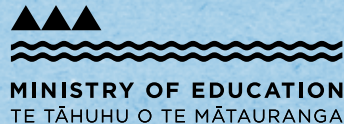


Speech, language and communication needs

A resource for educators

Ngā pūkenga reo ā-waha, whakawhitiwhiti kōrero hoki
He rauemi mā te kaiwhakaako



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Introduction

This booklet examines how speech, language and communication needs can influence learning and provides strategies teachers can use in the classroom.

It examines key areas where students with how speech, language and communication needs may require support and features some whole class strategies that may benefit all students, particularly those with how speech, language and communication needs.

It focuses on supporting you where specialist assistance may not be available, but you are searching for ways to adapt your classroom programme to meet the diverse needs of your students.

The strategies outlined in this booklet will be most effective when used in the context of good planning, knowing your students and what makes each of them unique, setting goals, and regular inquiry into what works and what doesn't.

If you need more intensive, specialist support, look into a referral to a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) or to your local Ministry of Education district office.

Helpful link

Visit the Inclusive Education Online Knowledge Centre where you will find a more indepth guide on how speech, language and communication needs, as well as videos and links to student and teacher experiences.

<http://inclusive.tki.org.nz>

Speech, language and communication needs – what are they?

Speech, language and communication needs are difficulties using intelligible speech; understanding and using language; talking fluently; and using a clear voice.

“Oral language is much more than speaking and listening. We think and learn through language – oral language is the basis for all thought and communication. Our oral language practices shape us as people and affect every aspect of our lives.”
Learning Through Talk, pg 11

How speech, language and communication needs can influence learning

Every situation and every student is different. Students may need significant help with all day-to-day tasks or they may work independently.

Their experience will vary, depending on the nature of their disability. It will also vary depending on a student's family setting and circumstances, and individual factors such as age and personality.

Students with speech, language and communication needs may find it challenging to:

- ▶ produce individual speech sounds or sequences of sounds in words when talking
- ▶ understand complex or lengthy verbal instructions
- ▶ find the right words or structure sentences used in everyday contexts and in social situations
- ▶ stay on topic, ask and answer questions or follow the rules of conversation
- ▶ regulate the volume, pitch, resonance, intonation and overall quality of their voice
- ▶ speak fluently.

How can I prepare for a student with speech, language and communication needs?

Start by talking with the student, their families, whānau, specialist teachers and other members of your student's team to understand your student and his or her learning potential.

You will find a student's family, whānau and specialists know the student best and will be a key source of information. Talk to them (and your student) to build a good understanding of a student's practical, emotional and learning needs.

Share with parents, family and whānau the knowledge you gain about teaching their child. Encourage them to support learning at home. Share their child's success with them. Involve them – and your student – in key decisions. Connect families and students with other people in your school community.

You may also like to consider using the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process to help you prepare and plan. The IEP process can be a good way to bring people together and plan collaboratively and doesn't always need to result in a formal IEP plan.

The most important thing is prepare and plan well and to regularly review what you do and what's happening.

For more information on the IEP process, refer to the Ministry's IEP guidelines, *Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans*, available in print and online at **www.seonline.tki.org.nz/IEP/IEP-Guidelines**

Starting out – ideas to think about

There's no one-size-fits-all

All of your students bring a huge variety of skills, needs and interests to their learning. These differences are as unique as their fingerprints. Students want access to learning in the way that works best for them.

Know your student

Talk with the student, family, whānau, specialist teachers and other members of your student's team to come to understand your student and their learning potential. Find out about the student's interests, likes and the things that motivate the student.

Ako

Be a learner as well as a teacher. Reflect on the impact of your practice and actions.

- ▶ What is important (and, therefore, worth spending time on, given where my students are at)?
- ▶ What strategies (evidence-based) are most likely to help my students learn this?
- ▶ What has happened as a result of my teaching and what will I need to do next?

You don't need a separate curriculum

Take a flexible, inclusive approach to teaching and you will find very little, if any, adaptation to the curriculum is required. Be flexible in the goals you set, as well as the teaching methods, materials and assessments you use.

Plan and prepare

Talk with and involve your student, their parents, family, whānau and other specialists.

