

How To Introduce and Use The SPEECH WORKSHEETS

Most individuals with Down syndrome have low muscle tone. This can impact the muscles in their mouths too, which might make it harder to do things like talk, keep their tongue in, or eat/drink. Low tone might make it difficult to understand what a person is trying to say. Speech Therapy helps strengthen the muscles with a variety of oral exercises.

These two worksheets will demonstrate the difficulties that some individuals face when trying to communicate. You can choose to do one of the worksheets, or both!

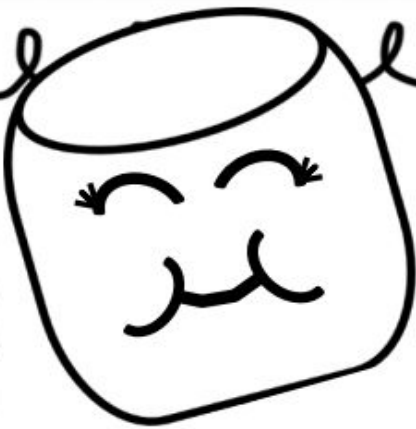
WORKSHEET 1: MARSHMALLOW ACTIVITY

You will need to have 1 large marshmallow per student for this activity. Have your students find a partner, explain the worksheet, and hand out the marshmallows (check for allergies). Students will take turns putting the marshmallow in their mouth, or on their tongue, to talk. The purpose of this activity is for students to learn how it might feel to have speech difficulties, and to not always be understood clearly.

****IMPORTANT:** While this activity can seem silly and light hearted in nature, please remind students that it is not silly for individuals living with speech difficulties. It is extremely frustrating to feel like you are not understood. Students participating in this activity have the privilege of being able to take the marshmallow out to communicate normally again. For those with Down syndrome, it might be something that takes lots of hard work and practice to master. This exercise is meant to be eye opening, and educational, not to be made light of. **HOWEVER if you feel as if your students might not be able to understand the weight of this activity, you can instead use the second worksheet: SPEECH IMAGINE EXTENSION ACTIVITY.**

WORKSHEET 2: IMAGINE EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Before having students complete this worksheet, you need to first read the imagine script to them (from day 4 opening). The end of that script has questions for discussion. If you are going to have the students do this worksheet, save the whole group discussions until after the worksheet is finished so they can brainstorm answers independently. Then, you can share and discuss answers as a class.



SPEECH

marshmallow activity

1. Put the marshmallow on your tongue. Do not chew.
2. Turn to a partner and talk about your favorite thing to do.
3. Try to remember what your partner said, and write it down below:

I Think My Partner Said....

4. Was it easy or hard to understand your partner?

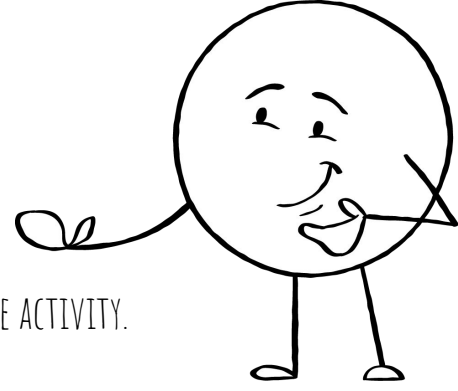
5. How did you feel talking with a marshmallow in your mouth?

6. After doing this activity, what will you do differently to better understand someone who has a difficult time speaking?

SPEECH

imagine extension activity

USE THIS WORKSHEET AFTER STUDENTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE IMAGINE ACTIVITY.



1

How would you feel if others couldn't understand what you wanted to say? Why?

2 Make a list! What are some ways that you can communicate with others without using words?

3 Why would it be important to make sure everyone is given the opportunity to feel "heard", even if they communicate in a different way?

4

What would you do now if you met someone that had a difficult time communicating with words? Or, if you didn't understand what someone was trying to say?