

Sound Games for Dyslalias

The Practical Application of Van Riper's Theoretical Chart.

By Joan Streit, B.A. Log.

Van Riper¹ advocates a nine step programme in the correction of defective articulatory sounds.

The nine stages are as follows:

1. Cannot make the sound nor discriminate it from its error even when word pairs are pronounced by another individual.
2. Cannot make the sound but can hear the error in another's speech.
3. Can make the sound in isolation but only after strong stimulation by teacher.
4. Can make the sound in isolation without requiring stimulation.
5. Can use the sound in nonsense syllables in all positions.
6. Can use the sound in isolated words when careful.
7. Can use the sound in careful speaking of prepared sentences.
8. Can use the sound habitually in swift unemotional speech.
9. Can use the sound habitually in swift emotional speech.

Using this outline as a basis, an attempt has been made to construct games which can be used for motivation and stimulation in the implementation of these steps.

The speech teacher in a public school situation finds herself confronted with the problem of handling a number of dyslalic children simultaneously so that therapy takes place primarily in a group situation.

Since the time is not available to establish rapport with each individual child, the speech therapist must construct an atmosphere wherein this can be established through play and pleasant speaking situations.

Keeping in mind the scientific approach as advocated by Van Riper, the following games have been devised for each individual stage, in order that they may provide

- (a) play and pleasant speaking situations.
- (b) an adequate group situation.

STAGE 1.

Leave out — only for testing purposes.

STAGE 2.

(a) **The Card Game.** This was originally bought as a game called "Speed" which includes picture cards of aeroplanes, trains, ships and cars. To each vehicle is then assigned a sound e.g. for a th-tacism group the sounds are: aeroplane-th, ship-f, train-d, and car-voiced-th (f and d are used as they are most commonly substituted for th); for a Sigmatism group the sounds

are: aeroplane-th, ship-f, train-s, and car-z; and finally for a Rhotacism group they are: aeroplane-r, ship-g, (Afrikaans), train-l, and car-w. In this game, the pictures of all the 'planes, ships, trains and cars are placed in a pack. For this stage, the teacher holds the pack and raises the top card. Should this be a ship, she says "f" and the first child to recognise that this is the ship sound and says "ship" is rewarded with the card — and so on through the pack. The child with the most cards at the end is the winner of the game.

In this way the children are learning to discriminate the correct and wrong sounds.

(b) **Finding the sound.** An article is hidden by the therapist. When the child is near the hiding place, she says "th, r, or s" and she says "f, w, or th" when far from the object.

(c) **The Hidden Window Game.** The therapist hides behind a picture of a window so that her mouth is obscured. The children in front of the window attempt to pick out the correct sound from the sound series which she makes. If they make an error, they can open the window to make sure. It should be noted that the correct sound is presented in sequences of similar and different sounds. A charm is rewarded to the first child to notice the correct sound. The child with the most charms at the end of the game is the winner.

STAGE 3.

(a) **The Train Game.** This game consists of railway tracks drawn in the shape of a figure 8 with different coloured stations at different points and a cardboard train. Each child then chooses his station and each has a turn at pushing the train to the accompaniment of the therapist saying the sound to be learned, stopping at each station to refuel with water or coal. This is devised to teach the sound in isolation.

(b) **Hiding the cards.** The cards (with the sounds already given them in Game (a) of Stage 1), are hidden away by the therapist and when each is found, the child says the appropriate sound to the teacher in order to win the card.

STAGE 4.

(a) **The Card Game** — same as game in Stage 2 (a) but this time the children join in. Each child has a turn in picking up the top card but being careful to say only the appropriate sound, and the rest guess which picture was chosen. If the wrong sound is given e.g. f for th, they forfeit by replacing that card into the pack plus one of those which they have already won.

(b) **The Train Game** — The game is the same as Stage 3 (a) but is now continued with the children advanced to saying the sound themselves.

STAGE 5.

(a) **The Ladder Game.** The material consists of paired objects all of which entails an object climbing

a ladder in order to reach a goal e.g. a little charm of Humpety-Dumpety climbs the ladder to get to the top of the wall, a charm of Sailor Sam climbs a ladder to get into a ship. Each step of the ladder is a vowel sound and the charm represents a consonant, thus making a nonsense syllable. When the charm lands on a step he blends with it e.g. Humpty-Dumpty equals s - - he blends on each step and becomes — soo, ahsah, etc.

