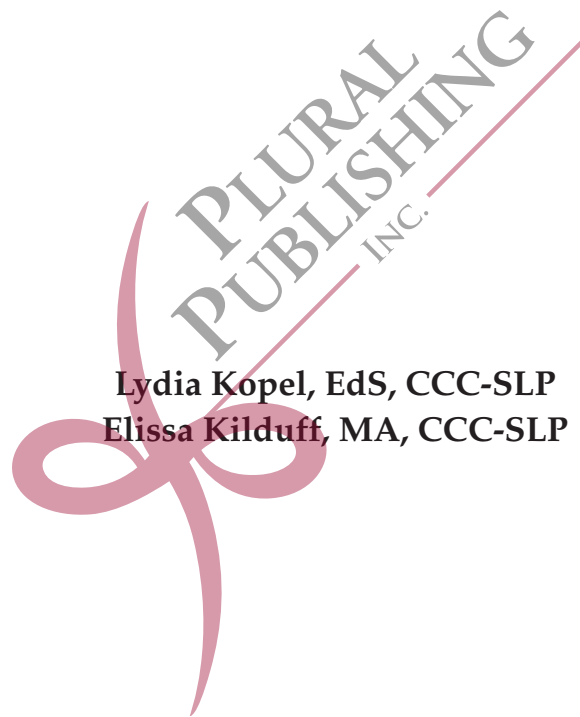


IEP Goal Writing for Speech-Language Pathologists

Utilizing State Standards



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Preface

As speech-language pathologists (SLPs), we have a responsibility to support the state standards. In order for students to be successful with the standards, they must have mastered specific speech-language skills. There are three objectives of this book. First, to familiarize the SLP with specific Early Learning Standards and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the speech-language skills needed to be successful with these standards. The second objective is to outline prerequisite speech-language skills and steps to mastering those skills. The third objective, through a step-by-step process, is to write defensible IEP goals that are related to the standards.

The information and process provided in this book are based on research, fifty years of combined experience as school-based SLPs and administrators, and reviewing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) from all over the country. The authors developed this book as a result of reading hundreds of IEPs that had goals and objectives that were difficult to implement as written. This process has been field tested through a large metro school system with more than 175 SLPs.

OBJECTIVE 1: EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS AND COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND ASSOCIATED PREREQUISITE SPEECH-LANGUAGE SKILLS

Early Learning Standards are the developmental building blocks for success in school. These are focused on in Chapter 1. These standards were developed using the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five (Office of Head Start, 2015) and individual state's early learning standards for three and four year olds. They are divided into the areas of Communication and Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Cognition, Approaches to Learning, and Social and Emotional.

The CCSS (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2010) requires a strong foundation of speech-language skills and these are the focus of Chapter 2. Standards have been pulled from all areas including English Language Arts, Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, Technical Subjects, and Mathematics. The standards are organized by grade level. Within each grade level the standards are organized by Common Core area, numbers, as indicated in the CCSS, and specific prerequisite speech and language skill(s) for that standard.

The Early Learning Standards can easily be compared to the Early Learning Standards from each state. In addition, for those SLPs whose state or school system has not adopted the Common Core State Standards, these can be compared to their adopted standards. This process can assist SLPs in identifying target skills within those standards.

OBJECTIVE 2: PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND STEPS TO MASTERY

Chapter 3 consists of the speech-language skills that, in our experience, are the commonly addressed skills of intervention for students aged 3 years–21 years, with all levels of functioning. These skills are organized by the following speech-language areas: *Vocabulary, Questions, Summarize, Main idea and Details, Critical Thinking, Pragmatics, Syntax and Morphology, and Articulation and Phonological Processes*. Every speech and language skill has several prerequisite skills which have been outlined in Chapter 3. Each *Prerequisite Skill* then has corresponding *Steps to Mastery* that should be achieved in order to succeed with the state standards. The *Steps to Mastery* are a hierarchy of levels from easiest to most difficult that should be accomplished for mastery of each *Prerequisite Skill*.