- ▶ Build a team around your student.
- ▶ Develop a good learner profile.
- ▶ Set clear goals and check in often.

It matters how you 'see' disability

Be a champion for students with speech, language and communication needs in your school to assist others to understand their perspectives. Some adults and teachers may have difficulty understanding the impact of these needs on a student's participation in daily activities, learning and wellbeing. Design your classroom programme to model ways of supporting students with speech, language and communication needs.

Teaching students who have speech, language and communication needs – a framework

There is extensive well-documented evidence about the teaching approaches that consistently have a positive impact on learning.

The evidence says all students need teachers who:

- ▶ create supportive learning environments
- ▶ encourage reflective thought and action
- ▶ enhance the relevance of new learning
- ▶ facilitate shared learning
- ▶ make connections to prior learning and experience
- ▶ provide sufficient opportunities to learn
- ▶ inquire into the teaching-learning relationship.

See *The New Zealand Curriculum*, pg 34.

Creating an accessible and supportive learning environment

Accessible and supportive classrooms can be a rich teaching resource for helping students learn about diversity and positively relate to one another.

They can foster student collaboration, problem solving and learning and give all students a sense they belong at school and can participate.

There are many ways you can create a more accessible and supportive school and classroom environment.

Here are some key questions to think about and discuss with your students and their families and whānau.

School environment

- ▶ Is the school environment socially safe for all students?

Nick, 12, is a quiet, compliant student who sometimes seems like he's switched off and not absorbing what is going on around him. In the classroom Nick has trouble tuning in and understanding and remembering what is said to him. Nick also finds it tough to contribute to a small or whole class discussion and often has difficulty expressing his ideas. However, Nick loves drama and finds it easier to use his oral language skills during skits and role plays.

Classroom environment

- ▶ Have you talked to your students to find out how to arrange classroom seating to make sure they can see and hear you and their peers?
- ▶ Have all distractions in the classroom or outdoor environment been reduced, for example, noise levels to help your students see, hear and concentrate on what you are saying?
- ▶ Are there any students who need additional assistive technology (such as writing tools or technology such as a lightweight keyboard)?
- ▶ Are there lots of opportunities in the classroom to extend language skills, for example, for younger students, are there imaginative play materials, dress ups, book sharing and other small group activities regularly available?
- ▶ What are some of the different ways you can make your classroom an optimum environment for classroom discussion and language use and reflection, for example, for older students, you may want to create a specific space where students get to practice agreeing, disagreeing, adding on to an idea and clarifying meaning.

Using the key competencies to guide teaching

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies the key competencies all students need to live, learn, work and contribute as active members of their communities.

These key competencies are relevant to all students and all learning areas.

They include:

- ▶ thinking
- ▶ using language symbols and texts
- ▶ managing self
- ▶ relating to others
- ▶ participating and contributing.

Three of these key competencies are explored in more detail on the following pages to show how they might relate to students with speech, language and communication needs.

The New Zealand Curriculum key competencies

Using language, symbols, and texts

Teaching support

All students need the opportunity to express their knowledge through a variety of language, symbols and texts. Language and symbols represent and communicate information, experiences and ideas. Through language and symbols, people produce texts of all kinds, for example, oral, written, visual.

Students with speech, language and communication needs, like all students, need to listen and be engaged in activities involving speech and language to develop in their skills in these areas. Provide students with opportunities to learn a wide variety of new vocabulary in a range of contexts. Build on this by providing students with opportunities to develop skills in expressing their ideas with confidence using sufficient and relevant information.

Give students with speech, language and communication needs frequent opportunities to learn the skills they need to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas to others. Use different strategies to build their confidence in their ability to communicate, relate to others and be valued members of a group.

The New Zealand Curriculum key competencies

Using language, symbols, and texts (continued)

Teaching support

Students may benefit from having more visual cues in the classroom. Improving the classroom acoustics may also support students. You might also like to help your students communicate and understand what is going on around them by introducing small group exercises where they can practice their skills and discuss what they are learning with their peers.

Students with speech, language or communication needs may also require complex, sequential tasks broken down into smaller steps.

