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## Embedding Language in Snack for Children with Disabilities

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Embedding Language in Snack

Embedding Language in Snack for Children with Disabilities

by

Alicen Irene Waldron

A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

In

Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education

Approved:

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Committee Member

Utah State University

2015

### **Introduction**

The number of children that are identified as having a language delay is increasing. According to Rescorla (p. 4 (1984)), “Language delay is the most common developmental problem found in preschool children.” Children with a language delay often struggle with reading and/or develop other types of learning disabilities (Aram & Nation, 1980). It is imperative that children with a language delay are identified early and that interventions are both effective and functional (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012).

The preschool years are a critical period for language development. The impact of language delays can be lessened with interventions and support. Children in a preschool classroom with access to language throughout the day realize increased language development, this acts to close the gap between typical development and language delays (Ramey & Ramey, 2004). Daily routines, including snack, are functional and effective ways of maximizing preschool students’ exposure to embedded language. This is especially true in special education classrooms where children can range from minor to severe language delays. Embedding language learning opportunities may be an effective way to teach many children at differing levels at the same time. Embedded language enables children to develop generalized language skills throughout the preschool day in different settings and this may lead to continued development and maintenance of these skills throughout life (Rakap & Parlak-Rakap, 2011). There is currently a need for functional and effective instructional systems that are implemented into a child’s natural learning environments (Hemmeter, 2000; Odom, 2000; Sandall et al., 2005; VanDerHeyden et al., 2005).

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### Neurological Emergency

The preschool years can be characterized as an “emergency” developmental period because the brain is growing at a rapid pace and many neurological things are happening (MedlinePlus, 2014). Due to this neurological emergency, it is vital that interventions used with children that have a language delays be functional, efficient, and allow many opportunities to develop language in the most natural setting possible.

According to MedlinePlus (2014), there are specific skill developments that take place during the four different growth periods of infancy, preschool years, middle school years, and adolescence (MedlinePlus, 2014). The preschool years describe developmental milestones for three-, four-, and five- year-olds. The developmental milestones that take place during this period are categorized as physical, motor, sensory, cognitive, social, speech, and play (MedlinePlus, 2014).

Developmental milestones in the preschool years include the following behaviors, learning to walk up stairs, cutting with scissors, dressing him/herself, feeding him/herself, knowing his/her name, playing with peers, and communicating effectively. The skills listed above are very important to a child’s development, but the ability to communicate is possibly the most important skill that develops during the preschool years. Without the ability to communicate, a child cannot tell the teacher when he/she needs to use the restroom, ask for help cutting, say that he/she wants a different shirt when getting dressed, say that he/she is hungry, or negotiate turns for a toy during social play. Instead of communicating effectively, children with a language delay also tantrum more than typically developing children (Perry Carson, Carson, Klee, & Jackman-Brown 2007). This could possibly be due to the inability to communicate

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effectively and the parent's/teacher's frustration in not understanding what the child is saying (Perry Carson, Carson, Klee, & Jackman-Brown 2007).

Language delays may affect a child's ability to develop relationships and impacts how well he/she functions in the classroom. According to Perry Carson (2007), "Although many children have a heightened sensitivity toward and reaction to their physical and social environment, it is possible that children with SLD experience a lack of personal efficacy with regard to their ability to interact with others and navigate purposefully in their world."

### Language Acquisition

Language acquisition is of great importance to all children that have a language delay. It is important to create meaningful and functional interventions to help children increase their ability to successfully interact with peers and adults. The best practice in the preschool setting is to focus on communication and language skills during classroom activities which can be created by meeting the child's interests, increasing the opportunities to learn language, and having a language rich environment (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). These three focuses will give the children meaningful experiences that they can enjoy and from which they can learn.

