



# ADOLESCENT LANGUAGE

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# AGENDA

- **Discuss questions from the team**
- **Background on adolescent language difficulties**
- **Types of therapy**
- **Narrative vs. Expository Text**
  - **7 text structures**
  - **4 key areas**
- **Addressing Underlying Language Abilities**
- **Discourse**
- **Therapy ideas**
- **Goals**
- **Questions?**

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEAM:



## WHAT ARE TYPICAL ADOLESCENT LANGUAGE DISABILITIES?

- Specific Language Impairment (SLI) is described as a disorder of language production and/or comprehension without a known cause)
- Specific Language Impairment (SLI) is considered highly persistent and often lasts into adolescence. It is usually directly correlated to :
  - Achievement deficits
  - Social difficulties
  - Behavior problems
- Researchers have traced the slow rate of development for these four key areas: **syntax, semantics, discourse, and pragmatics.**
  - The **PREVAILING** deficit area has been syntax, often referred to as a **hallmark for SLI** (Ukrainetz, 2015).

**“READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE LINKED  
AND INTERDEPENDENT IN THE  
EDUCATIONAL PROCESS” (MOORE &  
MONTGOMERY, 2018)**



## DIFFICULTIES OF THE SLP IN THE MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL SETTING

- Students who present with a variety of language difficulties
- Decoding deficits
- Lack of resources within the school
- Minutes of therapy session
- Motivation/Participation



## WHAT WE KNOW: ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- Students encounter academic language in their learning environments.
- Students with language deficits need to be systematically taught these skills!
  - Elaborated noun phrases (old rusty bike)
  - Changing verbs to nouns (erupt to eruption; colonies to colonization)
  - Verb phrases (had climbed)
  - Clausal expansions (carefully washing)
  - Relative clauses (that)
  - AND MORE!



# NARRATIVE VS. EXPOSITORY TEXT

## NARRATIVE TEXT

- More interesting and exciting for students
- A story with characters, setting, actions, problem, solution.
- **“Narratives are of central importance until fourth grade when facts take over the limelight” (Montgomery, 2018)**

## EXPOSITORY TEXT

- Language of the student’s future
- Textbooks contain this language
- FACTS
- Describe, explain, inform, and present factual information
- Vocabulary becomes less familiar and more complex
- Different organization types
- Complex syntax



## 4 MAJOR AREAS OF GOALS/THERAPY

- Four major areas of expository text:
  1. Syntax
  2. Semantics
  3. Discourse
  4. Pragmatics

Montgomery states that writing comprehensive goals for expository discourse gives greater flexibility, covers several types of student skills in one goal, and occur in many academic environments.



## 7 EXPOSITORY TEXT STRUCTURES

- Description
- Lists
- Sequences of activity
- Cause and effect
- Problems with solutions
- Persuading others to see the use or importance of a fact
- Compare (what is the same) and contrast (what is different) about the facts

**SLP's can provide scaffolding for these types of text structures!**



## 7 EXPOSITORY TEXT STRUCTURES

- Description-----→
- Lists-----→
- Sequences of activity -----→
- Cause and effect
- Problems with solutions -----→
- Persuading others to see the use or importance of a fact -----→
- Compare (what is the same) and contrast (what is different) about the facts-----→

## THERAPY EXAMPLES FOR TOPIC VOLCANOES

- Draw or write words related to have a volcano looks
- List where volcanoes can be found, main parts of a volcano, dangers of living near a volcano, list precautions people take in Hawaii
- How do scientists know when a volcano is about to erupt?
- What causes rich soil for planting? How many smaller eruptions reduce the danger?
- Name one problem and a solution related to volcanoes
- Using facts from the textbook, try to convince others to become seismic scientists from the future; why would this be important?
- Name 2 famous volcanoes and their location on earth. Describe how they are alike and different.

# INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE

## PRE-READING STRATEGIES

- Discuss the general topic and explain how the text is organized (7 structures)
- Direct students to see key words that signal the type of expository discourse structure (i.e. in contrast, similarly are comparison structure)
- Copy headings and subheadings in a notebook to fill in important information
- If no headings, use WH questions as prompts in notebook.

