

Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) in Secondary schools

I) Expressive Language: Grammar and structure

Characteristics

By 11 years children should be able to use sentences of 7-11 words in conversation and discussion

By 11 years children should be able to use a range of connectives to explain, describe

Children with grammar and sentence structure difficulties tend to:

Speak in phrases and/or shorter and more simple sentences

May miss out words and/or confuse word order

Make grammatical errors, for example use of pronouns, irregular plurals and past tense verbs

Make false starts, hesitate, repeat while they try to organise ideas

Need additional thinking time to make a verbal response

Will often give up or say, " I don't know" or "can't remember"

Possible skills affected

Spoken and written sentence formulation

Spoken and written narrative skills

Recording learning

Copying information

Slow to begin and complete tasks

Work avoidance

Social communication

Strategies

Whole school / General

Identify students with expressive language needs

Promote alternative forms of communication and alternative methods of recording work

Teacher

Modify your language (grammar and sentence length) for instruction and to present new information.

Support visually.

Use modelling techniques. This means respond to the child/young person positively but repeat the sentence, emphasising certain words that you want the student to notice, adding omitted words, building on the students speech

Teach grammar terminology explicitly and give examples of how to use/ underline in text (conjunctions, adverbs, adjectives, different sentence types

Use technology aids and programmes to record learning – i.e. Clicker 6, mind mapping

Provide differentiated tasks, for example, cloze exercises

Provide question words to support recount and other types of narrative
Provide writing frames/ narrative grids

Support staff

In addition to above

Teach specific grammatical concepts: irregular past tense verbs, passive forms, irregular plurals and pronouns- take one at a time- using words at single word level and then incorporating within simple sentences

Teach the use of connectives, focusing upon one new connective at a time before providing exercise where the student selects the correct connective to complete a sentence

Use colour coding to highlight targeted parts of speech

Provide cloze exercises-“gap sheets”

Discuss with the child/young person how connectives/ conjunctions can alter meaning of the text

Use cue cards and/or key rings with connectives to support generalisation into lessons

Support self-monitoring of speech and editing written work

Rehearse verbal responses for class discussions with student and support talk partner activities

Student

Underline key grammatical features in text

Complete gap sheet tasks on specific aspects of grammar- use of regular/ irregular verb forms/ use of pronouns/ question forms,

Self-monitoring of written work

Use a speech prompt programme such as clicker 6 or write on line which will help you to identify mistakes and self-correct

listen to whether sentence sounds right

Linked Resources

Rhodes. A. and Armstrong A. (2001) Rhodes to Language. Stass publications

ICAN “What’s Typical talk at Secondary School” – language development poster covering 11-18

AFASIC “Including Young People with Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties in Secondary School”

Inclusion Development Programme - SLCN (2011): , Department for Education

Hayden S. & Jordan E. (2012) Language for Learning in the Secondary School: a practical guide for supporting students with speech, language and communication needs. David Fulton