

Addressing Grammar throughout your Daily Activities

Grammatical deficits limit a student's ability to express meaning, encode a variety of messages, and effectively participate in conversations. If not targeted, poor grammar skills can persist well beyond the preschool years and impact academic success and literacy. The following strategies can provide opportunities to develop your student's grammar skills during authentic activities involving reading, writing, and speaking:

Record the errors: Make notes of what your student is saying and writing incorrectly. Keep a list of erroneous sentences and discuss them with your Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP).

Understand the errors: Learning the jargon that describes the error will help you communicate with your SLP and teach the student what he is incorrectly producing. For example, you will need to know what a relative clause is in order to teach your student how to speak or write them. Past tense, auxiliary verbs, plurals, pronouns, and subordinate clauses will become your friends again!

Targeting the errors: Once you know the grammatical targets, you can target them in your student's academic and conversational activities.

Compositions

Targeting grammar errors and improving the complexity of your student's sentences can happen during written assignments.

Drafting: Use mini- and micro-lessons throughout this process. Target specific forms during this time up to a maximum of three. Plan the content (e.g. outline) of the composition before the sentence building stage in order to reduce processing demands so the student does not have to divide attention between form and content.

Revising and Editing: Use editing strategies like checklists during this process. As well, have the student go back and recheck for common errors. The student can ask himself:

- Does your piece have complete sentences? Add words or rewrite each incomplete sentence so it will be complete.
- Does your piece make sense? Rewrite any sentences you want to make clearer.
- Does your piece show connections between ideas? Combine sentences so ideas will be connected.

Reading and Conversation

Weak grammar skills can also be targeted during reading and conversation activities. The following are some ideas that can be adapted to the student's grade level:

Published texts: Read published texts to show how the target grammatical forms impact meaning and text comprehension. Point out how the sentence relates to the pictures in the book or magazine.

Joint book reading: Read brief texts with repetitive patterns with the student. Select books that have the target forms repeated throughout the story. For older students, read the text aloud with the student and pause when the form has been read. Prompt as necessary to elicit production. Discuss with your SLP recommendations for book titles based on your student's age, reading level, and grammar skills.

Conversational Activities: Strategies from the handouts on micro-lessons and mini-lessons can be used for conversational activities. See your SLP if you need copies.

The classroom is a language-rich environment and has many teachable moments throughout the day to target your student's grammar skills.

Resource in Henry Grube Library:

Contextualized Language Intervention: Scaffolding Prek-12 Literacy Achievement by Teresa Ukrainetz

SLP009