**Child's interests.** It is important when planning activities to find activities that fit the child's interests (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). The child's interests can be met by using objects and food that are motivating and desirable to the child (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). Food can be fun and entertaining while teaching a language skill. Food can be used to create a scene or an object. For example, crackers can have blue frosting and goldfish to create the sea, or bread, cheese, and apples can make a turkey. These fun ideas can support the current unit and can provide an opportunity to reinforce the language goals through discovery and creativity. It is also important to introduce new things and new ideas to the children to keep their attention

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(Dunst, Raab, & Trivette 2012). For example, make a sunflower out of a tortilla and sunflower seeds placed at the center of the tortilla and cheese. This activity allows the children to explore and discuss a new object (a sunflower) while creating a fun snack (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012).

The interests of a child can also be met by working with their strengths (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette 2012). If a child can label utensils and plates then the child can be a helper and model the language for the children with less language (ie. “a spoon for you, a cup for you, and a plate for you”). This allows the child to feel confident and share his or her skills with the entire class (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). Throughout snack time the interactions of each student need to be positively reinforced. As this positive reinforcement happens the child will desire to interact more often and will practice the language skills that they are currently developing (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). Positive reinforcement “... is the act of identifying and encouraging a behavior, with the hopes that the desired behavior will increase” (Burden, 2003; as cited by Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). Ideas for positive reinforcement include praising the child’s participation, a smile, answering a question, or rephrasing what the child said to acknowledge that you heard. The child needs to know that someone is listening and to feel that what they have to say is important (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012).

Each interaction between the teacher and student should look a little different, as each child is developmentally different and should be addressed individually to meet their individual needs. It is important to teach at or above the current level of each child to allow them access to language so they have a model and can continue to grow and develop stronger language skills (Gilkerson, 2009).

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**Learning through repetition.** It is important to increase the number of repetitions because children learn through repetition (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). It is extremely important to allow access to language as often as possible. The more times a child can hear something the quicker they will learn the vocabulary and the concept being taught (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). The number of opportunities can be increased by relating the unit and the snack while using the same vocabulary as stated above. Also, the language that would normally be used during snack can be expanded and layered as the children develop their language skills. For example, if a child says “cereal” then the teacher can expand the phrase by saying “the cereal is yummy,” or “I like cereal,” or “cereal is crunchy,” or “can you hear my crunchy cereal?” Later during the year, the cold crunchy cereal can be compared to hot cereal that is not crunchy. The teacher can then discuss the difference between temperatures.

The children can be asked to describe what they want, or use the color and the object to form a more complex requesting phrase. For example, phrases such as “I want an orange carrot,” can be prompted instead of simply “I want a carrot.” As the child eats the carrot it is important to discuss the food using the label and the verb of what is happening to the food multiple times (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette 2012). This can be accomplished through phrases like “I see your orange carrot, your orange carrot is crunchy, we need to cut more orange carrots, or cut, cut, cut the orange carrots.”

**Language rich environment.** A language rich environment means giving the children every opportunity possible to hear and use language throughout the activity or routine (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). Children learn language from hearing it which starts at birth. Children hear and learn language from people they spend time with including, family members, teachers, peers, etc. (Gilkerson, 2009). Hart and Risley’s study, as was reported by Gilkerson (2009),

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described three key findings: “IQ and language abilities is partially predicted by the amount parents speak to their children; Children’s academic success at ages nine and ten can in part be attributed to the amount of talk they heard from birth to age three; Parents of advanced children talk significantly more to their children than parents of children not as advanced.” There are many strategies that can improve language acquisition including, self-talk, parallel talk, expansion, extension, commenting, asking questions, and modeling (Gilkerson, 2009).

Self-talk is used when the adult is using short sentences to talk about what he/she is doing, seeing, or hearing. The teacher describes the ingredients and what he/she is doing with the ingredients (ie. “I am putting the flour in the bowl. I need a spoon to scoop the peanut butter. Here’s my spoon, I’m scooping the peanut butter into the bowl,” etc).

If the child is the one doing the task, then the teacher can describe what the child is doing, this is called parallel talk (ie. “You need some butter. Good, you’re putting the butter on the bread. I like how you are spreading the butter on the bread. You are eating bread and butter.”). Parallel talk should be used with children with language delays because some will currently be learning expressive skills through listening receptively (Widerstrom, 1986).