## DURING READING STRATEGIES

- Fill in details under each heading/subheading in notebook
- Close reading markings while reading (i.e. question marks for questions, circle unknown words, exclamation points for interesting information).
- Circle repeated high-frequency content words to help focus on main idea
- Pause between each paragraph to write a summary of what was read.



# INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE

## AFTER READING STRATEGIES

- Reorganize information in their notebook outline
- Discussion about significant points, high-frequency words, circled unknown words.

## OTHER STRATEGIES TO USE ON ALL STEPS:

- Use the Paraphrasing Strategy
- Use the SQ3R Strategy
- Use the POSSE Strategy

The SQ3R Strategy (Cheek & Cheek, 1983; Just & Carpenter, 1987; Robinson, 1970; Schumaker et al., 1982) is a five-step strategy that students can use to facilitate their reading comprehension of expository text. The following steps comprise this strategy (Ward-Lonergan, 2010b).

*SQ3R Strategy Steps:*

1. *Survey:* Get a general idea of what the text is about by skimming chapter titles, headings, subheadings, illustrations, graphs, chapter introduction, and chapter summary.
2. *Question:* Read any study questions in the text or given by the teacher or create your own questions by turning titles and headings into questions.
3. *Read:* Read the text, keep study questions in mind, and keep track of main ideas.
4. *Recite:* After reading, recite answers to study questions and write a few notes to help remember important ideas.
5. *Review:* Look back at study questions and try to answer them without using notes and, finally, study notes to remember the content later on.

Similar to the SQ3R Strategy, the POSSE Strategy (Englert & Mariage, 1991) is another option that SLPs or teachers can use to promote reading comprehension and recall of expository passages. This strategy includes the following sequence of steps (Ward-Lonergan, 2010b).

*POSSE Strategy Steps:*

1. *Predict:* Scan the text for headings, boldface print, pictures, and the like, and for information that can be used to develop a preparatory set, activate background information, and generate pre-reading questions.
2. *Organize:* Brainstorm the pre-reading questions into a set of categories of information that the passage will contain, possibly through use of a semantic map or graphic organizer.
3. *Search:* Read the passage while keeping the pre-reading questions and organizer in mind.
4. *Summarize:* Give an oral summary of the passage, including the main idea, supporting ideas, and most important details, and ask additional questions.
5. *Evaluate:* Identify gaps in understanding and compare what has been learned with predictions, clarify misunderstandings encountered, and predict the topic of the next section of the passage.



## WAYS TO USE EXPOSITORY TEXT (BUILDING INFORMATIONAL DISCOURSE)

- Use their textbooks as much as possible
- Make copies of a few pages that have already been covered
  1. Select a page they have ALREADY SEEN
  2. Read a sentence out loud.
  3. Ask the student to restate it in their own words.
  4. Write what the student says
  5. Read it back to the student
  6. Ask if they want to add more to it or change it
  7. Next, the SLP will talk about something on the same page, but **not read it exactly.**
  8. Ask the student to find the sentence about that topic.





# STRATEGIES

- Previewing the passage
- Asking questions to yourself about the passage
- Finding the main idea
- Summarizing the key points
- **We have to remember that they may be helpful to many students but for students who have deficits in word reading abilities or in lexical or syntactic development; it may be VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO APPLY THE STRATEGIES EFFECTIVELY.**



**TO COMPREHEND A PASSAGE  
INDEPENDENTLY, STUDENTS NEED THE  
FOLLOWING:**

**1. Word Reading Skills**

- 1. Word reading skills sufficient to allow for quick, automatic, recognition and decoding of numerous abstract and morphologically complex terms.

**2. Lexical Development**

- 1. Students need to know the meaning of the words they are reading or be able to find the meaning using metalinguistic strategies.

**3. Syntactic Development**

- 1. Students need to be able to understand academic textbooks which contain long and complex sentences, numerous words, and complex clauses.

**4. Topic Knowledge**

- 1. Students need have knowledge of topics that are mentioned but not explained.