They might benefit from opportunities to present verbal information in different ways. They may also benefit from having different ways to express their knowledge, for example, through pictures, signing and gestures and by using computers to demonstrate what they know. Expose students to as many different genres and types of texts, for example, narrative texts, explanatory texts and reports.

The New Zealand Curriculum key competencies

Teaching support

Relating to others

Relating to others is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. This involves listening actively, recognising different points of view, negotiating, and sharing ideas. It also relies on students having a positive sense of self and understanding the subtleties of interacting with a variety of conversational partners.

You will find most students with speech, language and communication needs will benefit from support in these areas.

For example, you may need to give students additional opportunities in class to learn about recognising the listener's perspective, expressing their ideas (using sufficient and relevant information) and accepting differences of opinion.

“Research tells us most of the talk in classrooms is teacher talk. Research into new entrant classrooms found that teachers' talk made up 76 percent of classroom talk in whole class or group interactions.”

– Doell, 2005

The New Zealand Curriculum key competencies

Participating and contributing

Teaching support

All students need the opportunity to be actively involved in the life of their school, the activities of their classroom and in the wider community.

Participating and enjoying all the social world has to offer relies on having good speech, language and communication skills.

Many students with speech, language and communication needs will face barriers in the school and classroom related to participating and contributing. As a result they may also feel out of place at times and find it a challenge to build friendships.

You can help by giving your students extra support to learn the range of skills needed to communicate in different contexts and the opportunity to practice these skills to gain confidence. You might also create more opportunities for students to practice taking part in group activities.

Using the learning areas to guide teaching

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies eight learning areas that are important for a broad general education, including English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social sciences and technology.

There are five general strategies that are useful to keep in mind all the time and a range of specific strategies to consider alongside questions you may ask yourself as part of the teacher inquiry process.

All learning areas: Five general strategies

1

Present curriculum content in different ways to help students learn new information, build up their understanding, focus and enjoy what they are learning – give students information verbally and visually and break down complex ideas and concepts into smaller chunks.

2

Provide a range of options for students to express what they know – give students the opportunity to choose how they want to communicate about a topic.

3

Stimulate interest and motivation for learning – adapt your lessons and introduce alternative options for students to demonstrate what they know and can do. You may need to slow down the rate of your speech and pause to give students time to respond to you.

Provide students with lots of positive reinforcement. Feed forward or provide instructions to students about how to make the next step in their learning.

4

Establish a class culture and environment to support learning – you could do this by removing barriers to active listening and deliberately using instructional strategies. Develop a climate of respect and collaboration where learning is valued and adapt the classroom environment to support student participation.

5

Use technology – give students access to technology such as laptops, desktop computers or iPads to develop their ideas and present their work.

Questions and strategies for all learning areas

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I make sure my teaching practice supports all my **students to learn about and value diversity?**

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Reflect the cultural and language background of your students in learning tasks – for example, use some words and phrases from other cultures, include Māori concepts, for example, ako (reciprocal teaching and learning) and valuing the role of each person in a learning experience.
- ▶ Talk about diversity in society, at school and in the classroom. Discuss it with the whole class. Carry out a survey of students within the school – how do individuals compare when it comes to their families, gender, food preferences?
- ▶ Think about ways to make your classroom a good environment for learning social language and social engagement – you may want to set aside time and space for eating together and hosting people from within the community.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