Expansion is used when the teacher takes what the child says and adds the missing words or grammar. It turns a child expression into a more adult expression. For example, “dog run” could be expanded into, “the dog is running”. Extension is when you extend what the child is already saying. In this technique, the teacher would repeat the information in adult-like language and add new information. In the example above, “dog run” is extended to “the dog is running, the dog is running fast.” The teacher repeats the expression and then adds more information.



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Commenting and modeling are used to provide opportunities to hear more language. Examples of commenting can be, “look at Jenny, she is putting peanut butter on her celery. Wow Suzie, you have 5 oranges on your plate. Johnny is thirsty today, he is drinking a lot of milk.” Questions are used to elicit information from the child what they know and what needs to be modeled.

The above concepts can be implemented effectively in a snack activity. The activity can start with the teacher hiding items in a bag. For example, the teacher looks in a bag and describes the attributes of the items in the bag. The teacher can say things like, “I have something that is crunchy and green. It’s a vegetable and some people like it with peanut butter or ranch dressing. Yes, it is celery.” One by one the children have the opportunity to guess what the items are and the items are then placed in front of the children while repeating the label (ie. “here’s the green celery”). The teacher then creates something with the new items and allows the child to watch and listen to the language used while the teacher gives the children the directions and a visual example. The student will then have the opportunity to request items, ask questions, and pass out the items. The teacher will have the ability to comment, expand, and extend on the language used by the children. The teacher will use self-talk, parallel talk and comment on his/her own snack creation to provide ideas and language support that are developmentally appropriate.

### **Making the Activity Engaging**

Activities that are engaging are more likely to hold a child’s interest through the entire duration of the activity (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). As a teacher it may be more beneficial if the children are able to attend to the activity while hearing and learning the information being taught. If the children enjoy the activity then they may not even know that they are learning.

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Children learning in a natural environment experience less stress from drill and realize increased enjoyment from learning (Rapak, & Parlak-Rapak, 2011). Engaging activities also provide a teacher the opportunity to work on several different levels and meet the needs of each individual child. This individualization is critical for the language development of the child (VanDerheyden, Snyder, Smith, Sevin, & Longwell, 2005). Additionally, children that are developmentally more advanced can provide a language model to the lower-level students. Acting as a language model can increase a child's confidence as the child helps their friend (Odom, 2000).

A teacher's attitude can affect the attitude of his/her students. For example, if a teacher is excited about dirt then his/her students may also become excited about dirt. They may not know why the dirt is exciting but they will show interest because their teacher is excited. It is also important to encourage this concept with the children's families to allow them the opportunity and support to provide meaningful language opportunities at home (Gips, & Burdin, 1983). The family can be a great support when they have been taught the same strategies that the teacher uses in the classroom.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

As mentioned above, embedded instruction is the ability to teach children at differing levels at the same time. According to Hall, (Sec-B Readings, p. 1, 2002) differentiated instruction is "to recognize students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, and then to react responsively. Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process."

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Children learn differently and it is important to provide activities that provide exposure to the same information in differing ways (Hall, 2002). Snack activities provide a hands-on opportunity to learn new concepts through hearing and visually supported information. For example, in preschool, teachers discuss the ideas of “too hard, too easy, and just right”. Teachers can use differentiated instruction to teach each child at the appropriate, or “just right,” level for each individual child.

### Current Resources

Currently, there are not any resources that provide activities meeting the above stated objectives. Research does currently exist that suggests that embedded/naturalistic learning is beneficial to all children, including children with special needs, but there is not a specific resource that teachers are using in today’s classrooms (Dunst, 2012; Hemmeter, 2000; Jennings 2012; Noh, 2009; Rapak, 2011; VanDerHeyden, 2005). There is an immediate need for a resource that teachers can consistently reference. This should take the form of a guide that provides specific ideas and strategies that can be learned and implemented in all snack activities. There are several strategies important to the creation of a language rich environment including, self-talk, parallel talk, expansion, extension, commenting, asking questions, and modeling. The proposed resource will teach the teachers how to implement these strategies to create a language rich snack time. These strategies can further be used throughout the day to reinforce the information learned during snack time and give the child multiple opportunities to hear the information.

