

Language Stimulation *at Home*

IDEAS FROM YOUR SLP

Let's walk through some steps
to building language skills
at home



From the Research

Practice is better when it's spread out over time

Eisenberg (2014) found that spaced practice is better than massed practice when it comes to learning new words or pieces of grammar. A little bit of practice every day is more effective than crammed practice once per week.

Eisenberg, S. (2014). What works in therapy: Further thoughts on improving clinical practice for children with language disorders. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. doi:10.1044/2014_LSHSS-14-0021

When working on language: Give, Don't Quiz

Studies have shown that children with language disorders require more exposures (somewhere between 60 and 100 examples) in order to learn new words or pieces of grammar. These exposures are most effective when they are provided during functional activities that interest the child.

Cleave, P. L., Becker, S. D., Curran, M. K., Van Home, A. J. O., & Fey, M. E. (2015). The efficacy of recasts in language intervention: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 24(2), 237-255.



One More Thing!

Daily, targeted language stimulation can improve a child's skills. There's one more evidence-based strategy you can use anytime and anywhere, with no materials at all!

It's called recasting



Recasting is flexible
and follows
your child's lead

Recasting *the basics*

- Recasting is repeating what a child says using correct grammar (if the child says 'I eated that', you respond with 'I ate that' and then continue your conversation naturally)
- It does not require that you correct your child or have them try the sentence again after your recast (if they do this spontaneously, that's great!)
- Recasting is an evidence-based strategy for improving language skills in children (Cleave et al., 2015)



Now let's talk about
targeted stimulation

Decide on some targets

step one

- Your speech therapist might give you some specific things to work on in your child's speech (for example, the past tense -ed ending, pronouns or that plural -s)
- You might also notice error patterns on your own!
- It might be helpful to focus on one or two 'targets' (such as pronouns and the -ing ending on verbs) at a time



Consider your schedule

step two



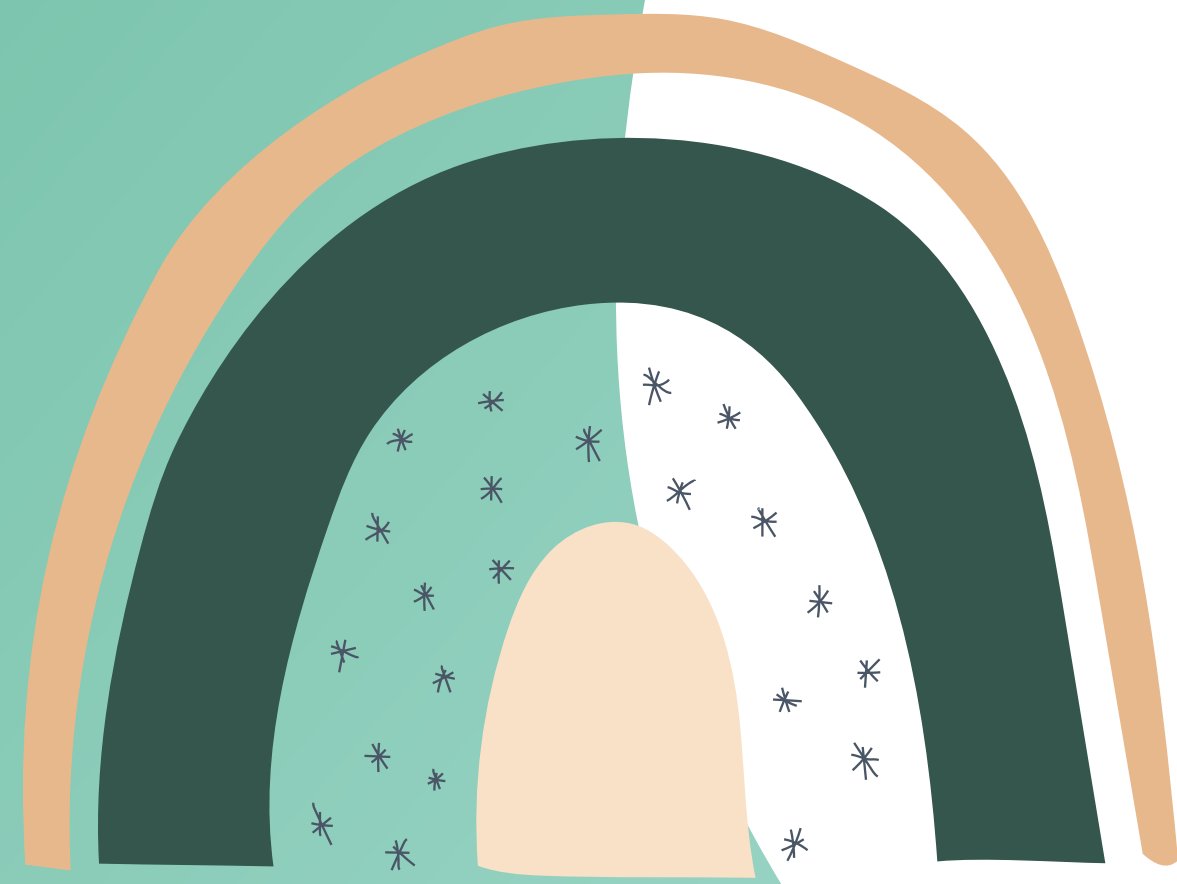
- While you can provide modeling and recasting at any time of day, think about one or two times of day when you can focus on modeling language more deliberately
- Some activities that lend themselves to language stimulation include: cooking, bath times, taking walks, playing with legos, playdoh or any preferred toy
- Don't feel bad if a day goes by when you haven't given thought to modeling or recasting language!

Modeling language

step three

1. Decide on your activity (such as cooking dinner) and pick one piece of grammar to focus on (such as past tense -ed)
2. As you move through the activity, try to model the target piece of grammar often
3. An excerpt of your conversation might sound like:
"Yes, you **stirred** it all in! You **poured** the milk and **sprinkled** the cheese and then you **mixed** it all in. Oh no! Your sister **spilled** some of the sauce. Don't worry, I have a towel. Okay we **cleaned** it all up."





Guiding principles

a few more tips

- Research (Plante et al., 2014) suggests 24 models is a kind of sweet spot for teaching grammar. However, this can be very challenging to do within one activity so don't worry about tracking your models.
- Try not to say the exact same word again and again during your modeling. Aim to show how that piece of grammar applies to a variety of words.
- Narrate the types of things your child is interested in...this is when they will be doing their best listening!

Don't sweat the small stuff

Your child will benefit from the rich language environment you provide in your home as long as you encourage communication and have fun doing so! Remember that recasting is a powerful tool. Successes over time may include increased engagement in shared activities, increased communication between you and your child, and an increase in language skills. Celebrate them!



Reach out to your speech
therapist with questions!