What are some of the different ways I can encourage students with speech, language and communication needs to **participate and contribute** in the classroom?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Give students the opportunity to choose how they want to communicate about a topic.
 - ▶ For example, give students who stutter or whose speech is difficult to understand the option of presenting information visually or reading a speech from cue cards.
 - ▶ Give students who struggle with memory and recall the option of using additional reference and organisational tools when presenting information.
- ▶ Involve everyone in your class in group discussions that lead to group collaboration and problem solving.
- ▶ Provide a range of options for students to express what they know.
 - ▶ For example, students who find it hard to get their ideas across in words may prefer to use digital tools and visual aids such as a photoboard, digital presentation, visual schedules or a poster to communicate their thoughts and understanding.
- ▶ Use prompting to encourage students to use what they already know and can do by saying 'And then?' 'Why is that?'
- ▶ Extend the wait time between question and response (mentally count to three or four) to give students time to develop their ideas.
- ▶ Use questioning effectively to help students extend their thinking, reflect critically and ask questions of themselves.
- ▶ Encourage students to listen actively to each other, share ideas and recognise different points of view.
- ▶ Discuss the conventions of conversation, for example, maintaining personal space between people, using eye contact and facial expressions, opening and closing conversations and taking turns. Talk about how these vary across cultures and contexts.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I support my students to develop their **listening and communication skills**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Model good listening behaviours.
 - ▶ Take time to listen.
 - ▶ Stop what you are doing and give your full attention as you listen to your students.
 - ▶ Set aside specific times for sharing conversation and interacting with individual students.
- ▶ Make your classroom an optimum environment for independent listening, speaking and discussion skills by setting aside space dedicated to fun, small group activities such as recalling the main points of a topic just covered, a story just told or a sports game just played.
- ▶ Use repetition of familiar stories, songs, rhymes and formulaic phrases to give students frequent opportunities to deepen their understanding and become familiar with language patterns and features. This is especially useful for students with speech, language and communication difficulties to develop their self-confidence.
- ▶ Get different students to lead the discussions, tune into one another and extend one another's ideas where appropriate.
- ▶ Model ways to acknowledge and value attempts at communication by all students in your class.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

What are some of the ways I can develop my students' **language skills and vocabulary knowledge**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Identify the oral language requirements of tasks and match the students' language capabilities to these requirements. Teach new vocabulary, grammar and ways of listening and speaking, using visual, audio and written resources – and incorporate vocabulary learning into all classroom activities.
- ▶ Do the same to teach language conventions such as initiating and contributing to a conversation, asking for clarification, making connections between ideas and so on.
- ▶ Revisit new words, new language structures and new concepts at frequent intervals throughout the day.
- ▶ Use mindmaps to develop conceptual information around new vocabulary.
- ▶ Provide new words to students as handouts they can take home, share and discuss. Compare and contrast new words with more familiar vocabulary, for example, 'buy' in contrast to 'purchase'.
- ▶ To improve speech intelligibility, teach syllables by having students clap or count the syllables in familiar words such as their names, family members' names, school vocabulary and topic words.
- ▶ Teach awareness of phonemes (the basic unit of distinctive sounds in a language), using letter-sound correspondence, rhyme recognition and creation, as well as the blending and segmenting of phonemes.
- ▶ Consider using visual and non-verbal prompts to teach and clarify the language used in the classroom (for example, when it is appropriate for students to talk, appropriate ways to gain attention, the vocabulary and grammar of school talk etc).
- ▶ Provide constructive feedback by recasting a student's words in a more grammatically correct form or to clarify or model correct pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure.

- ▶ Encourage students to learn new words using these steps.
 - ▶ Define the word (what is it? what does it do? what is the dictionary definition?)
 - ▶ Contextualise it (can you show me the word? where have we seen it before? what does it look like?)
 - ▶ Extend the meaning of the word (where do we use it? why do we use it? how do we use it?)
 - ▶ Explore the sound pattern (what sound does it start with? how do we say it? what other words do we know that are similar to this one?).
- ▶ Encourage students to define words by exploring the look, feel, touch and sound (even the smell and taste) of the word.
- ▶ Use familiar stories that help explore or describe the topic you are teaching and repeat them often. Supplement your stories with visual resources such as pictures and symbols – encourage your students to do the same.
- ▶ Suggest students use mindmaps or a story board to help them sequence their ideas or retell a story.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I use **small group work** to build up students' **speech, language and communication skills**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Use small group projects or problem solving tasks as natural opportunities to develop students' speech and language skills through sharing ideas, negotiating and collaborating.
- ▶ Set up small group activities for specific speech and language purposes throughout the day.
 - ▶ For example, you may want to assign roles, for example, speaker, listener, note taker. Monitor the discussions to ensure that students understand the task, have opportunities to participate.
- ▶ Set up a small group activity on speaking and conversational skills. Ask students to rehearse ways to start and close a conversation, to keep the conversation flowing, ask and answer questions or practise how they plan to tell a story, using a beginning, middle and end.

