

# How To Help Your Child Speak Well

More than ever before schools are trending towards a curriculum that emphasises presentation skills. There's little doubt that a confident speaking style and polished delivery will always create a favourable first impression, both in and out of the classroom. Furthermore, these traits will stand your child in good stead in social as well as professional situations for the rest of his life. As a parent, what can you do to help him achieve this level of articulation?

## SPEAKING

- **Engage** - Encourage your child's speaking skills by engaging him in conversation and discussing things with him.
- **Correct** – Gently correct his mispronunciation by repeating his sentence with the correctly pronounced words with no pressure on him to repeat after you unless he's in the mood to do so. In this way you'll be creating a non-threatening environment for him to practise and perfect his spoken English.
- **Interact** - You could also arrange for your child to interact with English speakers who have native-speaker fluency.
- **Learn Phonics** - Knowing the fundamentals of Phonics can also be a great boost for basic pronunciation skills.

## LISTENING

- **BBC radio** - Set aside time for your older child to listen to BBC radio at least once daily. For younger kids it helps to have the BBC station just playing in the background, whether at home or in the car. This is useful because many Singaporean speakers have a tendency to stress the wrong syllable in a word. BBC announcers provide good models for Standard English speech. Furthermore this provides opportunities to role model for your kid, by repeating the announcer's pronunciation of words you're unsure of yourself.
- **Audio books** - Buy or borrow audio CDs of your child's favourite books, read and performed by professional actors. Diction, accent, pronunciation and vocabulary are often dramatically improved simply by listening carefully to articulate speakers.
- **Pronunciation CDs** - Buy a good dictionary with a pronunciation audio CD that offers both British and American pronunciation styles. You could also subscribe to an online dictionary that offers pronunciation audio clips.

## READING

- **Read, read and read** - Make sure your kid reads broadly outside the school curriculum for vocabulary building. You can't impress people with your verbal skills when your vocabulary is limited—it will end up limiting you.

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Coming next month: **Journal-keeping for holiday fun.**



Elly Sim is a Child Development Specialist (B.Sc) who was trained and qualified in the US in Child Development and Psychology. She co-founded the school Jan & Elly in 1995 and continues to design and develop its highly-acclaimed English programmes.

Ask Elly anything regarding your child's English language challenges. Email her at [elly@jan-elly.com](mailto:elly@jan-elly.com)