

K-3 SPEECH ENHANCEMENT GUIDE PART 1

Guide to the best use of the cassettes ¹

1. THE NEED FOR SPEECH TRAINING in the early years.

Home school Workshop leaders, publishers, parents (and private school teachers as well) have called for better presentational skills in our children. In order for them to become tomorrow's leaders, they will have to pay particular attention to their speaking skills. And it seems that quite a few of them have been listened to and found wanting in this area. It is not that there is some major problem usually, it is just that careless ways have a way of creeping in and becoming habits. Like the computer "virus" the speech "virus" can have a destructive effect on the whole operation. In fact it can cause a complete misrepresentation of the speaker's meaning and capabilities! What to do about it? The best way is to establish good speech habits early and do it so well that these don't have to be redone over and over in the teenage years for instance!

2. Rationale

The first step in speech development is the production of sounds. Therefore articulation or enunciation is what is learned first - and must be trained first. That is why speech therapists and specialists teach isolated correct sounds in kindergarten speech programs.

Most children easily produce simple labials (lip sounds) such as mmm or ba ba etc. The last learned and trickiest to learn are the difficult consonants such as rrr, k, g, sss, ch, sh, th, l, and a few others, depending upon the child. The k and g sounds would be practiced as ka and ga ordinarily. Speech classes then, focus on these sounds.

3. The SPEECH GAMES AND ACTIVITIES on the tapes

These centre around animals or objects which would usually in fiction and "pretend play" say these sounds. We feel that our animal "speech teachers" display enough good character traits of honesty, responsibility, courage and individuality as well as humour to be friendly companions to your children. Also it is the "animal" saying the sounds and words, not the learning child. This of course, removes any personal feeling and keeps things in the realm of fun and interest.

Those "talking animals" most frequently used in kindergarten speech improvement classes as vehicles for teaching speech enhancement are listed herewith. (There will be some variation as the SSS can be "Sammy Snake's sound" or "The Teakettle" sound), for instance. This is a partial list but others will be shown as we go along. We also use most of the same animals and objects in our cassettes and materials.

¹ The audio material was originally produced on two cassettes.