

The Active Speaker & Listener

How can you help at home?

- ◇ If your child has a short talk or presentation to prepare, help them to get it organised by focusing on the needs of the listeners. At this stage they should be thinking hard about ways to involve the listeners by using a range of techniques including:
 - figures of speech such as rhetorical questions
 - visual aids
 - slide shows using software such as PowerPoint.
- ◇ Talk with them about how they might try consciously to include gestures when they are making a presentation in order to improve the effectiveness of presentation. Point out how politicians and other professional speakers use gestures and other forms of non-verbal communication on television.
- ◇ At this stage in discussions, youngsters should not only be listening to what others say but they should be thinking about what might be behind the statements (the so-called sub-text). Talk about examples of this as they crop up either in real situations or on television. For instance:
 - Interviewer: Will you cut spending on hospitals?
 - Politician: We have no plans for that at this time. (Sub-text: I'm not ruling it out.)
- ◇ Whenever you notice interesting examples of the way spoken language varies (accents, dialects, slang, very formal language and so on) draw attention to it and start a discussion about why this happens. The focus at this stage should be to encourage the young speaker to explain what is happening and to see how it affects listeners.

The Active Communicator

Tips on how to
progress on
Route 5

in reading, writing and
communicating and
how you can support
at home.



The Active Reader

How can you help at home?

Before reading, you can:

- ◇ ask the reader to create a list of speculative phrases to use when discussing a text. You may wish to start them off with *'This makes us think that...'* and *'This suggests that...'*
- ◇ ask the reader to talk about the purpose, audience and form of the text they are about to read.

During reading, you can:

- ◇ ask the reader to speculate about the writer's point of view in a text.
For example:
 - *Is the writer for or against this topic?*
 - *Does the writer want us to sympathise with this character or not?*
- ◇ ask the reader to comment on some of the words and sentences used by the writer. Discuss what effect is being created by the writer and how it is being created. For example:
 - *What did the writer want us to think when he chose that word?*
 - *That's a very short sentence. Why has he chosen to write it like that?*

After reading, you can:

- ◇ talk with the reader about what they liked or disliked about the way the text was written. Try to get him or her to point out particular words or sentences and comment on them
- ◇ talk with the reader about why the writer might have chosen to organise a text in a particular way.

The Active Writer

How can you help at home?

Before writing, you can:

- ◇ remind your child of his/her writing target
- ◇ ask them to plan the work with you, explaining their planning, saying who the piece of writing is for, what form it will take, and what its purpose is.

During writing, you can:

- ◇ suggest the writer uses a dictionary or thesaurus to select more vivid or more precise vocabulary
- ◇ ask the writer to tell you how they are trying to make links between their paragraphs
- ◇ ask the writer to tell you how the style of their writing is appropriate to its purpose and intended reader.

After writing, you can:

- ◇ ask the writer to check what they have done against their target
- ◇ praise positive achievement and ask the writer to identify areas they want to develop in their own work.