OBJECTIVE 3: STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS TO WRITING IEP GOALS

Once the SLP has identified the curriculum areas and specific standards that a student is struggling with, the Early Learning Standards in Chapter 1 and/or the CCSS in Chapter 2 should be reviewed. These standards identify specific prerequisite speech and language skills the student may be lacking. Next, the SLP would look up the *Prerequisite Skills* in Chapter 3 to determine which corresponding *Steps to Mastery* the student requires. The SLP then writes the IEP goal for the final *Step to Mastery* that the student can reasonably achieve in the course of the IEP. The *Steps to Mastery* can be easily developed into IEP goals. The *Goal Writing Worksheet* and information in Chapter 4 will assist the SLP with this process. It will also provide the framework for writing defensible IEP goals. The components of this framework include ensuring that the goals are understandable, doable, measurable, and achievable. An example of the goal writing process is included below.

D.J., 5th Grader—Classroom teacher reports that D.J. is having trouble with main idea and supporting details.

- Identify the 5th-grade CCSS in Chapter 2 that align with the skills of main idea.

- Go to the Main Idea & Details section in Chapter 3 and look at all the *Prerequisite Skills*. The skills listed are:
 - Comprehending questions
 - Sequence
 - Main idea when stated
 - Important versus unimportant details
 - Infer/draw conclusions
 - Main idea and supporting details
- Decide where the student is currently functioning. In this case, D.J. can answer questions and sequence. That means he would start with “main idea when stated.”
- Starting with “main idea when stated,” look at all the *Steps to Mastery* under each of the subsequent *Prerequisite Skills*.
- Decide how many steps D.J. can reasonably achieve in the course of the IEP. In this case, it is believed that D.J. can get partway through the “main idea and supporting details” *Steps to Mastery*; up to “Identify ___#___ details that support a given main idea in a _____ (paragraph, story, poem, chapter, etc.).” Write the goal using the *Goal Writing Worksheet*.
 - D.J. will state three details that support a given main idea in a grade-level passage when read aloud to him in four out of five opportunities using data collection.

This book focuses on skills for mastery, not on activities. The activities will vary from student to student and need to reflect the Universal Design for Learning (i.e., using multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement) (Rose & Gravel, 2010).

The concentration of this book is spoken language (receptive language, and expressive language) and articulation. Reading and writing are addressed through highlighting the underpinning language skills of reading and writing standards. A student’s ability and progress on a spoken language IEP goal should not be measured based on abilities with written language alone. If we take away the expectation of reading and writing, we can better measure if a student is struggling with comprehension versus basic reading, or the ability to formulate a cohesive thought versus the ability to write. According to *Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists with Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents* (ASHA, 2001), SLPs working in the school system are one member of a team with various areas of expertise. Spoken language should not be looked at in isolation but considered along with written language and addressed as a team. It is important for SLPs

to consider how students are using basic language knowledge and skills for the reading and writing processes. However, as direct service providers, SLPs should focus intervention on the language skills that underlie and impact the ability to acquire reading and writing. The SLP can then collaborate with other professionals in the school who provide interventions related to written language. Written language materials are imperative as part of spoken language intervention. SLPs should not be working on listening comprehension in the absence of reading material or oral expression in the absence of writing.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of speech-language skills. It is intended to target the common skills that SLPs focus on in the school system. There are many other skills that can be addressed as goals on a student's IEP. The key to remember is that the goal must be understandable, doable, measureable, and achievable. Goals are an ending point, not a beginning point.

This book provides clear guidelines of quantifiable building blocks to achieve specific goals defined by the child's IEP. SLPs are instrumental in helping students develop speech and language skills essential for mastery of the standards. With a clear understanding of early learning standards, state standards, prerequisite skills, and steps to mastery, interventions will be successful to help students achieve their IEP goals and have success with the curriculum.



3

Prerequisite Skills and Steps to Mastery

The speech-language skills in this chapter are organized into the following areas:

- Vocabulary
- Questions
- Summarize
- Main Idea and Details
- Critical Thinking
- Pragmatics
- Syntax and Morphology
- Articulation and Phonological Processes

These areas were selected as they are major domains of language development and common areas requiring speech-language intervention. Each area includes a brief explanation followed by a listing of *Prerequisite Skills* and corresponding *Steps to Mastery*.

An index of prerequisite skills has been provided in Table 3–1 so the SLP can easily locate the skills identified in Chapters 1 and 2.

