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Journey from Middle to High School: Language and Literacy Toolkit for SLPs

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Journey from Middle to High School:
Language Toolkit for School Based SLPs

Presented by:
**Kathleen J. Abendroth**, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe factors that increase motivation, resilience, and rapport with adolescents
- List 3 language strategies to foster student success
- Identify at least 4 therapy ideas for middle/high school students

Disclosures

Financial disclosure: Honorarium from speechpathology.com
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This learning event does not focus exclusively on any specific product or service. The presenter does not have a financial or conflict of interest with any material discussed today.
Middle School Development

Tweens (ages 9-12)

Puberty- girls before boys
Clumsy
Abstract thinking
Sarcasm
Mood swings
Emotional outbursts
Overreactions
Social ambiguity

(Lesesne, 2003)
Linguistic Changes in Middle School

1. Vocabulary - acquisition of Tier 2 vocabulary through academic discourse (receptive understanding precedes use)
2. Syntactic - Increased phrase and sentence length
3. Macrostructure - ability to summarize expository text
4. Inferencing - ability to apply context clues to comprehend
   (Lundine & McCauley, 2016)

High School Development
**Teens** (ages 13-18)

- Social media/technology (Barnes, 2018)
- Sexual orientation
- Social advocacy
- Opt out/ Drop out
- Pregnancy
- Mental health/ illness
- Criminal justice system
- Prefrontal cortex

**Linguistic Changes in High School**

1. **Complex Morphology** (Nippold & Sun, 2008)
2. **Syntax** - Greater use of clauses
3. **Vocabulary** - Tier 3 vocabulary subject specific
4. **Executive functioning** continues developing – planning, organization, memory and attention continues into early adulthood (Lundine & McCauley, 2016)
Language Impairment

**Strengths based perspective**

**Later development**

**Focus On:**
- Respect
- High expectations
- Individual interests
- Individual rate of change
- Assume competence

(Routman, 2003)

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How to Build

Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport
Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport

- Keep it real
  Use authentic topics and materials (Marlatt, 2018)
  Learn young adult culture (Lesesne, 2003)

- Increase resilience
  “The ability to bounce back from a negative experience”
  (Prince-Embury, 2006, in Caughter and Croft, 2018)

  Resilience is a social construct
  Resilience can be taught
Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport

Risk Factors

- Poverty
- Parental mental health
- Domestic Violence

Protective Factors

- Executive Functioning
- Emotional Regulation
- Positive Relationships

Caughter & Crofts, 2018; Masten (2004)

Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport

- Team mentality

  For younger students, a child must first think of themselves as a reader

  For older students, buy in to high school education is essential

  - School pride
  - Job preparedness
  - Seeing recent graduates working
  - College enrollment
Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport

- Understand Vulnerability

What do you do well?
What makes you feel vulnerable? (Brown, 2012)

Foster risk taking by offering choices

Motivation, Resilience, and Rapport

- Empowering Environments

Student choice
Avoid “round robin” reading- use shared, choral or volunteer reading
Focus on learning by doing (holistic)
Allow meaning to trump accuracy in some instances
Toolkit Refresher
Therapy Ideas

Growth Mindset Activities

Growth mindset vs. Fixed mindset (Dweck, 2016; Dweck & Leggett, 1988)

Teaches neuroplasticity
Growth Mindset Activities

toolkit.refresher-therapy.ideas

biglifejournal.com

“How to Teach Growth Mindset to Kids”

4 Week Guide (free)

Journal for teens

Famous Failures

Possible goals: Specifically targets resilience; taking another person’s perspective, cause and effect, verbal reasoning skills, executive functioning skills
Videogame Dictionary

Possible goals:
- homonyms,
- identify another person’s perspective,
- apply background information,
- comprehension

Spinoff idea: Internet Safety
Nonprofit service
Spinoff idea- Podcasts
(Bianchi-Pennington, 2018)

Possible Goals: Analyze online sources, listening comprehension, planning, sequencing, social interaction, following multistep directions, understand multiple perspectives, defend opinion citing evidence from the text, expository discourse

Toolkit Refresher- Therapy Ideas

Poetry Unit

Possible goals: analyze text, figurative language, poetic vocabulary, creative writing, listening comprehension
Poetry Unit
Ideas:
Blackout poems
Found Poems
Concrete Poems

Reading Journals
or “Letter-essays” (Atwell, 2007)

Possible goals: turn taking, written expression, executive functioning, coherence, written conversation
Toolkit Refresher - Journals

10-11-16

Blew you me I’ll Never
Run away I’m away
Going to be your little
Garn, you

10-11-16

Dear Sophie,

Blew you me, I’ll never
Run away, I’m always gonna
Be your old Mama Kilda.

Tell mom I love you.

12:00 am and back. You even
Should a button on it. Wow!

Love Always,

Momma

Toolkit Refresher - Journals (cont’d)

10-11-16

Blew you me I'll Never
Run away I'm away
Going to be your little
Garn, you

1-1-19

Dear Mama,

Happy new year to you and I ever did.
I been home at the holidays. And I hope
It was peaceful. Good that he ate the whole
Rack. Pleasing me trying to
Do this before I go to bed. I'll make more
That my room is clean and I'll remind you
Not to use big plastic bags.