# WE KNOW STUDENTS NEED THESE SKILLS BUT HOW DO WE TARGET THEM?

## I. Word Reading Skills

- Ideas: Words Their Way spelling patterns, decoding/phonological awareness instruction, multisyllabic words , chunking, morphologically complex words

**What do you use to target word reading skills with adolescent students?**



## WE KNOW STUDENTS NEED THESE SKILLS BUT HOW DO WE TARGET THEM?

### I. Lexical Development (semantics/vocabulary)

- Ideas: tier 3 vocabulary terms, using expository text structures to teach vocabulary, context clue strategies, paired words, multiple meaning words, paired words

**What do you use to target lexical development with adolescent students?**



# VOCABULARY

- **To teach or not to teach vocabulary?**
- **Middle/High School Vocabulary**
  - **Shift to TIER 3 vocabulary words**
  - **NEW vocabulary**
  - **Noun-heavy vocabulary**
  - **Verbs quickly becoming nouns or adverbs**
  - **Syntax structures are key**
  - **Multiple meaning words**
- **SELECTING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY AND USING IT IN THERAPY**

## EXAMPLES OF HOW TO EXPAND VOCABULARY SKILLS

- Reading Teacher's Book of Lists (Fry & Kress, 2011)
  - Contain word pairs that appear in the same order
  - In and out, high and dry, cause and effect, right or wrong, etc.
  - Goal: By the end of the IEP year, XX will analyze the meaning of words and phrases in their context by reading and writing 10 non-reversible word pairs with 80% accuracy without assistance.
- Targeting Tier 3 vocabulary terms from the student's curriculum while teaching context clue strategies.



## WE KNOW STUDENTS NEED THESE SKILLS BUT HOW DO WE TARGET THEM?

### I. Syntactic Development

- Ideas: teach specific types of sentence structures, teach clauses, use sentences directly from the textbook to identify the type of sentence and clause

**What do you use to target syntax with adolescent students?**



WE KNOW STUDENTS NEED THESE  
SKILLS BUT HOW DO WE TARGET THEM?

I. Topic Knowledge

\* Ideas: vocabulary intervention, graphic organizers, videos, expository structure scaffolding, etc.

**What do you use to build background  
knowledge in adolescent students?**



**GOAL IDEAS:**



## GOALS?

- “Given verbal and or written prompts, Carlos will maintain a conversational topic for a minimum of 7 turns with an adult or peer in 4 out of 5 opportunities (80%) over three consecutive sessions, with mild decreasing to no cues.”
- “By the end of the IEP year, Andrew will use grade level vocabulary to define and correctly use new words in compound and complex sentences, using core curriculum vocabulary, expository discourse vocabulary words, and selected word lists, for 15 out of 20 target vocabulary words.”
- Goal: By the end of the IEP year, XX will analyze the meaning of words and phrases in their context by reading and writing 10 non-reversible word pairs with 80% accuracy without assistance.

# SOURCES

Montgomery, J. (2018). 20Q: Adolescent language intervention: what works? *SpeechPathology.com*, Article 19750. Retrieved from [www.speechpathology.com](http://www.speechpathology.com)

Nippold, M.A. (2017). Reading comprehension deficits in adolescents: Addressing underlying language abilities. *Language Speech and Hearing Services in Schools*, 48, 125-131.

Nippold, M.A., & Sun, L. (2008). Knowledge of morphologically complex words: A developmental study of older children and young adolescents. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 39, 365–373.

Ward-Lonergan, Jeannene M., and Jill K. Duthie. “Expository Discourse Intervention for Adolescents With Language Disorders.” *Perspectives on Language Learning and Education*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2013, pp. 44–56., doi:10.1044/lle20.2.44.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN THE FOLDER:

Knowledge and Skills Needed by Speech Language Pathologists With Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents

Reading Comprehension Deficits in Adolescents: Addressing Underlying Language Abilities

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# Expository Discourse in Children, Adolescents, and Adults

Development and Disorders

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# LANGUAGE SAMPLING WITH ADOLESCENTS

*Implications for Intervention*

SECOND EDITION



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