participation with two types of motivational rewards: extrinsic and intrinsic rewards
- Extrinsic rewards
 - Token economies (e.g., earning stickers, etc.) can motivate the child to perform the task in order to obtain a particular incentive
 - Not controlled by the child but by external factors (e.g., parent promising the reward) (Cheng and Yeh, 2009; Kelsey, 2010)
 - Effective for accomplishing short-term goals but ineffective in the long run
 - “the more rewards are used, the more they seem to be needed” (Kohn, 1993, p. 17)
 - “extrinsically motivated learners may exert minimal effort to perform a task and may stop an activity when reinforcement discontinues” (Cheng and Yeh, 2009, p 599)

A Word About Rewards (cont)

- Intrinsic rewards
 - Rooted within the child
 - Created by the internal sense of satisfaction or pleasure in the behavior or task
 - Important for creating long-term change
 - Allows the child to self-monitor and self-regulate own actions to reach the desired goal (Cheng and Yeh, 2009; Kelsey, 2010; Kohn, 1993)
- Extrinsic rewards may be needed to motivate the child to participate in learning tasks/practice
- For optimally effective interventions figure out how to intrinsically motivate the child to spontaneously maintain task participation without the promise of external rewards

Use of Praise

- To develop intrinsic motivation, praise needs to be used effectively and **sparingly** as acknowledgement instead of **general statements** (e.g., “Good Job!”) (Hufton, Elliott & Illushin, 2003; Kelsey, 2010; Kohn, 2001).
- According to Kohn (2001, 1993) children seeking adult’s approval are less likely to perform difficult tasks, are deterred from forming own judgments regarding their accomplishments and tend to conform to the praise-giver’s wishes since “praise creates pressure to ‘keep up the good work’” (Kohn, 2001, p.3).
- Kohn (2001) recommends praising children by drawing their attention to the effect of their actions on other people (e.g., “Look how happy you’ve made _____ feel because you _____”), which also encourages the students to develop their perspective taking skills.
- To strengthen the child’s intrinsic motivation, positive reinforcement in the form of questioning the child, to determine their sense of own accomplishment, is also recommended (Kelsey, 2010; Kohn, 2001).

In the beginning

- Determine how much to work or practice you can do per day
 - Will you try to work on a skill incidentally (via play) or target it directly (structured teaching)?
 - You can try both!
- How much can the child handle?
 - 10 min, 15 min, 30 min?
 - Keep increasing the duration as long as it's not excessive
 - Some children can handle 60 minutes easily while others struggle with 15
 - Know your child and don't over do it!

Arrange the environment

- Set up a learning space in the home
 - Clear the area (de-clutter to reduce distractions)
 - Pick a corner of the room to set up ‘shop’
 - If the child is constantly running around very little learning may happen
- Get to their level
 - Sit on the carpet or
 - At the kid table on kid chairs vs. at the kitchen table
- Rotate toys to increase learnability and decrease predictability to some extent
- During play temporarily put desirable toys out of reach to increase communicative intent
- Clean up is a great routine to practice songs/vocabulary/sentences
 - Use it to your advantage to elicit language

Who is directing the show?

- Child centered vs. Parent led interactions
- How about using both to create a balance
 - Mix activities the child interested in (playhouse, toys) with activities you want the child to engage in (e.g., books)
- A Word on Toys
 - Provide a selection of several toys for the child to play with
 - DO NOT keep all the toys out in the open
 - Keep toys in a bucket, bin, or an organized closet
 - Ask the child to request and choose specific toys by communicating their wants/needs to you
 - “Open top, please”; “Take out train, please”, etc
 - After the child makes a selection, elicit language while they play with that toy for several minutes until the child loses interest
 - Then put it away and select another toy

