

Conceptbuilding: Developing Meaning Through Narrative and Discussion (1992)

by Peg Reichardt

Publisher: Thinking Publications, <http://www.thinkingpublications.com>

Available from: Jan Avis, 1-800-567-1147

Cost: \$42.00

Reviewer: Kathy Colwell, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta

Conceptbuilding provides procedures and activities to address concept knowledge in language and learning disabled elementary aged children. *Conceptbuilding* uses the theoretical basis of a "shared activity model" where routine and a shared communicative context (Nelson, 1986) are employed to increase knowledge of spatial, temporal, quality, quantity, and social-emotional relationships.

This routine and shared communicative context is established through short contrived (nonpictorial) oral concept stories, interactive story discussions and reasoning questions, imagery and drawing/representation of story events and finally, through story retelling activities. The author targets specific outlined concepts and provides reasoning questions for each cause and effect *Conceptbuilding* story. The stories primarily address the narrative skill levels and topic interests of children aged 6 to 10 years. A nice feature of *Conceptbuilding* is that several stories provide optional endings, open-ended or two-part stories allowing for flexibility and creativity. The author provides suggestions on writing one's own "concept stories".

Rather than teaching concept vocabulary words in isolation, *Conceptbuilding* provides a holistic-type approach to learning concept word meanings and relationships in a natural (story/discussion) context. In addition, the student is encouraged and assisted in creating her or his own story imagery and in organising thoughts prior to concretely representing concepts through drawing or, when fine motor difficulties exist, through picture manipulation (i.e., feltboard). Continued learning and repetition of concepts is then accomplished through story retelling. The author indicates that the long term goal of *Conceptbuilding* is such that a student will demonstrate understanding of concept relationships to describe events and communicate ideas with "adequate clarity". In addition, *Conceptbuilding* may prove useful in remediating other language disorders, some of which are morphology and syntax, narrative development, reasoning, and question comprehension.

In this writer's opinion, meaningful contexts and experiences are essential in concept acquisition and generalisation. *Conceptbuilding* uses this approach as its theoretical basis and is thus viewed as a valuable tool in teaching concept word meanings and relationships, especially when used in conjunction with other concept development activities. The author provides simple and clear procedures and useful examples and suggestions to aid in successful implementation.

Conceptbuilding seems to be especially beneficial when implemented with a group of clients or when incorporated within a classroom learning period.

Reference

Nelson, K. (1986). *Event knowledge: Structure and function in development*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Easy Does It for Apraxia and Motor Planning

by Robin Shode and Catherine Chamberline

Publishers: LinguiSystems Inc., 1-800-776-4332, <http://www.linguisystems.com>

Cost: \$69.95

Reviewer: Deann Plouffe, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta

Easy Does It for Apraxia and Motor Planning outlines a comprehensive treatment program for facilitating improved speech intelligibility in children with motor planning deficits. Given the resistance of such deficits to remediation through traditional articulation and phonological treatment approaches, this two-book set is a welcome resource for clinicians working with dyspraxic students. While the *Easy Does It* programme borrows from traditional approaches, it differs in its emphasis on developing sound sequencing skills and closed syllables in increasingly more complex tasks. The programme is intended for use with children ages 4-12 years, but could be easily adapted for a younger population.

The Therapy Manual hierarchially outlines the goals and objectives of the programme, enabling clinicians to systematically train production of vowel sequences and isolated consonants, consonant and vowel combinations, one-syllable (CVC) words, multisyllabic words, phrases and sentences, and consonants blends in words.

The authors emphasise the effectiveness of a multisensory approach and describe the use of several auditory, visual, tactile, and kinaesthetic cues. Pictures and descriptions of hand signals used for elicitation of individual sounds and words are included. The therapy manual also provides a discussion of strategies and general guidelines for intervention. Additional tips accompany each objective and provide the clinician with troubleshooting techniques and ideas for extra practice of newly introduced skills. Explanations of specific activities, which correspond to worksheets found in the materials book, also accompany each objective. Activity sheets are reproducible and will undoubtedly serve as a valuable time saver. Another attractive feature for the busy clinician is the inclusion of CVC and multisyllabic word lists as well as lists of two- and three-word phrases and sentences. Finally, sample lesson plans and data keeping forms will assist the clinician to systematically structure and track therapy sessions.

