

Lewis-Palmer School District #38
Speech/Language Strategy Sheets for Fluency
Strategies for Fluency For Parents & Teachers

Communicative Atmosphere

Delayed Response -Used to create a less 'rushed' communication style, allowing students to feel they can take the time for talking. Allow silence to happen among communication partners. For example, when you are asked a question, wait 2 seconds before responding even if you know the answer right away.

Model Thinking Time – Similar to Delayed Response but adds the benefit of providing 'permission' to take 'thinking time' before a response. To model this strategy, occasionally begin your response by saying, "Hmmm, let me think..." Allow no interruptions during thinking time.

Rephrasing – When you don't understand messages from the student, instead of responding, "I'm sorry, what did you say?", rephrase what you did understand and request further information. This is especially important for the student who stutters because requesting a full repetition may be counterproductive. Rephrasing goes a long way to create a calmer communicative atmosphere by focusing on the message rather than the delivery.

Classroom Atmosphere

Random Calling – When calling on students, choose randomly rather than in a pattern such as "going down the row". This decreases the tension created when a student who stutters waits for their turn to talk, answer, or read.

Tag-Team Discussions – Have more than one student share the weight of a discussion. Assign a few students to each be responsible for one part of a read-aloud selection, or one part of an answer to a question. It may help ease the anxiety of a student who stutters to know that they will not be responsible for an entire communication.

Oral Presentations

Make A Plan- This helps ease the anxiety of all those who need to present information to a group.

If a speech therapist is involved, notify them as far in advance as possible so the child can discuss and practice the presentation in the therapy setting.

Let the student who stutters know that you are open to his needs. Discuss the order in which the student will present. Discuss any time limits. Let the student know if you will be grading on "presentation" or on content. Be flexible in your requirements.

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As teachers and parents, we can learn new ways to relate to children. The new interactions can serve many purposes, but most of all, these new ideas are ways in which we can become a vehicle for free expression of ALL feelings. We can become the safe place that allows all types of feelings and beliefs to be discussed and validated.

Five Steps in Helping Children Feel Heard (Validating Children's Feelings):

Example A: These do not have to be in sequential order.

Step 1: Actively listen by acknowledging with a word.

Child: "I don't like playing with Eric. He always wants to win."

Adult: "Hmmm." "Oh?" "I see." "Really?" Wait for the child to continue talking.

Step 2: Periodically restate the child's message.

Adult: So you are telling me you don't like that Eric always wants to win?"

Step 3: Probe for more information.

Adult: So you don't like to play with Eric when he wants to win because..."

Step 4: Label the feeling.

Adult: "That makes you mad, huh?" (Children will tell you if the feeling word you choose is not correct.)

Step 5: Validate the emotion.

Adult: "It's OK to feel mad about that."

Using Encouraging Praise to Build Self-Esteem

Mazlish and Faber discuss the difference between "evaluative" praise and "encouraging" praise. Encouraging praise is a more effective way to build a child's self-esteem.

Three Steps in Encouraging Praise:

1. Make an observation
2. Sharing your feelings
3. Sum it up with a word

Example A: (not about talking)

Step 1: **Make an observation**

"I see that you..." "I was noticing that..." "You were telling me that..."

Therapist or parent says, "I see that your picture has a bright, yellow sun."

Step 2: **Share how it makes you feel**

Therapist or parent says, "When I look at this, it makes me feel happy."

Step 3: **Sum it up with a word**

Therapist or parent says, "You are a very good artist."

Example B: (about talking)

Step 1: **Make an observation**

Therapist or parent says, "You let me finish without interrupting me."

Step 2: **Share how it makes you feel**

Therapist or parent says, "It makes me feel excited when you take turns talking."

Step 3: **Sum it up with a word**

Therapist or parent says, "You are a great turn-taker."

Faber, A., & Mazlish, E. (1980). How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk. New York: Avon Books