Strategies for facilitating attention

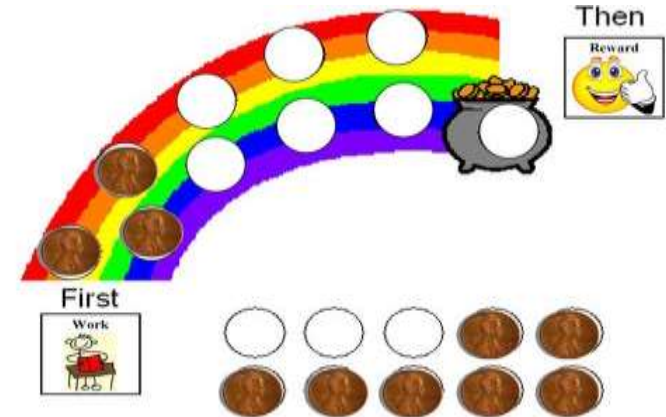
- Work in a quiet room and reduce distractions (e.g., clutter, noise) via
- One on one interaction (e.g., child sits on the carpet next to one parent)
- Start with familiar/favorite activities and toys of interest before branching out to new toys
- Offer favorite items as reinforcement to continue working
 - Foods /toys
- Offer choices of two toys, then remove one toy and focus interaction on one toy of interest
- Try to work with one toy at a time to increase understanding and interaction with that toy
- Try to prolong attention on toy/activity for more time (e.g., just 1 more minute) with each successive interaction

Strategies for facilitating attention (cont)

- Change activities frequently, HOWEVER, repeat same activities in cycles over and over again during session/home practice in order to solidify skills
- Label objects and actions in child's immediate environment
- Use brief but loud phrases (2-3 words not more) to gain attention and understanding with very language impaired children
- Frequently repeat words to ensure understanding of what is said/expected of child
 - Ask the child to repeat back what s/he should do
- Use combination of gestures, words and pictures to teach new concepts

Providing Reinforcement

- Praise
 - Praise specifically
 - Good job for _____
- Praise for positive behaviors
 - Focus
 - Attention
 - Activity Completion Despite Fatigue
- Cause/Effect Reward Sticker Charts
 - Get a sticker at the end of successful task completion
 - Get a prize after chart completion



First



Then



Core vocabulary for listening and expression

- Favorite and familiar toys and objects
- Names of people in the child's life as well as his own name
- Pets
- Favorite or familiar foods
- Clothing
- Body parts
- Names of daily activities and actions (go, fall, drink, eat, walk, wash, open)
- Recurrence (more)
- Names of places (bed, outside)
- Safety words (hot, no, stop, dangerous, hurt, don't touch, yuck, wait)
- Condition words (boo-boo, sick/hurt, mad, happy)
- Early pronouns (me, mine)
- Social words (hi, bye, please, sorry)
- Early concepts: in, off, on, out, big, hot, one, up, down, yucky, wet, all done)
- Yes/no

A word on teaching vocabulary order

- Family
- Foods (e.g., dairy, fruits, grains/breads, meat, vegetables)
- Toys
- Body parts
- Bath time and grooming
- Clothes
- Animals—farm animals, forest, jungle, pets, water, zoo, Insects/bugs
- Nursery rhymes (Basic concepts and vocabulary from board books)
- Basic Feelings (happy, mad, sad)

A word on teaching vocabulary order (cont)

- House -basic (e.g., rooms, household items, furniture, dishes and utensils, appliances—large and small, cleaning (supplies and activities, electronics: TV, camera, computer, phone)
- Transportation
- Musical instruments
- Playground/park
- Preschool words (numbers, shapes, colors, alphabet song)
- Outside (neighborhood, Places/Buildings, Community helpers, Garden, Nature, Ocean, Beach)

Teaching Basic Concepts

- Spatial concepts: in, on, off, out, up, down, under, over, on top, next to, front, back, inside, outside, high, low, between, first, last, above, below, top, bottom, near, far
- Descriptive concepts: hot, wet, dirty, yucky, pretty, loud, quiet, big, little, large, small, hard, soft, rough, smooth, same, different, heavy, light, empty, full, fast, slow, sticky, clean, old, new, large, small, tall, short, long, alike, sharp, dull, textures
- Quantity concepts: one, all, all gone, more, one more, another
- Time: night, day, now, later

