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Chart-sharing

GROUP LANGUAGE ACTIVITY TO INCREASE
RECALL OF FACTS

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Background

The activity described in this article was
conducted in an Oral Language class with eight
severely learning and language disabled junior
high students. This class is part of the SIMS
Project, which provides a highly structured
data-based program of individualized instruction
for severely learning disabled junior high
students. SIMS stands for Systematic
Instructional Management Strategies, terms which
describe the learning environment designed to
systematically establish individualized academic
and social goals for each student and to
continuously monitor and evaluate student
progress toward these goals. The Oral Language
class, which meets daily for one hour, is
co-taught by a learning disabilities teacher and a
speech clinician.

The students participate in a 15 minute group
activity focusing on language objectives from
orally presented material. These include: 1) 
participating five times in a discussion, 2)
answering questions appropriately, 3) answering
questions in complete sentences, 4) asking
questions appropriately, 5) identifying the main
idea. The following activity evolved from
attempts to design more oral language probes
that could be used to monitor the group as a
whole. The purpose of this probe was to
increase recall of facts form orally presented
material.

Method

During the group time, the learning disabilities
teacher read and asked questions from a
selection in the Mott Basic Language Skills
Program. The sections focused on the lives of
Charles Lindberg, Walt Disney and Althea Gibson.
A short discussion followed reviewing the
important information with the students. A
one-minute group timing of think/say facts was
conducted. The students were assigned seats for
this activity so that the first student responding
rotated weekly. Each student was given five
seconds to initiate a response before moving on
to the next student. The learning disabilities
teacher monitored this through visual and oral
cues. The speech clinician counted the responses
as either correct, incorrect, or a repeat on a
master tally sheet and this sheet was reviewed
with the students before a second timing was
done that week. This procedure was performed
and the results were charted once a week for
seven weeks. To determine an aim, the
following measures were taken into consideration:

1. Guidelines set forth by Unique Curriculums
   Unlimited (10-30 ideas said from material
   read);

2. A free frequency was taken by instructing
   the group to think/say material that they had
   mastered (naming different kinds of food).
The group named 29 foods in one minute;

3. A frequency aim was calculated by
   multiplying the frequencies for the first and
   second timings each by 50%, and adding these
   amounts to each frequency. This measure
   was suggested by the California Guideline for
   Rate Survey developed by the California
   Child Service Demonstration Center.

The group aim was set at 13 facts/minute for
both weekly timings. When the group reached
this aim by the fourth week, a new aim was
calculated and set at 20 facts/min. It was at
this point that the teachers decided to use the
following interventions in an attempt to see how
close the students could get to their free
frequency:

1. The students predicted the number correct
   for each timing based on the previous week's
data and/or the first timing for that week;

2. Tangible reinforcers were given when
   predicted aims were met;

3. Thirty second practice timings were
   conducted and a strong emphasis was placed
   on giving one or two word facts; and

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4. The time interval allowed between responses was reduced from five to three seconds.

Results and Conclusions
As shown in Charts 1 and 2, the group's correct responses accelerated by X2.5/month on the first timing and by X2.6/month on the second timing. The aim was met in both weekly timings. In analyzing the results, we found that when one or two wrong responses were given, the total number of facts increased (see the fifth, sixth, and seventh data points). As the subjects came closer to their free frequency, the form or quality of their responses improved. Also, by resetting the goal and using interventions, the students were able to recall facts from orally presented material approximating their free frequency.

This activity was a positive experience for the students and the teachers involved. This was the first attempt at setting a group rather than individual aims. It is our hope that by using similar group activities there will be some carryover to students' performances on their individual language aims.

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FROM 1-1/4 MILES TO A MARATHON: MONITORING PROGRESS ON THE STANDARD CELEBRATION CHART FOR 31 MONTHS

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On March 28, 1981, I purchased an inexpensive pair of running shoes, marked out a course with the aid of the odometer in my car and proceeded to run very slowly. At the end of 1-1/4 miles, I stopped because of fatigue. I was disappointed, because I had decided to chart "runs miles without stopping" on the Daily Standard Celebration Chart, and I had completed the movement only once. Chart 1 displays this initial performance on the Monthly Standard Celebration Chart.

Even though I was very sore the next day, I ran two miles before stopping. I experienced my first frequency multiplier—X2! I was beginning to feel encouraged. I ran 15 of the next 31 days, charting my daily performance and watching my weekly improvement on the Daily Standard Celebration Chart. On the 31st day, I ran 3 miles for the first time. On that day, I decided to run in a 10,000 meter race to be held at the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA) Convention on May 29th. This decision left only 32 days to prepare for the race.

I began running 4-6 days per week, attempting to increase my longest run each week. One week before the race, I ran 5 miles for the first time. On May 28, 1981, I completed the ABA 10,000 meter race in 57 minutes and 10 seconds (over 9 minutes per mile). The important word in the previous sentence is "completed." I was very excited! I had run 5.2 miles without stopping—a x6 frequency multiplier from my first day on the road, just 63 days ago. This performance is also displayed in Chart 1.

During the next 12 months, I continued running 3-6 days per week and entered a number of 10,000 meter races. My best performance was 44:02 (about 7 minutes and 35 seconds per mile). On June 6, 1982, I entered and completed my first half-marathon (13.1 miles) in 1:42:14 (about 7:20 per mile). I was elated! I had run over 13 miles—a x13 frequency multiplier from March 28, 1981. This performance is also shown in Chart 1.

During the next 12 months, I continued running 4-5 days per week, entering about fifteen 10,000 meter races. My best performance was 40:59 (about 6:33 per mile). On June 5, 1983, I entered and completed another half-marathon race in 1:38:21 (about 7:26 per mile).

Two months later I decided to train for my first marathon (26.2 miles). I ran 660 miles in 3-1/2 months, training for the "big" race. I charted "runs miles without stopping" on the Daily and Weekly Standard Celebration Charts. I also charted my longest run each week on the Weekly Standard Celebration Chart. My weekly performance and monthly improvement are shown in Chart 2. On October 30, 1983, I completed my first marathon in 3:14:21 (about 8:08 per mile). As I was coming down the last hill, I could see the finish line about 1/2 mile away. I started thinking about that first 1-1/4 miles and how far I'd come. I cannot adequately describe in this article how I felt at that moment. My body was almost totally drained, but my spirits were higher than they've ever been. Here I was, about to complete a performance I never dreamed possible! I had multiplied my "runs miles without stopping" performance x36 from my first day on the road, 31 months ago (see Chart 1).

During this 31 month period, I recorded "runs miles without stopping" on either the Daily or
Chart 1. A Group Language Activity: First Timing

- corrects
- incorrects
- repeats

Student predictions
Tangible reinforcers
30-second practice timings: one or two-word facts
3 seconds between responses

Peterson, C., Nelson, R., Holman, M., Rosemary, D., Group Language activity

To increase recall of facts.
Peterson, Carole, and Holman, Rosemary. Group language activity to increase recall of facts.


- student predictions
- tangible reinforcers
- 30-second practice timings; one or two-word facts
- 3 seconds between responses

- • corrects
- × incorrects
- ▲ repeats

Peterson, Carole, and Holman, Rosemary. Group language activity to increase recall of facts.