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### **Educational Project**

I created the following products and activities in pursuit of my stated goals and objectives to improve child outcomes and increase the language exposure of children in the special education pre-school classes:

1. A binder that includes language rich snack ideas and pictures of those activities
2. Qualitative feedback forms that allow the teacher to measure whether the activity was meaningful, functional, easy to use, and engaging for the children
3. Language Support Guide that supports the activities with language strategies that can be used for each activity and explanations of how to generalize those strategies throughout the day.

### **Extension Activities/Binder**

For the purpose of this project, a binder was created with extension activities that support children with language delays. The binder provides activities, strategies (explanation of the strategies are included in the binder), and information in support of language acquisition. The lessons were planned around child interests. Repetition was used during the snack activities to enable the children to internalize the information and begin using the skills in their natural environment (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2012). The binder included fun activities that fostered learning while enjoying a snack. The activities were accompanied with a picture of the snack idea to help teachers visualize and replicate the activity (sample pictures posted in Appendix B). The binder was organized into multiple units including, Book (based on a specific book), Theme, Holiday, and Basic “go to” activities. Examples of these specific units can be found in Appendix B. The binder also included activities that support each unit. The snack extension activities supported the book that was read, the theme being discussed, or correlated with things that are

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eaten during specific holidays. The basic unit contained language rich activities that could be used anytime with minimal preparation and financial cost. The binder had a variety of activities that were used in special education pre-school classes. The activities were language appropriate and were designed to meet the needs of different children at varying developmental levels. Some activities required increased preparation time, but the general objective of the binder was to create activities that were easy to prepare and inexpensive enough to fit into any special education budget. Due to the Neurological Emergency, it is crucial to teach throughout the entire day and this binder provided a resource for the teachers to meet that need.

### Qualitative Feedback

The teachers were given eight copies of a feedback form in the binder. The feedback forms asked the teacher to rate the activity on a five point scale. The teachers each rated the usability of the activity, whether it was meaningful to the child, whether it was functional in the classroom setting, and whether the children were engaged during the activity. There were comment sections that allowed the teachers to add additional feedback that may be helpful in editing the binder for future use (see example in Appendix F).

### Language Support Guide

The Language Support Guide detailed the suggested strategies, instructed how to use them in the lesson, and outlined goals that should be addressed during the lesson. The guide contained information on topics including expansion, extension, "wh-" questions, and prepositions with a list of phrases that should be used. For example, "where is the turkey hiding?" "Yes it is dirty and brown, what is that dirty brown stuff?" "Pigs like to roll in that

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brown (wait).” “Yes the turkey is hiding in the mud.” “Is the horse on top of the barn? No he is in the barn.” (see examples in Appendix G)

### Dissemination Plan

Three special education preschool teachers in the Alpine School District were given a binder in October 2014. I hand delivered the binders to the teachers, explained how the binders worked, and provided the feedback forms. Each binder was used for six weeks. Since the preschool schedule is Tuesday-Friday, the teachers filled out between four to eight feedback forms depending on availability. I collected the feedback forms and the binders after the six-week period and analyzed each binder to see if the lesson plans needed to be changed. I looked for comments on how to improve the binder. There was a lot of positive feedback and minimal suggestions on the binder. After the updates and changes had been made the teachers that participated in the project were given a copy of the binder for future use. I plan to hold an in-service the following year to introduce the binder to the entire special education preschool staff. It would allow me the opportunity to share the successes explained in the feedback forms and introduce the staff to the idea of using snack as a functional part of the day to enhance and support language exposure and development.

