



***A Structured Language Approach to Teach
Language and Literacy to Hearing and
Visually Impaired Pupils with Autism***

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Purpose of Presentation

This paper describes how *Structured Methods in Language Education: SMILE*, a adaptation of the Association Method, originally designed to teach beginning speech and language to deaf children, was adapted to meet the needs of an autistic population and then of necessity to pupils who in addition may have a visual impairment

What is SMiLE?

SMILE is a step-by-step multisensory program, based on the *Association Method* that assumes you learn best when various forms of verbal and visual behavior are combined.

SMiLE is appropriate for pupils who are having significant problems learning to speak, read, or write.

These may include visual, hearing, cognitive and affective disorders.

What does **SMiLE** do?

It teaches spoken and written production of sounds, sound and word recognition, reading and writing in a multisensory, structured, step-by-step manner thus meeting the needs of students with autism.

Why use **SMiLE**
—for pupils with low-vision

It can be an important part of the literacy development program for pupils with visual handicaps because it is possible to employ any print modification as books and exercises are adapted to their cognitive as well as visual and auditory needs.

Modifications

- Print size** - -some visually impaired pupils see better when print is small, others when it is large. Gradations in size and thickness can be important.
- Color** - Some pupils see better with black letters on a white background, others yellow on black, or other combinations.
- Texture** - Some benefit from raised letters, others when there is depth.

Modifications

Formatting - The amount of print on a page may need to be varied.

Use of lines - Lines may be helpful or not.

Surface angle - A flat or angled surface, dull or shiny background, could make a difference.

These modifications, particularly using short, simple, stimulus bound procedures also meet the needs of pupils who have learning and attention problems in general.

Why use **SMiLE**

—for pupils in Auditory-Verbal and other programs for DHH students

- The AV approach is based upon guiding principles which enable children who are deaf or hard of hearing to learn to use even minimal amounts of amplified residual hearing or hearing through electrical stimulation (cochlear implants) to listen, to process verbal language, and to speak.
- **SMiLE** also incorporates those principles as part of a total speech-language learning program.

Who can instruct SMiLE?

- SMILE can be readily learned by reading specialists, speech pathologists and regular and special education teachers including vision and hearing resource personnel.
- A team approach, including all staff working with the pupil, and the family where possible, is best.

Getting familiar with SMiLE

- SMILE has five modules. It begins on a basic nonverbal level “attention-getting” with each module adding additional skills culminating in the ability to develop, read and write short stories.
- Each module is supported by a *Teacher’s Guide* which provides practice sheets and activities for a variety of workbooks developed on a continuing basis.

LANGUAGE MODULE 1

- Attention-getting activities.
Attending and tracking skills are addressed.
- Beginning teaching of phonemes and graphemes.
Includes steps which require visual as well as auditory discrimination and speechreading.
- Consonant-vowel combinations.

Six Steps in Teaching Phonemes

- Step 1** Introducing new sound
 - Repeating sound after teacher
 - Articulation practice.
- Step 2** Tracing letter, then articulating sound
- Step 3** Copying letter, then articulating sound
- Step 4** Auditory-Visual Discrimination
 - Teacher produces same sound. Pupil repeats sound
 - Pupil finds letter and points to it saying the sound
 - Pupil does activity with letter...
- Step 5** Saying sound from memory, or "reading."
 - Pupil looks at letter and says sound (recalls without prompting).
- Step 6** Writing letter from memory when teacher says sound.

Pupil's Reading Book

- As soon as the pupil learns one sound a reading book is begun.
- Only the teacher writes in this book.
- It only contains sounds the pupil knows.

Because there are no prepackaged readers, information is placed in the book as it is learned, in the best format for the visual attributes of the pupil.

