

# Speech and Language Samples

Oral language sampling is one way to evaluate the language of students with a hearing loss or any language delay. Recorded speech and language can be analyzed to know which grammatical structures and speech sounds the student has mastered, as well as to identify new goals. A voice recording is a more accurate indicator of the communication ability of a student than evidence obtained through formal tests, and the recordings can be used year after year to track student progress. Using an iPod for capturing and storing these voice recordings greatly simplifies the process.

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**Curriculum areas:** Speech and Language, Special Education

**Grade level:** All

## Project Description

In this project, the teacher uses an iPod with a voice recorder to record a student telling a story, describing a picture, sharing about a favorite toy from home, or talking about anything that will have the student leading the conversation. Next, the recording is imported into iTunes to save in the student's audio playlist. Now the teacher can use an iPod or iTunes to easily move to any point in the sample for ease of use in transcribing and reviewing the student speech sample.

## Project Steps

- 1 Set up a situation in which the student to be assessed will be talking about a familiar topic. You can do this by providing a picture prompt, asking a leading question that will require a lengthy answer (more than yes and no answers), or by bringing in an object to talk about. The goal is to have the students feel comfortable with their topic so that you can get an accurate sample of their language.
- 2 Record the conversation with an iPod and a voice recorder.
- 3 Import the file of the student conversation by connecting the iPod to a Macintosh computer. The files are automatically copied into iTunes.
- 4 In iTunes, create an audio playlist for each student. Periodically, record a new sample to add to the playlist in order to show progress over time.

- 5 You can play the recording back to students using an iPod or iTunes, and can also play the recording when meeting with the students' parents or other teachers about their progress.

**Extension:** A Speech Pathologist can create exercises that are downloaded to an iPod for students and parents to listen to and practice at home.

### Outcomes

After completing this project, teachers will have:

- An accurate record of a student's long-term speech and language progress
- A sample to analyze to ascertain new speech and language IEP goals
- A sample with which to analyze a student's MLU (mean-length-utterance)

### Technology Skills

After completing this project, students will understand how their speech can be recorded and played back using an iPod, a voice recorder, and iTunes.

### Assessment Suggestions

You can use the recording for assessment of a student in the following ways:

- Review or transcribe the language sample to identify new speech/language goals.
- Review or transcribe the language sample to identify MLU (mean-length-utterance).
- Keep samples for an accurate record of the student's long-term speech/language progress.

### Preparation and Duration

Individual samples will take one 15-minute class session with each student. Optional transcription of the language sample will add more time depending on the length of the language sample. Ongoing language sampling is recommended.

### Tools and Resources

#### Internet

<http://education.apple.com/education/ilife/howto/>  
iLife How-To guides

#### Tools

Macintosh computer, iPod, iPod voice recorder, iTunes

**Note:** A voice recorder can be used with all iPod models that have a Dock Connector, except for the iPod mini. (The iPod shuffle does not have a Dock Connector.) For more information, see your iPod User's Guide.

### **Facilitation Tips**

- Less structured conversational settings elicit more language and more complex language than structured task-oriented settings.
- Encourage the student to take the lead in the conversation.
- Select materials appropriate to the student's interest level.

### **Technology Tips**

- Before recording, test the microphone to make sure the iPod is at the proper distance from the students for the best results.
- Language samples can be stored on an iPod, in iTunes on a computer, or burned onto a CD for portability and ease of sharing.