Let's Sing and Dance

- Listening, singing and dancing along with simple children's songs develops comprehension of words through actions and expression of language through vocalizations.
- Emergent Communicators (first words stage)
 - Low demand on the child vs. directly imitating adults
 - Actions in conjunction with sounds can help initiate speech onset
 - Hands up and down
 - Jumping
- Proficient Communicators (phrases/sentences stage)
 - Great for teaching emergent reading abilities
 - Rhyming
 - Clapping out syllables

Popular toys for young language impaired preschoolers (3-4 years old)

- Language rich toys
- Bubbles
- Balls, cars and trucks, animals, dolls
- Pop-up and/or lift the flap picture books
- Cause and effect toys
 - Push a button
 - Move a lever
- Toys with a variety of textures
 - Soft toys, plastic toys, cardboard blocks, ridged balls
- Toys with special effects
 - Lights, Sounds, Movement
 - Push and go vehicles
- Building and linking toys with multiple parts

Popular toys for young language impaired preschoolers

- Wooden Peg Puzzles
 - Melissa and Doug
 - Great for teaching thematically based content words
 - From foods and animals to transportation and clothes
- “Create-A-Scene Magnetic Play Sets” (Smethport)
- Make endless combination of fun scenes and create a story
 - Magic: Fairy tales
 - Nursery rhymes
 - Water Related: Pirates/Beach
 - Animals: Pet Shop/Zoo
 - Boy friendly: Construction/Firemen
 - Locations: Town/School/House
- Facilitate language through child centered, commentary rich imaginative play
 - Child creates scenes and adult comments on them while setting up multiple opportunities for the child to imitate and respond



Play Sets

- Great tools for language development

- Doll houses
- Car garages
- Toy castles
- Ferris Wheels
- Kitchen sets



- Use for teaching and eliciting new language forms through

- Repetition
- Following multistep directions
 - “Put daddy in the kitchen, mommy on the porch, and the baby in the bathtub”
- Developing child’s imagination and cognitive skills through play
- Learning functional vocabulary and developing self-help skills

The Versatility of Bingo (older preschoolers)

- Make your own for free
 - <http://bogglesworldesl.com/bingocards.htm>
 - www.makingfriends.com
 - www.dltk-kids.com
 - Search - bingo
- Good for developing basic skills (theme based)
 - Knowledge about body parts
 - Recognizing everyday sounds
 - Learning rhyming words
 - Learning sight words
 - Learning Holidays
 - Learning Seasons

Books, Books, Books

- Board books
 - Young toddlers
- Preschoolers can handle paper pages
- ‘Lift the flap’
- ‘Pop up’ books
- Reading with your child
 - Don’t just ask to label pictures
 - Ask concrete “wh” questions
 - What, where, when
 - Ask abstract questions
 - Why, how



Book reading can be an art form

- Shirley Brice Heath “What no bed time story means”
 - Explored patterns of book reading to preschoolers
- Bedtime stories are a crucial part of a child’s early education and the way they are read to children can determine their success in school
- During book selection take into consideration
 - Clear engaging illustrations
 - Amount of words per page
- Books for preschoolers must contain “learnability”
- Repetition
- Rich in Vocabulary
- Teach basic concepts (e.g. up/down, big/small, good/bad etc)
- Contain rhyming
- To develop the child’s comprehension and vocabulary as well as to prepare them for independent book reading in the future



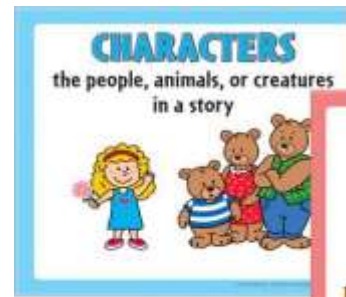
Using Specific Story Prompts

- What is happening in this picture?
 - Why do you think?
- What are the characters doing?
- Who / what else do you see?
- Does it look like anything is missing from this picture?
- Let's make up a sentence with _____ (this word)
- Let's tell the story. You start:
 - Once upon a time
- You can say _____ or you can say _____ (teaching synonyms)
- What would be the opposite of _____? (teaching antonyms)
- Do you know that _____ (this word) has 2 meanings
 - 1st meaning
 - 2nd meaning



