

# Introduction

The first edition of the *Language Activity Resource Kit* (LARK) was introduced in 1986 and was designed to provide the speech–language pathologist with a portable collection of materials to use for language stimulation activities with the adult language-disordered patient. Rather than taking a “cookbook” approach to language therapy, the kit was intended to allow the clinician to draw on various methods, approaches, and techniques to help the patient regain the ability to communicate effectively. The first edition of the LARK manual provided suggestions for using the materials and reviewed general treatment methods for different acquired language disorders. The second edition of the LARK manual emphasizes the use of LARK objects to achieve functional communication by teaching compensatory strategies to the patient.

The second edition of the *Language Activity Resource Kit* represents an updated collection of objects, photographs, illustrations, and print material for use in language therapy with adults who have moderate to severe language disorders. The materials can also be used in therapy for right hemisphere dysfunction and for speech production tasks to improve intelligibility. As in the first edition, the objects represent items that can be associated with a specific action and are not gender specific. The print materials have been expanded to include cards with sentence closure phrases that use the LARK vocabulary and question cards that require a response using the LARK vocabulary.

Differences between the two editions include a reduction in the number of objects from 30 to 25, an additional 75 printed cards (action photos, phrase closure cards, and question cards), and the inclusion of the LARK Workbook. The workbook can be used to provide the patient with materials to be completed as an extension of face-to-face therapy. Objects eliminated from the kit include the smoking-related items (pipe, lighter, ashtray), those not provided with the first edition kit (candle, dollar, razor, eyeglasses), and other items (cup, measuring cup, paper clip). The replacement objects include things that represent daily living activities (sock, plate, envelope), as well as things that are easier to include with the kit (penny, ruler).

The second edition of the LARK manual provides clinicians with general information about the revisions to the kit and some guidelines for incorporating the materials in their adult speech and language therapy. The therapy guidelines do not subscribe to any single approach or program; rather, the emphasis is on using the materials to help the patient achieve a functional level of communication. The term *functional* has been used to describe activities that pertain to daily living routines, like being able to comprehend simple questions, express basic needs, write shopping lists, and read restaurant menus (Elman & Bernstein-Ellis, 1995; Holland, 1998). These activities represent a small number of the communicative behaviors that allow language-impaired patients to achieve independence. A language impairment may limit patients’ ability to communicate effectively in their environment. As

defined by the World Health Organization (2001), an impairment refers to any temporary or permanent loss or abnormality in body structure or physiological function, and functioning denotes the positive aspects of the interaction between an individual and his or her environmental and personal factors.

The first edition LARK manual provided information about therapeutic approaches using the classifications of global aphasia, Wernicke's aphasia, and Broca's aphasia. In contrast, the second edition manual offers suggestions for using the LARK materials to enhance comprehension and expression in general, and to help the language-impaired patient with functional communication. The therapy suggestions emphasize the use of strategies to compensate for the handicapping condition. The materials in the second edition were selected for their functionality and their use with all levels of severity.

The kit includes a Manual and Workbook, as well as two each of 25 objects:

ball	penny
can opener	pill bottle
dice	plate
envelope	ruler
flashlight	salt shaker
glass	scissors
hairbrush	screwdriver
hammer	sock
key	spoon
knife	toothbrush
mirror	washcloth
paintbrush	whistle
pen	

The kit also includes 200 cards:

- 25 color photos of each object
- 25 color photos of action associated with each object
- 25 black and white drawings of each object
- 25 black and white drawings of actions associated with each object
- 25 object name cards
- 25 printed phrase description cards
- 25 printed phrase closure cards
- 25 printed question cards