

down syndrome
south australia

We help people with Down Syndrome march to the beat of their own drum.

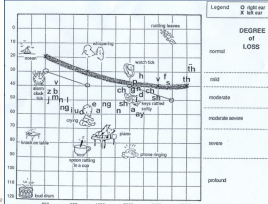

**Developing Literacy Skills
in children
with Down syndrome**


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Medical

Before beginning the programs and during the programs, have a medical check up.

- Hearing impairment – glue ear, wax build up
- Visual impairment
- Blood test –iron ,zinc and thyroid deficiencies





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Learning Styles


Failure avoidance

The student will avoid skills/tasks where they feel they may be unsuccessful.
They may refuse to attempt the task

Implications

Inappropriate behaviours may occur when :

- An unfamiliar task is presented
- The task appears to be too long
- The task appears difficult




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Failure avoidance

Strategies :

- Use novelty
- It feels like this. - do it together using hand over hand.
- You start the task - my turn, your turn
- Give only small sections of the task at a time
- Breakdown each new skill into small steps using task analysis



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Errorless Learning

The student does not learn from their mistakes. They continue to make the same mistake.

- The student needs to be presented with tasks that will give immediate success.
- Consistency across staff essential


Implications

- Unless explicit teaching is used an incorrect method will be internalised.



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Errorless learning


Strategies :

- Teach the skill until it is learnt before free practice.
- Do not let the child make a mistake, correct immediately
 - *Teach the child how to write letters hand over hand, until it has been internalised.
 - *Give the correct word when they make a reading mistake.



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Literacy skills

Literary Skills

Literacy is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately in a range of contexts. It also involves the integration of speaking and listening and critical thinking with reading and writing.

(DEET Australia's Language, 1991)




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Literary Skills

Children with Down syndrome are not simply delayed in their development but are affected by a number of specific learning difficulties which lead to asynchrony across different pathways, within some areas such as language.
(Sue Buckley)

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Literary Skills

Any assumptions we make about teaching literacy skills may not hold true for a student with Down syndrome.
(Sue Buckley)




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Reading

Reading Research

The normal child has mastered an enormous range of language skills by the age of 5 years and is speaking sentences of near adult complexity. When he learns to read he is simply learning an alternative written code for the spoken language he has already mastered. The Down syndrome child is learning to read as if it were a first language. He has to learn the sound and meaning of each word as he progresses through the flashcard vocabulary. He is learning to speak and read side by side.



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(Lane & Stratford)

Reading Research

The research strongly suggests the introduction of reading and signing at an early age (approximately 3 years old), as an augmentative form of communication.

MILESTONE	RANGE FOR CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME	TYPICAL RANGE
LANGUAGE		
First Word	1 – 4 years	1 – 3 years
Two-Word Phrases	2 – 7.5 years	15 – 32 months




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Reading Research

- The spoken word is a transient event passing through the listeners ears quickly. A written word allows for stable processing over a longer period of time.
- Children can learn to read when they have very little spoken language and they can learn to read words they cannot speak.
- The words first seen in print seem to transfer more readily to use in the child’s everyday speech than the words they just hear.




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Reading Research

- Practicing two-word and three-word sentences in reading accelerated their emergence in the child’s speech.
- Practicing proper sentences in reading leads to the use of syntax in speech.
- Reading practice improves phonology and articulation.
- The children who read early achieve higher levels of literacy and linguistic competence than has been expected.



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(Buckley & Bird)

Reading Research

Students who had learnt to read had significantly better language and memory scores than those who had not learnt to read.

(Adapted from Dr Glenys Laws)




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Summary

- Learning to read is not the same process for children with Down syndrome as it is for normal children.
- Children with Down syndrome learn to read as if it were a first language.
- Their range of language skills is built up in a different order and using different strategies from those of normal children.



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Reading


Pre-requisites:

match

select

name

Picture lotto– 2,4,6,9 pictures / words



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Video – Hannah lotto Mitchell on Ipad

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Reading-a Whole Word Approach

Selecting Vocabulary :

- Nouns (10-15) that are specific to the child – family names, toys, food, pets, TV shows
- Verbs related to the nouns. eat, play, hug, kick
- Combine nouns with verbs(eat chips, hug mum, kick ball, Tom play)
- Carrier phrases (I, can, see, here, is, look at, my)
- Add letters & numerals as the child shows interest

Do not change words to make grammatical sense.
If you do, you will need to teach them as new words.
(mum drink - Mum drinks)

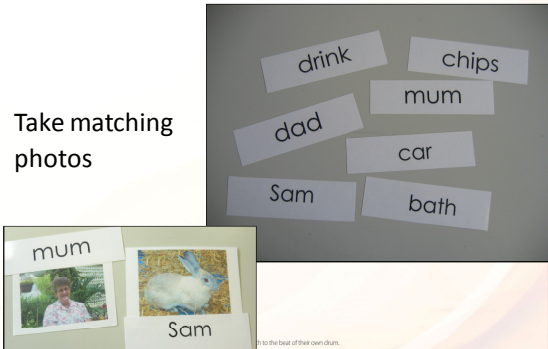


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Reading

Flashcards must all be the same size and font

Take matching photos






It is to the best of their own ability.

Reading

Teaching Single Words

- use own name or high interest word
- use a sign to support the word (expect sound)
- Match word to person, object or photo



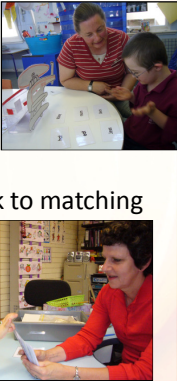



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Reading

Assessment (no prior practice)

- Selects from choice of words
- Names
- If correct – introduce new word
- If incorrect – reteach
- If continually incorrect – go back to matching or discard the word





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Reading





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Selecting



Video Cher/Kye



We help people with Down Syndrome reach to the best of their own ability.

Video Cher, Kye (4)



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Naming



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[illegible]

Practice

Children as learners... need to have opportunities to practise, practise and practise too!

It takes an adult, on average, nine full weeks to learn something new and have the new learning assimilated into the human brain.

The Brain that Changes Itself Norm Doidge

We need to hear a word 2,000 times in context to be able to use it with meaning.