- ▶ Give your students an opportunity to reflect on and discuss classroom activities such as the one described above.
 - ▶ Suggest they discuss the feelings, facial expressions and voice differences that arose and gave clues about the communication.
 - ▶ Talk about how you use different sorts of language when you are talking to your friends, your teacher, your grandparents.
 - ▶ Discuss different genres/text types, for example, narrative, explanation, report.
- ▶ Draw attention to opportunities for students to transfer oral language strategies to new learning contexts.
- ▶ Provide students with a range of opportunities to practise their oral language skills.
- ▶ Provide students with opportunities to practise presenting in different contexts using the appropriate language for that context, for example, giving a mihi, sharing news, giving a thank you speech.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I use **technology** to support speech, language and communication learning?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Have speech sound and language software available on classroom computers, for example, software that helps students to recognise letters and sounds, write stories and sequence events.
- ▶ For older students, consider using tablets to encourage students to learn the language of text messaging, blogs and email.
- ▶ Use podcasts and audio and multimedia to build your students' phonological awareness – suggest older students make their own podcasts of rhyming, alliteration, linking letters and sounds, segmenting and blending that they can listen to repetitively and when they're at home.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

What strategies can I use to help students practice and apply their **language and thinking skills**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Use your professional judgement to decide when and how to deliberately use a range of instructional strategies, for example, modelling, prompting, questioning, giving feedback, telling, explaining and directing.
- ▶ Use feedback to reconceptualise and reshape what a student has said to demonstrate a connection between ideas, to build awareness of how a student is thinking or to build their confidence.
- ▶ Ask students about different characters in a story to understand different people's perspectives.
- ▶ Encourage reflection by discussing humorous meanings compared with non-literal meanings, opinion in contrast to fact. Look at a range of genres and text types such as narratives, an explanation or a report.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I **present the curriculum in different ways**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Teach oral language skills in a range of contexts – in class, on the sports field, during maths or science classes and in the playground.
- ▶ Highlight new words, phrases and concepts on the board or provide these to students as handouts.
- ▶ Encourage students to make handy reference aids that feature common maths, writing or reading facts that students can refer back to throughout the school day.
- ▶ Use visual aids such as photoboards and posters as tools for improving students' recall and retrieval skills, for example, ask students to bring a photo from home to illustrate the board and to use as a prompt to tell a familiar story.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I improve the way I **communicate** with students?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Give every student the best opportunity to hear and see you in the classroom – keep background noise to a minimum.
- ▶ Break up series of instructions.
 - ▶ For example, instead of ‘After you’ve sat on the mat, we are going to watch a video clip, then you’re going to talk about what the scientist in the clip is doing with the person beside you ...’
 - ▶ You could say, ‘First, sit on the mat. Next, watch the video clip. Last, talk about the clip with your neighbour.’
- ▶ Face students when you are talking to them so they can see your entire face, hands and gestures (all valuable communication cues that help get your message across).
- ▶ Make sure you have the attention of your students. Be aware of distractions, particularly when you need them to concentrate on what you are saying.
- ▶ Ensure you have a student’s full attention before getting your lesson under way. Avoid talking while students are doing noisy, distracting activities such as getting their books out or being given work material.
- ▶ Establish eye contact (if it is culturally appropriate), stand or sit close to students when you speak. Speak clearly, use gestures, pauses and inflection to emphasise your message.
- ▶ Slow down your rate of speech. Pause (by counting to three or four) to give students time to process what you have said and to think about their response.
- ▶ If pausing doesn’t provide sufficient support, try repeating or rephrasing your message when students don’t understand you.
- ▶ Rephrase your questions or comments to link them back to something a student is familiar with, for example, ‘Remember the trip to Rangitoto we had and walking on the black lava. Remember how the volcanic surface felt under foot?’