Given the relatively limited selection of treatment resources in this area, the *Easy Does It for Apraxia and Motor Planning* programme will undoubtedly be well received. While modifications to the programme may be necessary in order to address the specific needs of individual clients, it provides useful guidelines and structure for intervention with this population of children.

Phonobuilding: Using Narratives to Facilitate Phonological Development (1993)

by Jerry Vicinio

Publisher: Thinking Publications, <http://www.thinkingpublications.com>

Available from: Jan Avis, 1-800-567-1147

Cost: \$50.75

Reviewer: Kathy Colwell, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta

Phonobuilding consists of 22 contrived short stories designed to address speech and language skills in a holistic manner. *Phonobuilding*, influenced by Hodson and Paden, primarily addresses phonological skill development through black and white pictograph stories for children aged three to nine years presenting with mild to severe phonological delays.

Each *Phonobuilding* story contains one phonological pattern with a separate page of reproducible target word illustrations designed for extra practice activities. Most pictographs chosen to be represented contain facilitative phonetic contexts; however, target word suggestions are provided for "first" and for "later" phonological cycles. The author provides a nice summary of the cyclic phonological approach and provides suggestions of how to use the pictograph stories in conjunction with this approach. When using a traditional phonological approach, target sounds rather than patterns can be selected to use the stories.

Through use of the *Phonobuilding* stories, a whole language approach to treatment is possible. This is highly beneficial to many of the clients we see. Vocabulary, reasoning, comprehension, emergent literacy, narrative, and written language skills can be enhanced in addition to phonology. The author provides activity examples for each of these areas and provides an overview of the levels of narrative development (Applebee, 1978).

As recognised by the author, the *Phonobuilding* pictograph stories do not represent "good literature". The contrived stories were created primarily to address the need for a specific number of words with a specific phonological pattern. In this writer's experience, stories and pictograph cards need to be used creatively and supplemented by other materials to maintain client interest and motivation. The stories have been specifically useful in auditory bombardment tasks and as a starting point to treatment. Furthermore, the pictograph stories have been extremely helpful in facilitating a natural context in which generalisation of phonological sounds and patterns can occur with a variety of listeners and situations.

Reference

Applebee, A. (1978). *The child's concept of story*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

The Source for Apraxia Therapy

by Kathryn J. Tomlin

Publishers: LinguiSystems Inc., 1-800-776-4332, <http://www.linguisystems.com>

Cost: \$53.95

Reviewer: Carol Dearden, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta

The *Source for Apraxia Therapy* is intended to provide the clinician with lists of printed words and sentences for use with adult clients. The author states that the exercises are meant to help the client transfer from an impaired auditory feedback system to a visual-auditory-kinaesthetic system. The author points out that the book can be used with clients who exhibit apraxia, dysarthria, dysfluencies, oesophageal speech, pronunciation problems, or difficulty with paralinguistics.

The book is organised into three sections. The first section presents phonemes which have been grouped according to place of articulation, beginning with the most visible. Lists consisting of monosyllabic, bisyllabic, and multisyllabic words can be found. Short and long sentences for individual phonemes in initial word position are also included. The sentences begin at a level which may be too difficult for some clients.

Section 2 is entitled "Articulation/Fluency/Phrasing". Within each task and throughout the section, there is a progression in level of difficulty. Included are rhyming words, sentences containing rhyming words and an extensive choice of monosyllabic, bisyllabic, and multisyllabic words, sentences of increasing length and complexity, several paragraphs, and two narratives. Lists of similar words, compound words, irregular verbs, heteronyms, and word-form variations provide considerable choice for drill work.

Paralinguistic drills are found in the third section. Sentences for practising pitch variation, word emphasis, and intonation are provided.

A simple therapy tracking chart is included in the appendix. Some therapy ideas and criteria for progress are given by the author. The book does not provide specific suggestions for practising speech in more spontaneous communication situations. Also, it is left to the clinician to be "flexible and creative" with the stimulus items.

Large print and wide spacing between words and sentences make the exercises easy for most clients to see. Although copyrighted, the pages may be copied for use by individual clients. Some words may be unfamiliar, but the author reasons that these can still be useful for speech practice. *The Source for Apraxia Therapy* is well organised and contains a good variety of words and sentences. It would be a readily useful treatment resource for clinicians working with speech-impaired adults.

