



CHIL.D. Association

Information Sheet for Teachers

Supporting children with speech–language and related

Cued Articulation

General Information

Cued Articulation and Cued Vowels are hand cue systems for demonstrating the 49 consonant and vowel sounds which make up our language system. These hand cue systems were developed by Jane Passy, a Speech and Language Therapist in the United Kingdom.

Cued articulation / cued vowels provides a mechanism for visually and movement based (kinaesthetic) learning about the phonological (sound) elements of our language system. It can provide support for children:

- learning how to articulate sounds (eg for the child with an articulation disorder or other speech production disorder, such as developmental verbal dyspraxia);
- who may be experiencing difficulties in hearing the difference between sounds (auditory discrimination);
- learning about the sound system of our language for literacy, as in the development of phonological awareness (eg ‘sounding out words’ and rhyming); and
- who are learning to or who may be experiencing difficulties with the encoding and decoding elements of reading and spelling.

Procedure and Application

Cued articulation / cued vowels can be used with an individual, small group, or whole class. The hand movements are logical, formed near the mouth/face, and each hand sign represents one sound. Although there are 26 consonant sounds and 23 vowel sounds which make up our spoken English language, learning of the hand cues is relatively easy, and of course may be learnt gradually and as required.

Cued Articulation

The hand cue signs for consonants represent the way a consonant sound is articulated, thus providing the child with a visual cue, which is individual and represents the unique characteristics of that sound. The method in which the fingers are moved indicates whether the sound is made, by actually stopping and then releasing air, or if air is allowed to pass through the mouth without obstruction, or a combination of the two. The position of the hand cue represents whether the sound is made at the front or back of the mouth or is a nasal sound, while the shape of the hand suggests lip and tongue positions and movements. The number of fingers used indicates whether the sound is quiet (voiceless) or noisy (voiced), with one finger used for voiceless sounds, and two for voiced sounds.

Each of the consonant sounds also has an associated colour cue which can assist when reading/spelling the written word. Cued articulation can be used with or without the accompanying colour cues.

Cued vowels

Individuals need to be able to discriminate precisely between the 23 vowel sounds in spoken English for speech and literacy (for which there are only five written vowel symbols). All vowel sounds are made by changing the shape of the airways and mouth. Consequently, vowels are more difficult than consonants to be identified visually as someone is articulating them. The hand cues for the vowels, like for the consonants are based on where the sounds are made and the specific way they are made.

Activities and Use in the Classroom

The following are some suggested uses for using cued articulation and cued vowels within the classroom, but are only a small selection of the myriad of opportunities available.

- ◆ pair the cue sign with the verbal model when teaching young children the written representations for vowel sounds.
- ◆ as children are struggling to decode a written word, model the cue sign as the child is pointing to the printed letter. This is particularly beneficial when decoding vowel sounds.
- ◆ encourage the children to learn and use the hand cues spontaneously, as a means to facilitate their own speech production, and decoding/encoding the written word.
- ◆ demonstrate the cue sign for the final sound in words, in conjunction with verbal instruction, when teaching children the skill of rhyming.
- ◆ demonstrate a sequence of two sounds when teaching children to say, read, or spell consonant blends (eg *fr*, *tr*).
- ◆ prompt and model with the cue signs when teaching children to identify initial sounds in words, as part of phonological awareness work.
- ◆ provide the hand cue sign for sounds which may be easily confused (eg /f/ and 'th').

It is highly important to facilitate the hand cue sign at precisely the same time as the verbal production, in order to ensure the correct links are made.

Resources

In order to learn the cues and thus implement Cued Articulation / Cued Vowels, the appropriate book or video must be purchased.

- ◆ *Cued Vowels* and *Cued Articulation*, by Jane Passy. Approximately \$16 for each book.
- ◆ *A Handful of Sounds*, edited by Jane Passy. This resource is a compilation of chapters by users of cued articulation and its application in practice and is approximately \$43.
- ◆ *Cued Articulation charts*. Approximately \$50.
- ◆ *Seeing a Sound and Learning the Cues* (Video demonstrating all of the hand cues and illustrating some of the ways in which this system can be used to support children with speech and literacy difficulties). Approximately \$50.

All are available through Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) www.acer.edu.au

Talk with your Speech Language Pathologist about how specific children in your classroom may benefit from the use of Cued Articulation.

References

- Passey, Jane. Cued Articulation. Northumberland: Stass Publications, 1993. Published by arrangement, Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research, 1990.
- Passey, Jane. Cued Vowels. Northumberland: Stass Publications, 1993. Published by arrangement, Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research, 1990.

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