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I support students to **think, process ideas and information?**

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Strive to explain anything new as clearly as you can and take the time to order or sequence the information as simply and clearly as you can.
- ▶ Use a mixture of telling, explaining and directing to convey information and instructions.
 - ▶ Telling will give students who need it explicit instruction about ways of participating.
 - ▶ Explaining will give students more opportunity to develop their own understandings.
 - ▶ Directing is simply giving a specific instruction.
- ▶ Use games such as memory or twenty questions to improve students' recall and descriptions skills.
- ▶ Present the same information in a range of ways over an extended period of time (for example, a week) to help students retain information, build up their understanding and familiarity of the topic and stay stimulated and focused.
- ▶ Use a good range of visual learning materials such as handouts, YouTube clips, PowerPoint presentations, posters, diagrams etc to convey information.
- ▶ Encourage your students to use pictures or visual cues or maps to remind them what they are learning, to help them recall information and to keep the ideas fresh.
- ▶ Consider helping students to develop an action plan outlining the key steps required to complete difficult tasks or large assignments.
- ▶ Understand that every student is different and language delay may not reflect a student's intellectual ability.
- ▶ Pre-teach language and concepts that will be used and taught later in your classroom. Talk to a speech-language therapist to find out more about how to do this.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I integrate **social skills** into teaching and learning?

STRATEGIES

Create an environment where students can clearly see one another, identify social cues and practise and learn turn taking, for example, during mat time (for young students) or during group work (for older students).

- ▶ Explain to students that people don't just listen to words to understand a message.
 - ▶ Say people look at the person who is talking and take meaning from the speaker's body language and the way they say the words.
 - ▶ Explain most meaning is gained from someone's tone of voice and non-verbal communication.
- ▶ Teach students to recognise and interpret non-verbal language and the social rules of different settings – have them observe and identify examples of staying on topic, moving off topic, keeping a conversation going.
- ▶ Use both indoor and outdoor games to encourage students to practise their social language skills such as negotiating, expressing disagreement, making collaborative decisions, explaining, helping and encouraging others and being gracious in victory or defeat.
- ▶ Set up exercises such as a peer mediation exercise to give students a framework for sorting out disagreements and showing the power of language to work through problems.
- ▶ Build up student social language skills by inviting them to use the school's conference call facilities to interview or ask questions of experts, thank school visitors on behalf of the school and share their findings at school expos and science fairs.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

How can I help students prepare for **changing schools or leaving school?**

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Plan well ahead for students changing schools or moving on to secondary school.
- ▶ Talk to the Head of Learning Support at the student's new high school to find out about the learning environments they will work in.
- ▶ Prepare students by giving them opportunities to spend time in their new school, meet their teachers, other students and visit the classrooms they will be spending time in.
- ▶ If appropriate, consider assigning a buddy to a young person making the transition to high school.
- ▶ Ask the student what their concerns are, and their ideas of the best ways to support them during transition.
- ▶ Talk to the Head of Learning Support at the student's new high school to clarify any personal care and social support the student may need in her new school.
- ▶ Directly teach the skills the student will need in their new setting.

TEACHER INQUIRY QUESTION

Who can I contact for **extra support and advice**?

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Contact the Ministry of Education for advice from a speech language therapist.

Student examples

Here are two practical examples of how you might put some of the ideas outlined in this resource into practice. One focuses on primary school, the other looks at a student in the secondary context.

Primary school

Six-year-old **Robbie** is an outgoing student who has difficulty making many speech sounds. For example, he says 'tar' for 'car', 'tun' for 'sun' and 'wook' for 'look'. Sometimes he'll drop parts of a word and say 'nana' for 'banana' or 'sketti' for 'spaghetti'.

Robbie's parents can usually understand him, but his grandparents and less familiar adults and children struggle to understand him.

Robbie really enjoys skateboarding and often goes out skating with his mates after school. At times, Robbie gets down and withdraws when his friends can't understand what he is saying. Sometimes he can't recall the words he wants to use. Other time he has difficulty structuring a sentence properly. It is starting to make him feel really self-conscious.

Robbie the student

- ▶ Create a learner profile for Robbie that all the teachers and other staff that will work with Robbie will be able to use to understand his needs.
- ▶ Engage with Robbie to come up with ideas about how you can support him in class. For example, find out if using checklists and visual instructions might work. Look at using visual prompts and allowing extra time for Robbie's verbal responses.
- ▶ Consider referring Robbie to a Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) and/or speech-language therapy service at the Ministry of Education.
- ▶ Create a plan where Robbie's family and teachers know the speech and language goals you are working on and the strategies you have developed to support Robbie's speech and language skills in class and at home.
- ▶ Develop a specific plan focused on conversation structure that can be used at home and school, using similar techniques.

