

Step 1: Getting Ready

Goal: The student will be prepared for the therapeutic process.

During this step, the student will decide whether to make a commitment to learning to use easy speech. Before a decision is made, educate the student about the process of developing easy speech by defining terms, identifying goals and target behaviors, and having the student experience easy speech. Let the student know that the goal of developing easy speech doesn't involve achieving perfect fluency — no one has perfect fluency. Instead, while some speech will be fluent, easy disfluencies will also be present.

Often, this step is completed at the end of the evaluation or in the conference following the evaluation. This could also be done in conjunction with a parent conference. We have found, however, that it is wise to speak to the student and parent(s) separately and then talk with them jointly.

Suggestions for Support Providers

Send Home Letter 1 and School Letter 1, pages 148 - 149. These letters describe the therapy program. They also suggest that a family member and/or student's teacher(s) join the session to observe the use of easy speech in unison responses. If an observation isn't possible, meet in a convenient location to explain and model the use of easy speech.

Consider involving family members/significant others in family support and/or family counseling programs you have developed. Also, consider programs to inform school personnel about the identification and management of stuttering and possible collaboration activities. You might also develop a program to inform students about communication difference¹.

In addition, consider developing a questionnaire which could be sent to the family and/or school personnel. It asks them to list people with whom the student has contact, places the student is likely to frequent, and situations in which the student speaks or is expected to speak¹. Suggest to the student's teacher(s) that unison or choral responses be used in the class whenever possible. Be sure that the teacher maintains confidentiality about why this is being done.

Objective 1: The student will demonstrate understanding of the terminology associated with the therapy process.

Procedure

The student will learn the terminology associated with the therapy process. Give the student definitions for *fluency* and *disfluency*. Explain to him how to differentiate types of disfluency using definitions for easy disfluencies and stuttering disfluencies. Also, explain that the use of easy speech will be the goal of therapy should he decide to make a commitment. Finally, have the student demonstrate an understanding of the terms by matching definitions.

¹These types of programs and a questionnaire found in *The Fluency Companion*, LinguiSystems 1994, may be used or you can develop your own.

Say, “Today we’re going to solve some problems. First, we’ll read the problem on the top of this page. Before we start, though, let’s look at the words on the page and pick ones for practicing our bouncing, sliding, light contacts, and easy onsets.”

Have the student help select the words and underline them. Place letters over the words so you’ll know which technique to use. “Let’s read the problem together.” Read in unison including the word-initiation techniques. “Now, let’s take turns reading the clues and then telling what to do. I’ll show you. ‘The first clue says, “Tyrannosaurus Rex is in the middle.” I’ll write Tyrannosaurus Rex on the middle line. Your turn.’ Read the clue and then tell me what you’ll do. Remember to use bouncing, sliding, light contacts, and easy onsets in your reading and talking.”

Activity 10

Materials: any Thinking Problems, Materials Book, pages 116 - 117

Homework: any Thinking Problems, Materials Book, pages 116 - 117

Directions: First, cut apart the pictures. Next, take turns reading the problem printed on each picture using word-initiation techniques. Then, mix up the problems and place them in a pile. Tell the student that you’ll take turns asking each other how to solve the problem. Say, “This is how we’ll practice bouncing, sliding, light contacts, and easy onsets today. Pick a picture and read me the problem. Then, ask me, ‘What can I do?’ I’ll say, ‘I can climb on a chair.’ Then, I’ll say, ‘Your turn.’ Be sure to use bouncing, sliding, light contacts, and easy onsets when you ask about and solve my problem just like I do on my turn.”

Remember to reinforce the student for using the target behaviors by saying, “I liked the way you used (bouncing, sliding, a light contact, or an easy onset) on that turn.”

Activity 11

Materials: any “What’s Wrong?”, Materials Book, pages 132 - 135

Homework: any “What’s Wrong?”, Materials Book, pages 132 - 135

Directions: Using word-initiation techniques, tell the student, “Today, we’re going to practice bouncing, sliding, light contacts, and easy onsets while we tell each other what’s wrong with this picture. Here’s how we’ll do it. We’ll each look for something that is wrong. We’ll take turns telling each other what’s wrong. I’ll start. ‘I found something that is wrong.’ You ask me, ‘What did you find?’ I’ll answer, ‘I found a horse with no tail. Your turn.’”

Periodically, ask the student to tell you why you’re doing this activity and what the target behaviors are. Also, have the student self-evaluate by asking, “Did you remember to use (bouncing, sliding, light contacts, easy onsets)?”

Objective 6: The student will produce easy speech by using word-initiation techniques as cancellations, pull-outs, and preparatory sets in structured activities.

Activity 23

Materials: paper, a pencil, and poster board (optional)

Homework: none

Directions: Tell the student, “Sometimes we want to gather information from a lot of people. Then, we take a poll. After we get the information, we can summarize it. We can practice easy speech as we gather the information and again as we summarize the findings. Let’s pretend we want to take a poll of the people in our building. Let’s see which team they think will (win the Super Bowl). First, you’ll introduce yourself and then you’ll explain what we’re doing. Be sure to thank the person when you’re done. Pretend I’m the principal. Ask me for my opinion. Be sure to use easy speech.”

Pretend to be other people in the building and have the student continue the poll. Tell the student that you might ask some unexpected questions. Remind the student to keep using easy speech.

After the student is successful, go around the building and take a real poll. Choose a topic from the list below. Tell the student you’ll be close by, but he’ll do all the talking. As you walk around, model easy speech for the student in your conversation. Talk to the student’s teacher about letting the student take a poll in his classroom.

When you’re finished, return to your room. Tell the student, “Now, let’s keep practicing easy speech while we talk about the results.” After you tally the results, ask the student to pretend to give a summary report to his class. You could even make a chart to use while giving the summary report. If possible, the student could give an actual summary report to his class.

Topics

winner of an election	best movie
best magazine	best sport
best holiday	best instrument
best vacation	best car
best TV show/channel	winner of a contest

Activity 24

Materials: Interview Questions, Materials Book, page 205

Homework: Interview Questions, Materials Book, page 205

Directions: Tell the student, “Sometimes we’re asked to interview people. This is a good time to practice our target behaviors. Let’s pretend by using this interview sheet. I’ll interview you first and then you can interview me. Remember to use your target behaviors.”

After the student has achieved success, arrange for the student to interview other people at home and at school. Role-play the interviews first.

Home Letter 6

Dear Family,

Your child has made excellent progress and it's now time to begin to reduce direct therapy contacts. If your child continues to be fluent, the time between direct contacts will be gradually increased. At first, continue to use easy speech at home and continue to complete the home activities routinely. Then, if your child maintains fluency, home activities can be gradually reduced. I'll be providing you with a schedule on how we'll accomplish this step.

Even though direct contact will be reduced, it's important to stay in touch. I'll ask you to call or drop me a note from time to time so I'll know how things are going at home. While I don't expect regression to occur, please call me if you have concerns. There are a number of things to do, but it's important to begin them right away. Meanwhile, remember to use easy speech — your continued model is important.

I've enjoyed working with you and your child. Your assistance has been much appreciated!

Sincerely,

Speech-Language Pathologist