


**Tricks (and Treats!) of the Trade:  
Planning Great Lessons**

**Listening and Language  
Connections LLC**



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**About Me**

- Speech Language Pathologist practicing since 1994
- In private practice in Ann Arbor providing Auditory Verbal Therapy, aural habilitation and consultation services
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**Agenda**

- Planning Great Lessons
- More Bang for Your Buck
  - Super Items
  - Games a Million Ways
  - Less is More
- Make it Real Life

**Planning Great Lessons**

**Planning Great Lessons**

- Most critical aspect of planning a successful lesson or activity....knowing the target
  - Identifying key words embedded in a sentence
  - Using regular past tense verb forms (-ed)
- Whether the chosen target is a listening goal or a language goal, creativity is needed to make our activities as motivating and as real-life as possible
- One strategy for increasing the fun factor and the motivation factor...Creative Framework

**Creative Framework**

- Providing a conversational framework for an activity gives it context and insures that the game "makes sense" to the child and creates opportunities for action and communication
- Within this framework, targets for receptive and expressive development are easily integrated
- As you choose materials, keep in mind the following questions:
  - *Why* would the child want to play with these toys?
  - *How* will the child be allowed to play with these toys?

• For each activity, give the child a reason to play (a story) and some direction

• Does not have to be complex (Sabotage is a creative framework)

- Completing a Puzzle
  - "Oh no, would you look at that! Someone knocked this over – will you help me fix it? I'll pick up the pieces, but you tell me where they go"
- Following Directions
  - "Look Jenny, I have this baby to play with, but she has no clothes on" "Let's put on the pink pants and red shoes"

### An Example

- Language Target: spontaneous use of aux. + -ing verb form
- Chosen activity: Play with play mat and transportation toys
  - Will the child automatically tell you what the various vehicles are doing? Why?
- Creative Framework: Traffic Jam
  - "Oh My! The cars and trucks are all in the wrong places...let's see what is happening. Look, the airplane is floating in the river!"
    - The reason to tell about what is happening is more natural (and more fun) now
    - moving the vehicles to appropriate places on the mat gives another opportunity for target language

### More Bang for Your Buck

### Stretch the Therapy Dollar

- With budget cuts at home and at school, buying specific toys for specific goal areas is just not possible
- Therapists, teachers and parents alike are challenged to be creative when it comes to creating new and different activities to target speech, language and auditory skills

### Shopping Tips

- Look for bargains
  - TJMaxx, Marshall's, Dollar Store
  - Consignment shops
  - Yard Sales and Rummage Sales
  - Craigslist, Freecycle, etc.
- Start your own "Swap"
  - Parent groups or cochlear implant centers are a great place to organize these activities
- Head for "timeless" toys
  - Avoid branded toys that will fade in popularity (and cost more!)

### Worth the Money: Super Items

- Masking Tape
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Binoculars or Eyeglasses
- Magnet Wand

**Masking Tape**

**Sidewalk Chalk**

**Binoculars/Eyeglasses**

**Magnet Wand**

**Yours?**

**Games a Million Ways**

- Of course, commercial games have their place in the classroom or therapy setting as well
  - Including board games as one element of a therapy session allows for expressive turns and the development of age appropriate play skills
- Choosing novel games (not branded!) that incorporate varied vocabulary items allows for the most flexibility in planning
- Change the rules to target new structures

### Storefront Bingo (eeboo)



- Single word identification, comprehension, vocabulary
  - Play the game in traditional fashion, naming the objects pictured
  - Play the game naming objects by category or with tier 2 vocabulary
  - Play the game naming the store where the pictured object would be sold. Question and answer would then narrow down the choices

### Storefront Bingo

- Identification of objects based on a series of descriptors
  - Describe objects and have other players find them on the game board
  - Hide a token or sticker under one of the tiles and describe the object, one clue at a time, eliminating objects until the child finds the sticker
  - Mastermind a robbery! One of the items has been stolen. The listener follows a series of clues to determine what it was or to determine who took it

### Storefront Bingo

- Comprehension of connected discourse
  - Language of math; each person gets an amount of play money to spend on his or her turn
    - "I want a loaf of bread (\$2) and a wedding cake (\$5). How much do I owe?"
  - Conditional statements
    - "If I had 5 dollars, I would buy the striped hat and a hammer"
    - "For 2 dollars, you can buy these cupcakes, but not this wedding cake"