Robbie's learning environment

- ▶ Use a visual schedule to guide Robbie on what to do.
- ▶ Develop visual materials to support Robbie's verbal skills.
- ▶ Do you need to modify any activities so that Robbie has alternative ways of expressing his ideas?
- ▶ Do you need to modify any task expectations so Robbie can achieve?
- ▶ Be prepared to allow extra time for Robbie to respond to questions or contribute to class discussions.
- ▶ If Robbie is going to be supported by a speech-language therapist or an RTLB, consider how they can work in partnership with you to support Robbie. Together, you can develop specific goals and strategies to support Robbie in the classroom.

Teaching Robbie

- ▶ **English (reading)** – Use Robbie’s interests in skateboarding in reading material, where possible.
- ▶ **English (writing)** – Provide Robbie with visual materials to recall vocabulary, structure sentences and create stories.
- ▶ **Social sciences (news time)** – Encourage Robbie to use visual prompts, for example, a photo, an item from home or an event ticket, to help him develop his verbal skills. Actively teach conversation skills and encourage students to support each other to learn these skills.
- ▶ **Health and physical education (in the playground)** – Use skateboarding to model Robbie’s strengths to his peers.
- ▶ **Play** – Actively encourage Robbie to develop friendships with peers who will support his verbal skills.

Secondary school

Jasmine is an academic teen who loves physics and netball. Jasmine has fluency difficulties, which means she often repeats sounds or syllables such as 'pa ... pa ... paper'.

Sometimes it seems her words get stuck and won't come out. When this happens, she'll grimace or stamp a foot. Jasmine is very self-conscious about stuttering. She's also reluctant to talk to teachers and friends at school.

Jasmine the student

- ▶ Develop a learner profile with Jasmine and her family so her teachers understand the difficulties she has with speech fluency and ways to support her. Include specific strategies to support Jasmine to regain fluency.
- ▶ Keep Jasmine's goals of going to university part of regular discussion.
- ▶ Jasmine is worried about being teased because of her difficulties with fluency. Establish a 'go to' person in the school for her to talk to whenever she needs to.
- ▶ Set aside moments to praise Jasmine and to and reinforce her self esteem.
- ▶ Discuss with Jasmine the strategies you could use to help her regain fluency quickly.

Jasmine's learning environment

- ▶ Care needs to be taken in setting up group work – make sure the people she works with will support her and give her time to share her ideas verbally.
- ▶ Think about how you can use the school's Learning Management System (LMS) to support Jasmine? For example, can she ask questions on the LMS during class time rather than raise her hand to ask a question?
- ▶ Think about letting Jasmine develop an online presence where she can share her thoughts and sense of humour. For example, in the school newsletters or blogs.


Teaching Jasmine

- ▶ **English (presenting)** – When asking the class questions, use a pause as part of your routine to allow all students to come up with ideas before calling on someone to answer.
- ▶ Use strategies such as 'think, pair, share' may also be a way to help Jasmine contribute without the pressure of speaking to a large group.
- ▶ NCEA assessment is concerning Jasmine because she knows there are some assessments requiring verbal presentations. Talk to her and her mum about this early. Is it possible to redefine the audience that Jasmine presents to? Could she present her knowledge in a different way, for example, reading a prepared written presentation?
- ▶ Create an environment where Jasmine can academically succeed and become a successful communicator.

Useful contacts and resources

Communicate to Participate – a training package for classroom teachers including information about speech and language development, screening tools and checklists, Specialist Education Services (1998).

Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4 – Learning Media for the Ministry of Education (2009).



<http://inclusive.tki.org.nz> – Ministry of Education’s Inclusive Education Online Knowledge Centre

Learning Through Talk: Oral Language in Years 1 to 3 – Learning Media for the Ministry of Education (2009).

Learning Through Talk: Oral Language in Years 4 to 8 – Learning Media for the Ministry of Education (2009).

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz> – a website on literacy teaching and learning from the Ministry of Education.

