

Strategy: Using Visual Supports

At one of my kindergarten classes, I suggested the broad based strategy “Use visual supports (pictures) to support...social communication, expressive and receptive language, phonemic awareness and sound production” with the teacher. As a result, the class was focused on retelling stories with the aid of pictures, bringing in photos and asking/answering Wh- questions about them, using pictures to prompt children to remember directions, etc.

One little girl in the class was a reluctant communicator who rarely engaged with her peers and teachers, no matter what we tried. Most of the children had never even heard her voice and assumed she couldn't talk. For her, “Using visual supports (pictures)” meant that we sent home a talking photo album and, with the help of her family, she filled it with her favourite photos and recorded messages to go with the photos.

I was there the day that she brought the photo album back to school and I will never forget the look on her face as she showed the pictures and played the recordings for a small group of friends. Her face lit up and she and her friends giggled as they heard her voice for the first time. She paged through the book over and over, playing her voice for her friends. Her typically anxious face relaxed and we all got a glimpse of who she really was.

Rachel Reid
Speech Language Pathologist

Early Learning
Speech & Language
Broad-Based Strategies

Use Objects
as Visual
Supports

