



UNDERSTANDING SPEECH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

Over 50% of all speech-language pathologists (SLPs) work in school settings. Speech-language pathologists focus on strengthening individuals' communication skills with the goal of improving their performance in home, school, and work activities. The school-based SLP's services benefit students who struggle to learn because their foundational speech and language skills are delayed or affected by their disability. Improving a child's communication abilities improves their overall chances of success and boosts their confidence and quality of life.

WHAT DOES A SCHOOL-BASED SLP DO?

The school SLP participates as an equal member of the educational team. Speech-language intervention is directed toward helping a student achieve the educational goals agreed upon by the school team, including caregivers. The SLP contributes much to the discussion and decision making process by presenting key information about the student's level of communication function, the impact of the communication impairment on successful participation, and strategies team members can implement in the classroom, the therapy room, and other settings to promote success.

To provide the best possible treatment for students, the SLP must collaborate with caregivers and other school team members. Some of the aspects that SLPs and educators should jointly discuss are:

- The student's communication strengths and needs
- The academic and social demands placed upon him or her in the classroom
- The student's interaction with peers
- Goals and treatment strategies that will facilitate positive change in communication skills
- Ways the student can be supported in the classroom
- Suggestions of instructional and environmental modifications that will lead to success

Each student has unique physical, sensory, neurological, emotional and mental functions as well as challenges, which enhance or deter successful school-related performance in the communication areas of education. Share your learning objectives, curriculum materials, and instructional methods with your school's SLP. Join forces to determine how to best structure the classroom and instruction to support the student.



ROLES & CUES

CONSIDER THESE THINGS WHEN TEACHING A STUDENT WITH SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DISABILITIES

- What type of speech and language skills does a student need to be successful in your class?
- Are there students who need directions repeated, rephrased or seen written as well?
- Are there distractions in the classroom such as, sights, smells, sounds and movement?
- Would changing a student's seat in the class improve his ability to see or hear you?
- Does performance improve when key vocabulary is highlighted?

ASK YOUR SCHOOL SLP TO TELL YOU ABOUT...

- Normal patterns and milestones for speech, language, and hearing development
- Steps they take to diagnose and treat communication disorders
- Major types of communication impairments they see in your school
- The relationship between speech, language and hearing to the education and learning process
- Treatment techniques that can be initiated in the classroom setting
- Parts of the curriculum that require strong communication skills for success
- Classroom modifications that may result in improved performance

WHAT KIDS CAN LEARN FROM SLPs

- How to organize and categorize their thoughts
- Learn how to say their sounds properly
- Help children speak in front of others with ease
- Ask questions appropriately and concisely
- Express wants and needs
- Help a child with language disabilities interact and engage with their peers
- Expand and understand vocabulary
- Work on social language i.e. analogies

TRY THESE STRATEGIES WITH KIDS IN YOUR CLASS TO IMPROVE DIRECTION FOLLOWING

Reduce the length of the instructions ◦ Reduce the complexity of the instructions ◦ Slow your rate of delivery ◦ Repeat instructions more than once ◦ Alter the mode for delivering instructions ◦ Give prompts and assistance ◦ Vary the tone and intonation pattern to emphasize key words