### Concentration Games

- These picture based games are very versatile and may be worth having multiples of
- Each game has different vocabulary and the pieces can be used in infinite ways
  - Scavenger hunts
  - Barrier games
  - "Secret Square"

### Some Ideas

- Play Concentration "by the rules" but do not reveal the first card chosen on a turn so that the other player/s can identify the word
- Attach one of each pair onto the ceiling or onto the bottom of a table, have the "caller" draw from the remaining cards and have fun looking for the match
- Use a color copier to make lotto boards, bingo games, matrixes or story sequences with selected cards to target certain structures

### Video - Ayla

### Cariboo



- Kids love this game!
- Replace the existing tiles with pictures of your own to target
  - Vocabulary
  - Speech sounds
  - Pronouns
  - Any number of possibilities

### Less is More

- Sometimes we can challenge our children with activities that leave almost everything to the imagination
- These toys and approaches target not only listening skills but thinking skills; one key to natural language

### Less is More

- Try using “empty” materials for ultimate flexibility and creativity
  - Blank books
  - Empty bags
  - Empty boxes

### Blank Books

### Empty Bags

### Empty Boxes

## Make it Real Life

## Keeping it Real

- For all targets, generalization is the ultimate goal
- Therefore, planning activities that provide the most naturalistic experience will give the best overall outcomes
- One way to approach this is to think in terms of "schemata"...

## Schemata

- A literacy concept
- the reader's "concepts, beliefs, expectations, processes — virtually everything from past experiences that are used in making sense of reading. In reading, schemata are used to make sense of text; the printed word evokes the reader's experiences, as well as past and potential relationships" (p. 20)

McNeil, J.D. (1992). *Reading Comprehension: New Directions for Classroom Practice* (3rd. ed.) Los Angeles: U. of California

## Schemata

- World knowledge: The essence or whole of an experience or situation
  - People and objects present
  - Communication patterns (expressions and vocabulary used, tone of voice, manners)
  - Expectations for behavior

## Regarding Language

- Particular situations/experiences call for particular language structures
  - therefore by identifying these "schemata", you now have "go to" activities for those patterns
- And, not by accident, pragmatic language becomes an integral part of each activity
  - Culture dictates use of particular greetings, manners, etc. in each particular situation

## General Communication Roles

- "The Describer" - particular situations call for a speaker to *share* with the listener
  - e.g. Showing photographs of a vacation
    - Present tense verbs
    - Descriptive language
- "The Questioner" – some situations require the speaker to *ask* another person
  - e.g. Asking directions
    - Question forms
- "The Leader" – some events call for the speaker to *tell* the listener
  - e.g. Listing the steps necessary to complete a craft
    - Imperative forms
    - Present tense verbs

### Take it Further

- Beginning with the target, think of what life situation often *requires* use of that structure (obligatory context) or at least offers natural opportunities for its use
- Approach these as pretend play activities with or without props to address your discrete language targets within a natural context

### For Example

- Sports Play-by-Play or Newscaster
  - Action words
  - Present tense verbs;
    - “He lines up, he shoots, he scores!”
  - Main ideas
- What about that Traffic Jam?
  - Maybe a local TV crew comes to report on the strange things happening on the highway
  - “This just in...the boats are now blocking the highway!”

### How many can you think of?

### Guess Who (Hasbro)

- A popular game that requires turn taking to ask Yes/No questions to ultimately identify a mystery person
- Targets
  - Syntax: Question forms and inverse statements
  - Pragmatics: manners of game play
  - Auditory: listening for key words in carrier phrases



### “Scene of the Crime” (Garber)

- One player is designated the “police officer” and leaves the room
- Using the loose characters, hide a “sack of money” or “diamond ring” sticker under one of the characters, this character is the “thief”
- Once the money is hidden, the officer is called and then must interview the “witnesses” to gain clues about the identify of the thief
- Targets
  - Syntax: past progressive “He was wearing a hat”, question forms
  - Schematic language: “Stop thief!”, “Did you see what happened?” “witness” “testify”, “badge”
  - Auditory: key words, identifying via a series of descriptors

### Summary

- For everyone involved in building the language and auditory goals of children with hearing loss, creativity is a daily challenge
- The simple addition of a “creative framework” to an activity can turn it into something motivating and fun
- Materials that have broad appeal and usage are most conducive to creating flexible activities that can be used over and over again
- Varying the materials and type of activity used to attack each goal will lead to generalization of the skill and associated language
- As often as possible, make it real!