(b) **The Ping-Pong Game.** For this game the ping-pong table is drawn with people at each end. The ball is a counter. The object of this game for two to play and win a point for each correct saying of the nonsense syllable which the therapist says first. If said incorrectly, the opponent gains an extra point. The greatest number of points determines the winner.

These games provide the amount of stimulation required to keep a child's interest while attempting to form the new habit through nonsense syllable exercises.

STAGE 6.

(a) **Secrets.** To establish the new sound in words, this game is played by drawing on separate slips of paper, pictures of words containing the sound in all positions e.g. for the th sound — three, thumb, thief, path, birthday-cake, etc. Each person takes one, the remainder being left in the box. The object of this game is for each person to ask the one on his left "Have you got three, thumb, thief, etc.?" and so on through the list until each picture is discovered. One may not ask more than one object in one turn.

(b) **Climbing the House.** This is based on the game of "Snakes and Ladders". A large house is drawn with ladders leading to and from two windows on the top floor. In conjunction with this game the book "Speech through Pictures"² is used. Each child has a turn at throwing a dice and should they throw, for example, a five, that person has to say correctly what each of the five 'th, r or s' pictures to which the therapist points. If one picture is said incorrectly, then the person can only move four steps instead of the five which he threw.

(c) **The Thinking Game.** This game is also played with the book "Speech through Pictures".² The book is opened at the page containing the sound to be learned. One child thinks of a specific picture on the page and the others, question him until they guess the right one. The person who guesses correctly, merits the next turn. Questioning consists of "Are you thinking about?" — thumb, thief, etc. The answer has to be "No, I am not thinking about the thimble, thumb, etc.?"

STAGE 7.

(a) The games of **Climbing the house** and **Ladders** (same as Stage 6 (b) and Stage 5 (a)) are played also for this stage, substituting nonsense syllables and words by sentences from "Work and Practice" book.³ The ladders are therefore still being used as motivation for exercises.

STAGE 8.

(a) **Nursery Rhyme Game.** For this stage, the therapist uses the rhyme of "This is the House that Jack built" with appropriate pictures to illustrate each new character e.g. "this is the flour that lay in the house that Jack built". Thus using the "th" sound in swift unemotional speech. For Sigmatisms pictures of "Simple Simon" are used.

(b) **Finger Plays.** Another idea at this stage, is to make use of the numerous finger plays learnt from Nursery Schools such as "Cherry Stone", "Incy-Wincy Spider", "Five Straight Soldiers"⁴ for Sigmatisms, and "Humpety, thumpety", "Fee, fi, fo, fum"⁵ for Thetacisms, etc. The writer feels that finger plays help distract the attention from the speech sound being taught.

(c) **Story Game** "Th, R or S" objects may be placed in front of the children and they can be asked to tell a story about all the objects on the table.

(d) **"I went to Market" and "I Spy".** Other well-known games are those of "I went to market to buy a thimble, a birthday-cake, etc." Or "I spy with my little eye something with a s sound e.g. bracelet, socks, etc."

STAGE 9.

(a) **Dramatisations and Conversational Situations.** This consists of letting the children act out the nursery rhymes, finger plays and stories from Nemo-Davis⁶ and thus letting them use the sound in swift emotional speech.

(b) They should also be allowed to speak freely of the events of the day, etc.

By the time Stage 6 has been completed, it is often still necessary to allow the child to discriminate by saying contrasting sounds. The following game is used in this procedure.

The Contrast Game. Pictures of words beginning with conflicting sounds e.g. f and th in the case of Thetacisms; or th and s for Sigmatisms are drawn. The words can be sick and thick, sink and think, mouse and mouth or fin and thin, free and three, fort and thought, etc. Each child has a turn in thinking of one and the rest have to guess what he is thinking about but have to point to the object which they mean so that the therapist can see if they mean the right name for that particular object. This game is played in exactly the same manner as the game in Stage 6 (c).

The writer has found the above games to have been of some value in relation to the aims as initially set out. They do not and are not planned to cover a complete speech therapy programme but are designed primarily to aid the speech therapist who finds it difficult to equip herself with expensive toys and motivating games.

One cannot overlook the importance of parental and teacher co-operation or the value of regular practice but it is hoped that these games will find some small place in the speech therapist's programme.

¹Van Riper "Speech Correction." page 148.

²McCausland, Miller and Okie. "Speech through Pictures."

³McCullough. "Work and Practice Book."

⁴Boyce & Bartlett. Number Rhymes and Finger Plays.

⁵Barrows & Hall. Jack-in-the-Box.

⁶Nemo & Davis. Correction of Defective Consonant Sounds.