Focus on Story Characters and Setting

- Who is in this story?
- What do they do?
- How do they go together?
- How do you think s/he feels?
 - Why?
 - How do you know?
- What do you think s/he thinking?
 - Why?
- If it's a wordless picture book
 - What do you think s/he saying?
- Where is the story happening?
 - Is this inside or outside?
 - How do you know?
- Did the characters visit different places in the story?
 - Which ones?
 - How many?



Story Sequencing

- What happens at the beginning of the story?
 - How do we start a story?
- What happened second?
- What happened next?
- What happened after that?
- What happened last?
- What do we say at the end of a story?
- Was there trouble/problem in the story?
 - What happened?
 - Who fixed it?
 - How did s/he fix it?
- Was there adventure in the story?
 - If yes how did it start and end?

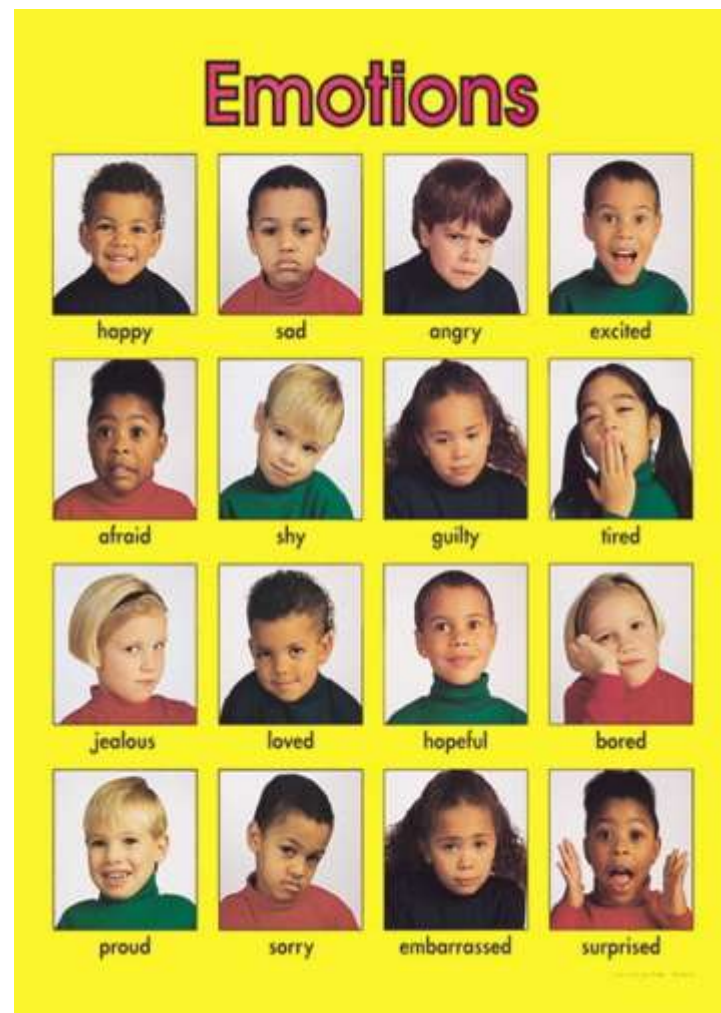


More Complex Book Interactions

- Compare and contrast story characters/items
 - (e.g. objects/people/animals)
- Make predictions and inferences about what going to happen in the story
- Ask the child to problem solve the situation for the character
 - What do you think he must do to...?
- Ask the child to state his/her likes and dislikes about the story or its characters
- Ask the child to tell the story back after reading it
 - With Pictures
 - Without Pictures

