



A+ Speech Therapy Speak with Confidence and Live Better

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Here is a culmination of seven key therapy tips from holding Summer Intensive Speech Therapy for four years. These tips are sure to help any therapist and child using the "SmartPalate" system. (For Therapist's mostly, but parents are welcome to read on.)

1. To get best results, teach children to "relax" from the beginning. Relaxing is such an important aspect as they start learning how to say their words correctly with the palatometer system. (This made it easier for them to eliminate the "awkward tension on lips, tongue and jaws, that were associated as they tried to say their words correctly.) Be sure and use the word "relax" and "nice and easy" for the first few days a lot.

2. Use "mirrors" to help the child watch his lips, tongue tip and jaws during the session and at home. I call it "mirror talk" practice to keep their tongue in their mouth and to keep their jaw or lips relaxed if that part was not required to say the word. I'd tell them to "let your tongue and air do the work". "Look at the screen," see how you are lighting up the right place with your tongue." The child should do daily mirror talk and even have them keep tallies of plus and minus if their tongue is correct or not, or jaw is correct or not, or lip is correct or not. Make sure they turn in their tallies to you.

3. Don't forget to emphasize good forward airflow! It was surprising how many kids would talk with tension with air in the back of their mouth. We worked on good control of air and loudness on vowels. This made a huge difference in almost all the kids. Really USE the "green sound waves" with the palate display view, on your palatometer system. I had to be "militant" about not letting the kids give up on this task till they could accomplish 5 correct long-loud vowels in isolation, then chaining it into syllables. It didn't take them long when we turned it into a competition with this. I got all 5 kids to accomplish this task!!! Then their "r" words got better quicker each day!!!! (The green waves will fill the whole bars if done loudly and cleanly. I have the child hold it for 2 seconds at a time to see a rectangle. Holding the vowel loud and clear for 3-4 seconds makes a nice square.

4. Practice the correct approach to the word at different rates. Many kids would approach the word incorrectly, for example, one child said "teh", when they needed to say a long "o" first in "tore" to get the diphthong "Oer". So, I had them practice their correct approach loudly and slowly, then, I had them say the words alternating rates, (slow rate, regular rate, slow rate) As the child improved, I had them move to practicing the words at different rates. (Regular rate, slow rate, regular rate), with the "palate view" display. (You can use the green sound waves without the mouthpiece, which helps the child see their

words shape and loudness.)

5. Once the "R" was fairly intact; I had them practice the "r" syllable in contrast, correctly and incorrectly 5-10 sets. (E.g., meh/ merr) I stopped the child at any given time if he approached the word wrong and had him do this exercise. It made a difference. Some kids find it's easier to say the "correct" sound now versus the "wrong" sound. That is a good sign.

6. Practice with and without the "smartpalate" mouthpiece across all linguistic complexity. (Move the child as quickly as possible into words, phrases, sentences, readings and conversations.) Many therapists want perfection before moving the child on. I would have the child talk for 2-3 minutes when they first came into therapy without their mouthpiece, about what ever they wanted to talk about or read from a book. I would list all his target words on paper with plus or minus next to them. Next have the child practice his list of words and sentences with his mouthpiece in/out of his mouth.

7. Allow the child to practice for 3-5 minutes on his own, without your feedback. (This is so important, do not overlook this!) This allows the child to rely on what he is doing with his tongue to make the "blue dots" light up on the display thus making "finer connections" and self-monitoring without any ramification of penalties. You can tell him beforehand what to pay attention to if they aren't sure what to look at. (E.g., "Watch the number of blue dots you are making." "Reduce your orange dots." Or "which word had the most blue dots? Also you can use the "Gold Standard" as they practice.)

