

Strategy 7: The Speech Hierarchy

DESCRIPTION/PURPOSE:

A speech hierarchy is a series of identified steps towards achieving a specific goal. These steps are usually rank-ordered from easiest to hardest. A hierarchy used in this way helps children become desensitized to fears associated with speaking in certain situations.

Hierarchies are used in a similar fashion when teaching speech modification skills. Manipulating variables across the hierarchy (e.g., topic, model) helps the child achieve success at each step. This success helps build positive attitudes.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE:

We or the child may identify a difficult speaking situation. Other strategies, (e.g., webbing/concept mapping or flow charts) may be used to further explore the topic before a hierarchy is developed. Next, a series of small systematic steps are created from easiest to most difficult and listed on the hierarchy. Finally, the clinician helps the child work through each step in the hierarchy.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVE:

The child will identify ___ difficult speaking situations and develop and execute steps in the speech hierarchy.

Your Assignment:
write out your own
hierarchy of difficult
speaking situations.