Table 3–1. Index of Prerequisite Skills

Prerequisite Skill	Speech-Language Area
Adjectives	Vocabulary
Adverbs	Vocabulary
Answer factual questions	Critical Thinking
Antonyms/synonyms	Vocabulary
Articles	Syntax and Morphology
Ask a question	Questions
Categorize	Vocabulary
Cause/effect	Questions Critical Thinking
Comparatives/superlatives	Vocabulary Syntax and Morphology
Compare/contrast	Vocabulary Critical Thinking
Answer questions: Yes/no What Where Who When Why How	Questions Main Idea and Details Summarize
Concepts	Vocabulary
Conjunctions	Syntax and Morphology
Conversational repairs	Pragmatics
Describe	Vocabulary
Fact/opinion	Critical Thinking
Figurative language	Critical Thinking Pragmatics
Future tense	Syntax and Morphology

Table 3–1. *continued*

Prerequisite Skill	Speech-Language Area
Greetings/farewells	Pragmatics
Identify own emotions	Pragmatics
Identify what information is needed	Questions
Important versus unimportant details	Main Idea and Details Summarize Critical Thinking
Infer/draw conclusions	Questions Main Idea and Details Critical Thinking
Initiating conversation	Pragmatics
Main idea	Main Idea and Details
Match	Vocabulary
Meaning from context	Vocabulary
Multiple meaning words	Vocabulary
Narrative elements	Questions Summarize
Negation	Vocabulary
Nonliteral language	Critical Thinking Pragmatics
Nonverbal cues	Pragmatics
Nouns	Vocabulary
Past tense	Syntax and Morphology
Plurals	Syntax and Morphology
Possessives	Syntax and Morphology
Predict	Critical Thinking
Prepositional phrases	Syntax and Morphology
Present progressive	Syntax and Morphology
Present tense	Syntax and Morphology

continues

When utilizing this book to develop goals, the words in parentheses are options to consider. The following example is from *Vocabulary*:

“Identify/name ___#___ _____ (noun, verbs, etc.) from a (picture scene or illustrated story).” This could be written as “Point to five nouns from a picture scene” or “Name five verbs from a picture scene.” It could also be written as, “Name three adjectives from an illustrated story.” The term “etc.” should not be written in the goal as its meaning can be broadly interpreted.

It is important to remember the following tips. Goals should not be the *starting* point. The goals on an IEP are *endpoints*, indicating where the student is expected to end up by the mastery date. The process is to work through the *Steps to Mastery* to reach the goal. Optimally, written goals should be understandable, doable, measureable, and achievable.

GOAL EXAMPLES

Steps to Mastery

Any of the *Steps to Mastery* for vocabulary can be developed into IEP goals. The SLP needs to determine which step would be an entry point for the student and which step would be an ending point. The entry point is the step where the student is currently functioning. This is where intervention should begin. The goal(s) placed in an IEP should represent the endpoint—what the student can reasonably attain in the IEP’s timeframe. The student must then work through the *Steps to Mastery* to reach the goal. Use the following tips to help you transform the *Steps to Mastery* into goals.

- Use the *Goal Writing Worksheet* in Appendix 4–1.
- Replace a # sign with a number.
- Consider the options in parentheses when filling in the blanks.
- Replace the words *identify* or *determine* with a specific instruction that is measurable (e.g., point to, write, name, state).
- Remember that goals must be understandable, doable, measureable, and achievable.

Prerequisite Skills

Every skill has several prerequisite skills that must be mastered prior to mastery of the larger skill. Prerequisite skills are not aligned with specific age or grade level. Students at any age or grade level could have or lack any of these skills. The prerequisite skills are generally listed in a hierarchy; however, some develop simultaneously with differing degrees of difficulty. A student does not have to master every prerequisite skill before moving on to another area.

Vocabulary

Example 1

Prerequisite Skill: Concepts-Spatial

Step to Mastery: Identify/name *(state specific concepts) using objects

The skill to be worked on:	Spatial concepts (in, on, out, under, over)
How the student is expected to respond:	Physically manipulate
What material will be used:	Objects
How material will be presented:	Student asked to demonstrate concept with given objects
Cues/Prompts/Supports:	None
Criteria for mastery:	80% accuracy for three sessions
Final Goal:	The student will physically manipulate objects to demonstrate the spatial concepts <i>in, on, out, under, and over</i> with 80% accuracy for three sessions.
How the skill will be measured:	Data collection

APPENDIX 4--1
Goal Writing Worksheet

Prerequisite Skill: _____

Step to Mastery: _____

The skill to be worked on:	
How the student is expected to respond:	
What material will be used:	
How material will be presented:	
Cues/Prompts/Supports:	
Criteria for mastery:	
Final Goal:	
How the skill will be measured:	