Sounds Sense: Phonics and Phonological Awareness – Ministry of Education, 2003b.
speechtherapy.org.nz – Speech-Language Therapists’ Association of New Zealand.

stuttering.co.nz – New Zealand website for the Stuttering Treatment and Research Trust (START).

The Literacy Learning Progressions – Learning Media for the Ministry of Education (2010).



For more information

For information about services and support available to children with special education needs, visit **www.education.govt.nz** [search word special education].

For more specialist classroom, teaching and curriculum resources, visit the Te Kete Ipurangi website **www.tki.org.nz**

Replacement copies may be ordered from Ministry of Education Customer Services, online at www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz by email: orders@thechair.minedu.govt.nz or freephone 0800 660 662, freefax 0800 660 663 Please quote item number 16122

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How speech,
language and
communication
needs can
influence learning

Download
and keep as
a handy
reference

CHALLENGES

Will vary from student to student

- ▶ Producing individual speech sounds or sequences of sounds in words.
- ▶ Understanding complex or lengthy verbal instructions.
- ▶ Finding the right words or structuring sentences.
- ▶ Staying on topic, asking and answering questions or following the rules of conversation.
- ▶ Regulating voice quality (volume, pitch, resonance and intonation).
- ▶ Speaking intelligibly.
- ▶ Speaking fluently.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES



Present curriculum content in different ways

- ▶ Teach new vocabulary, grammar and ways of listening and speaking using visual, audio and written resources.
- ▶ Incorporate vocabulary learning into all classroom activities.
- ▶ Use repetition and link learning to students' experiences.
- ▶ Provide speech and language learning opportunities in different contexts.
- ▶ Provide a range of options for students to express what they know for example, photoboard, digital presentation, visual schedules or a poster.

- ▶ Revisit new words, new language structures and new concepts at frequent intervals throughout the day.
- ▶ Use mindmaps or a story board to help students sequence their ideas or retell a story.
- ▶ Compare and contrast new words with more familiar vocabulary, for example, 'buy' and 'purchase'.
- ▶ Have students clap or count syllables in familiar words.
- ▶ Teach awareness of phonemes using letter-sound correspondence, rhyme recognition and creation, as well as the blending and segmenting of phonemes.
- ▶ Encourage students to define words by exploring the look, feel, touch and sound (even the smell and taste) of the word.

STEPS TO TEACH NEW WORDS

- ▶ **Define the word.** What is it? What does it do? What is the dictionary definition?
- ▶ **Contextualise it.** Can you show me the word? Where have we seen it before? What does it look like?
- ▶ **Extend the meaning of the word.** Where do we use it? Why do we use it? How do we use it?
- ▶ **Explore the sound pattern.** What sound does it start with? How do we say it? What other words do we know that are similar to this one?



Adjust the classroom environment

- ▶ Reduce classroom noise and distractions.
- ▶ Make language learning a focus of your classroom set-up.
- ▶ Design your classroom for small group work.



Use technology and equipment

- ▶ Have students use technology (for example, laptops, desktop computers or tablets) to present their ideas and work.
- ▶ Enable students to use speech sound and language software.
- ▶ Encourage the use of graphic organising software and tools.
- ▶ Use podcasts, audio and multimedia to build your students' phonological awareness – suggest older students make their own podcasts of rhyming, alliteration, linking letters and sounds, segmenting and blending that they can listen to repetitively and when they're at home.



Stimulate interest and motivation for learning

- ▶ Pre-teach language and concepts that will be used and taught later in your classroom.
 - ▶ Model good listening, speech and language.
 - ▶ Provide opportunities to learn and practise with small group work.
- ▶ Use repetition of familiar stories, songs, rhymes and formulaic phrases to deepen understanding and become familiar with language patterns and features.
 - ▶ Encourage organisation and focus with checklists and verbal prompts.
 - ▶ Regularly remind students when to start or complete tasks.
 - ▶ Break complex tasks and instructions into smaller chunks.
 - ▶ Slow your rate of speech and give students time to respond.
 - ▶ Allow additional time to complete tasks.
 - ▶ Encourage students to make handy reference aids that feature common maths, writing or reading facts that students can refer back to throughout the school day.