Reading book Cover & drawn picture

My
Sounds
Book
Tania



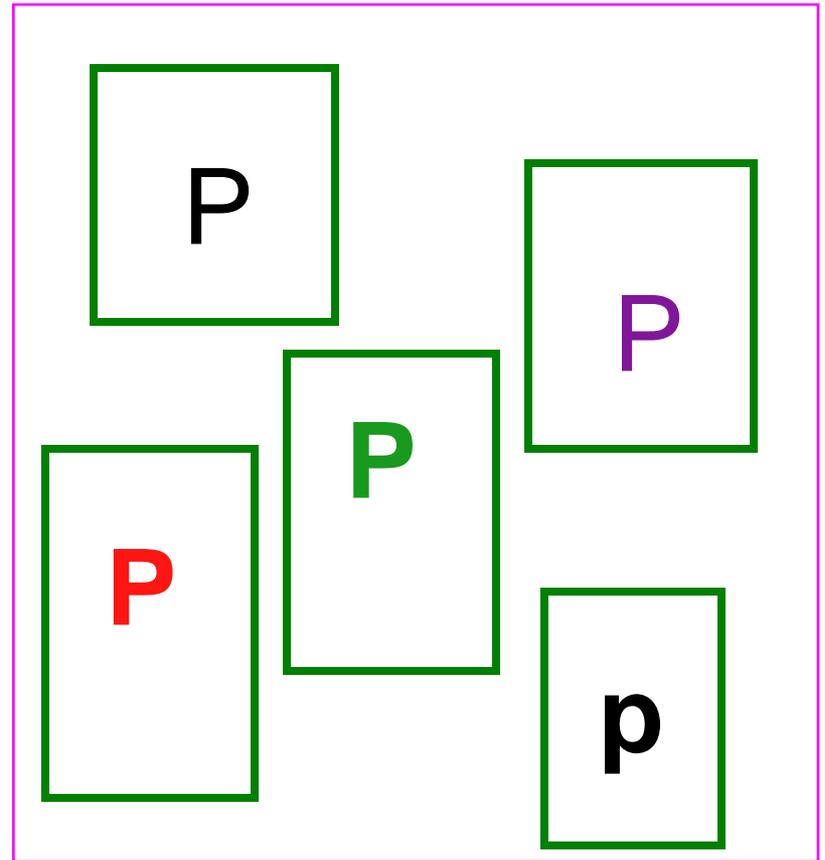
Sample page First letter-sound learned

Page 4 in

My Sounds Book:

Put 5 letters

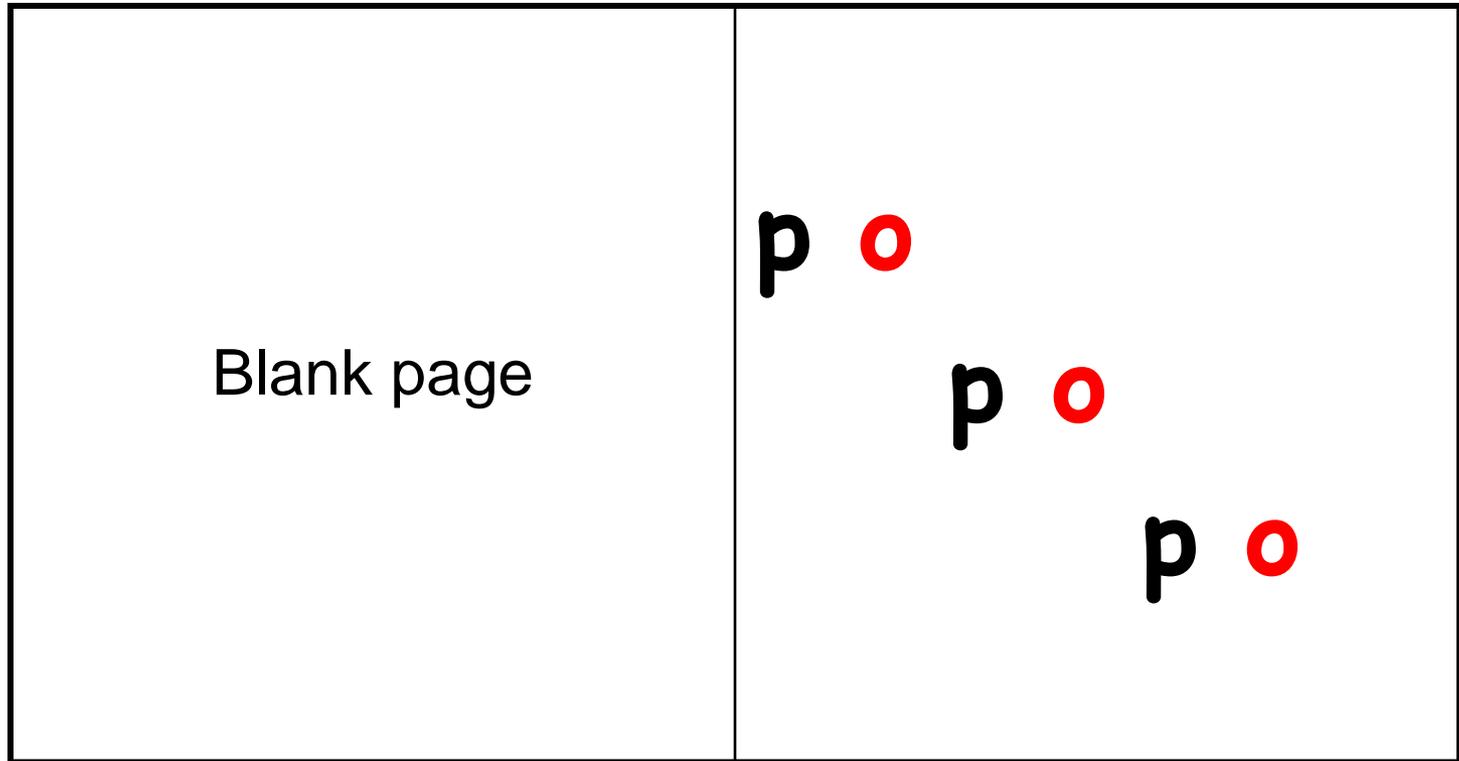
- Different colors
- Surrounding design same color
- Only use right side page in book