I'm your

Wax, your baby

February 2023,

But still (as always)

Love,
Bullying Awareness for Teachers (Hays, et al., 2014)

Mean Chicks, Cliques, and Dirty Tricks (Karres, 2004)

Possible goals: perspective taking, improve reasoning skills, metacognition, editing, planning a project to completion, syntax, persuasion
INTRODUCTION

Hey Teachers and Students,

We want to tell you about how bullying really goes in school. We think that the bullying packets make no sense at all. They weren’t written by students; they were written by adults who have no idea what bullying is about. If they were living in our generation, they would understand what it’s like to be bullied. Our class wanted to inform you about our perspectives as middle school students. We wanted to get through to someone about what it’s like to be mistreated and ignored. The main reason we started writing this was because we didn’t like the bullying packets that the school board gave us. Our purpose was to show how we feel about being a bully’s victim. Another reason we wrote this was to persuade students not to bully other students. We chose this genre because we thought it would be more interesting and realistic to the reader. It best suits the stories we needed to tell. Teachers, staff members, principals, we give you this gift and hope you embrace it.

-Dr. Reed’s 7th grade ELA class, 2013-14 school year

When you step into East Side Middle School, it’s like you’ve opened Pandora’s Box. Middle school is rough. It’s every man for himself unless you have friends. You can be alone, I call it Hades. The locker room devour you and turns you into a stranger, judging people by their underwear. Jimmy said, “What is that greenish brownish stuff in your underwear?” The coach said, “Is that Barbio?”

“Today in the life of a middle school student is horrible. The partnerships also aren’t that great either. There are two kinds of relationships. There is the inappropriate kind, and then the friendly kind. Once you’re in either one of them you’re stuck forever.”
CHAPTER ONE: THOUGHTS FROM THE GUYS...

Hey readers,

You think elementary is easy? Wait till middle school. Girls talk about Twilight, boys talk about sports. When boys are fighting we yell out and scream, while girls are like, “Why are they fighting each other? That is so hood rat.”

Trust me, you don’t know how bad middle school is! It’s like anarchy; there are NO rules! The locker room is the darkest place in the school, besides the bathroom. A lot of people fight in there. Walking through the hallway on the way to lunch is like the zombie apocalypse.

Toolkit Refresher- Therapy Ideas

Set up a store front

Brew Crew
PBIS

Possible goals: turn taking, multitasking, social interaction, calculation, verbal interactions, following a verbal script, following multistep directions, using AAC, problem solving
Job interview skills unit
Spinoff idea: Career literacy

Possible goals: functional life skills, verbal interactions, syntax, perspective taking, executive functioning, comprehension, planning, social interaction, career transition, expository discourse

Letters

- To a new student
- To a younger student
- High school Handbook

Possible goals: written collaboration, perspective taking, demonstrate understanding of rules, social interaction, editing
Toolkit Refresher - Therapy Ideas

Letters to a New Student

Possible goals:
Reading fluency, oral reading, verbal interactions, turn taking, willingness to read, decreased avoidance, increased risk taking, oral speech skills
Toolkit Refresher - Therapy Ideas

Study skills

Possible goals: planning, executive function, improve academic organization, turn in assignments on time, complete homework, implement graphic organizer, time management, reasoning skills

Strategies to Help You Get Started
#1 Understand avoidance behaviors

“Compensatory adaptations”

When a participant is expected to complete a task but does not, instead shifting the burden to another person.

(Damico, et al., 2008)

Common Avoidance behaviors

- Picture description
- Off-topic comments or joking
- On-topic comments that avoid task
- Repetition of what adult read
- Asking questions
- Direct refusal

(Damico et al., 2008; Damico et al., 2011)
Avoidance is not personal to you!
Positively viewed, it reveals:
  - Awareness of difficulty
  - Desire to overcome
  - Attempt to develop strategies
  - Way to monitor progress
  - Sensitivity to success/failure
  - Maintenance of interaction during difficult task
(Damico, et al., 2008; Whited, 2015)

Strategy #2 Go beyond “Sound it out”

WHY?
Phonemic awareness most effective before 1st grade
Comprehension and shared reading
Teach additional strategies
Effective teachers use wide variety of cues
(Routman, 2003)
Strategy #2 Go beyond “Sound it out”

HOW?

“What would make sense there?”
Provide unknown word
“Skip it!”
“Go to the end of the sentence and then guess what would make sense”
Provide binary choice
“Does that [guess] make sense?”

#3 Assess Your Feedback

- Use Recasts (Cleave, et al. 2015)
- Teach Inferencing (Barth & Elleman, 2017)
# Books that Hook Teen Readers

## Middle School
- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney
- *Dork Diaries* by Rachel Renee Russell
- *The 13-Story Treehouse* by Andy Griffiths
- *Wonder* by RJ Palacio

## High School
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (Police brutality; Income disparity)
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds (Racial tension; Police brutality)
- *He Said, She Said* by Kwame Alexander (Social Protest)
- *Blended* by Sharon Draper (Biracial experiences; blended family dynamics)

## Conclusions

Contact Kathleen.Abendroth@gmail.com
References

- References included in separate pdf for participants to download