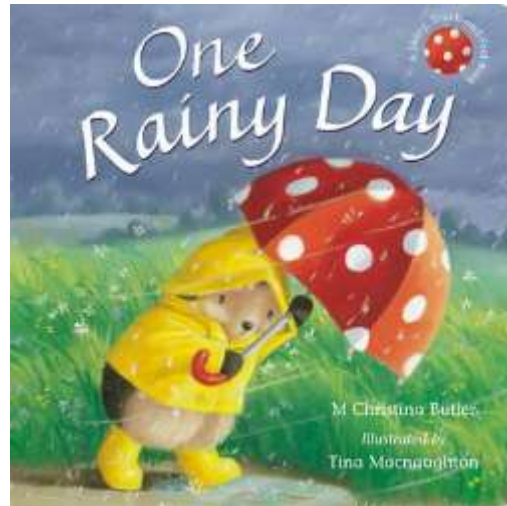
Teaching vocabulary of feelings and emotions

- Words related to thinking
 - Know, think, remember, guess
- Words related to senses
 - See, Hear, Watch, Feel
- Words related to personal wants
 - Want, Need, Wish
- Words related to emotions and feelings
 - Happy, Mad, Sad
- Words related to emotional behaviors
 - Crying, Laughing, Frowning



Select favorite authors perfect for Pre-K

- Alyssa Capucilli
 - Biscuit series
- Karma Wilson
 - The Bear Series
- M. Christina Butler
 - The Hedgehog Series
- Lucille Colandro
 - There was an old lady who...series
- Jez Alborough (all books but particularly)
 - Bear Series, Duck Series, Cuddly Dudley
- Keiko Kasza (ALL Books!)
- Jan Brett (Most Books)
- Audrey Wood (all books but particularly)
 - Napping House, Quick as a Cricket, The Big Hungry Bear



Finding Intervention Materials Online The Easy Way

- Teachers Pay Teachers
 - <http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/>
- Teacher's Notebook
 - <http://www.teachersnotebook.com/>
- Create free account
- Find Ready Made Free/Paid Materials
 - Book Companions
 - Basic Concepts
 - Seasonal Packets
 - Picture cards
 - Word walls
- Sort by subject (do you want speech therapy specific or general?)
- Type in words in search window
 - Summer
 - Opposites
 - There was an old lady...
- Sort results by price

Free Arts and Crafts Activities Anyone?

- **Dltk-Kids**
 - <http://www.dltk-kids.com/>
- **Making Friends**
 - <http://www.makingfriends.com/concraft.htm>
- **Enchanted Learning (Edible Crafts)**
 - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/edible/>

Helpful Resource Bundles

- [The Checklists Bundle](#)
- [General Assessment and Treatment Start Up Bundle](#)
- [Multicultural Assessment Bundle](#)
- [Narrative Assessment and Treatment Bundle](#)
- [Introduction to Prevalent Disorders Bundle](#)
- [Social Pragmatic Assessment and Treatment Bundle](#)
- [Psychiatric Disorders Bundle](#)
- [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Assessment and Treatment Bundle](#)

Helpful Resources

- [Assessment Checklist for Preschool Aged Children](#)
- [Assessment Checklist for School Aged Children](#)
- [Speech Language Assessment Checklist for Adolescents](#)
- [Differential Diagnosis of ADHD in Speech Language Pathology](#)
- [Creating Functional Therapy Plan](#)
- [Selecting Clinical Materials for Pediatric Therapy](#)
- [Social Pragmatic Deficits Checklist for Preschool Children](#)
- [Social Pragmatic Deficits Checklist for School Aged Children](#)
- [Auditory Processing Deficits Checklist for School Aged Children](#)

More Helpful Resources

- [The Role of Frontal Lobe in Speech and Language Functions](#)
- [Executive Function Impairments and At Risk Pediatric Populations](#)
- [Behavior Management Strategies for Speech Language Pathologists](#)
- [Narrative Assessment of Preschool and School Aged Children](#)
- [Treatment of Social Pragmatic Deficits in School Aged Children](#)
- [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder An Overview of Deficits](#)
- [Speech Language Assessment and Treatment of Children with Alcohol Related Disorders](#)

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