Drop Drills

- Drop drills begin after pupil learns 4 phonemes
- A drop drill is a consonant-vowel combination repeated three times in a descending order.
- Purposes:
 - Teaching sequence of sounds
 - Moving eyes left to right
 - Reading top to bottom
 - Improving auditory and visual memory

Example of Drop Drill



SMILE Module 2

Teaching 50 nouns

- Cross drill leads to learning a word
- Each word is reinforced by saying, reading and writing as well as associating it with objects and pictures.

Attending to visual needs

Because the teacher creates the reading book it is possible to make it in the most appropriate format for the pupil. For example, a large scrapbook size book, a loose-leaf size book, etc.

If heavier weight paper is necessary poster board can be cut into sheets and tied together to make the book.

Sample My Words Book

Cover & Picture

**My
Words
Book**

Jacob



Six Steps in Teaching Nouns

- 1. Cross drill (syllable drills leading to a noun).**
- 2. Writing noun below the drill and associating the word with a picture.**
- 3. Copying the noun while articulating sounds.**
- 4. Oral recall (show picture and pupil names).**
- 5. Auditory-visual discrimination (teacher says word, pupil repeats, finds picture and matches to word).**
- 6. Pupil writes noun after hearing it (spelling).**

Cross drill leading to first noun

bo

bo

bo

b i-e

b i-e

b i-e

b ee

b ee

bee

bee

Bee picture

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

bee

Module 3

Goal: The pupil will achieve understanding and use of —

- **Verbs**
- **Color names**
- **Number concepts**
- **Plurals**

Module 4

- **Develops the pupil's capacity to say, read, write, and understand short sentences and questions that incorporate appropriate grammar and syntax.**
- **Sentences include to start:**
 - **pronouns**
 - **prepositions**
 - **have and has**
 - **present progressives**
 - **past tense**

First sentence

What do you see?

I see a



I see a



I see a



By the end of this module:

Pupil will understand and use questions—

What **do** you see?

What **is** this?,

Who **is** this?

What **do** you want?

Can a _____ ?

Where **is** the _____ ?

How many _____ ?

What color **is** the _____ ?

Module 5 develops description stories including questions and answers such as:

- **Animal Description stories**
- **Inanimate Object stories**
- **Personal Description stories**
- **Round-up stories**
- **Experience stories**

Assessment-Intervention-Assessment Model

SMILE incorporates a series of screening and skill charts to document evidence based progress in the program.

Data from most recent studies will be presented.

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