### Outcomes

- Created a binder that is a user-friendly, meaningful, and functional resource
- Taught the teachers beneficial strategies that supported language development in the classroom
- Provided a resource for children to learn language skills and develop language in a natural way

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- Explained to the teachers the neurological emergency, shared a possible solution, and explained the importance of using snack as a routines-based activity

### Project Outcome

All three of the teachers participated in the cracker and popcorn activities. Two of the three teachers used the cereal, Pete the cat, and ants on the log activities. All three teachers commented that the activities provided opportunities to work on pre-academic skills in a natural environment that were both engaging and motivating. They also talked about the excitement seen in the kids while participating in the new snack activities. The kids really enjoyed the activities that supported the story that had been read in class. One of the teachers said that kids did not want to eat the celery and suggested that the lesson plans needed to include an alternate to the peanut butter because of allergies. One teacher suggested doing the ants on the log with bread and raisins, or with cream cheese and sunflowers to provide exposure to new foods. One teacher said this about the binder:

*“I specifically picked these lessons [mainly] because; first, I had the snack items already and second, the kids could make these snacks more independently. I love how not only “language” is enriched, but [that] math, following directions, and fine motor skills were also incorporated. I have done these lessons several times for practice and repetition and the children never get bored. They are also increasing their vocabulary and expressive language skills. Very Well Done! Lesson plans are written so Para-professionals can [even] carry out these lessons and I know that they are learning and being exposed to many different things even if I can’t be there.”*

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**Lesson Plans**

## Average Ratings

The rating was 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree of the following areas.	Crackers	Popcorn	Cereal	Pete the Cat	Ants on a log
The lesson was easy to develop and use with the class.	5	5	5	4	4.5
The activities were meaningful and functional for each child's developmental level.	5	4.67	5	4.5	4.5
The lesson requires an acceptable amount of prep time.	5	4.67	5	4	4.5
The children were engaged in snack time.	4.17	4.67	5	5	3.5
The lesson helped promote the language targets for each child in the class.	4.67	5	5	5	3.5
I would use this lesson again in my classroom.	5	5	5	4.5	4
I could adapt this lesson for future use to meet a variety of language targets.	4.67	5	5	4.5	4

The teachers reported that the basic activities rated highly on the scales measuring functionality, usability, and ease of preparation while being engaging to the students. The lesson plans in the book section were rated as very engaging, but required more preparation. As a result, the teachers said that they would not use these lessons as often, but really enjoyed the language that could be used during the lesson and the expansion that happens with the activity. The teachers reported that the children are talking more during snack time and that utterances are increased.

One teacher really enjoyed the mystery part of the lessons, where ingredients are described and the kids guess the ingredients. One teacher suggested simplifying the lesson with



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fewer goals because of the need for repetition among the children. The teachers did not have many suggestions for ways to improve the binder besides adding substitute food options for children with allergies. I learned that, even though each class has children at different levels, children enjoy a fun snack activity that is engaging and educational. I also learned that children can learn and can be engaged in a highly motivating activity multiple times and yet still gain new information through repetition of the activity.

### Discussion

“Language delay is the most common developmental problem in preschool children” (Rescorla, 1984). The preschool years are a critical period of development as the brain is growing at a rapid pace and many developmental milestones are occurring during this period. Language delays can have long-term effects because language abilities affect many facets of our lives and can impact our ability to move purposefully throughout our world. Daily routines with embedded language are an effective way of increasing language skills. Embedding learning into routines-based activities can be more beneficial than pull-out services. It is important to create meaningful and functional interventions that support language development including, tailoring activities to child interests, increased repetition, creation of a language rich environment, and making the activity engaging. The activities must be age appropriate, motivating, and fun. Old activities can be re-introduced with new elements by taking old activities and making them new, or by introducing new and interesting foods to the children. This allows children to become engaged and they can gain a deeper knowledge of the subject matter. The snack activity can be related to what is happening at the time or a recent experience with a situation or book.

The teacher can use strategies such as, self-talk, parallel talk, expansion, extension, commenting, asking questions, and modeling to enrich the language activity. The snack activity

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needs to hold the attention of the children to allow time to teach the information, vocabulary, and/or concept of the lesson plan. Differentiated instruction is critical to meeting the differing levels/needs of children in a special education preschool classroom.

The teachers reported positive feedback about the binders and enjoyed the activities as a tool to support language development of the children in their classrooms. The teachers stated that they enjoyed the basic activities because they were inexpensive, required minimal preparation time, and were engaging to the students. The teachers also reported that the other lesson plans included great language skills that are meaningful to the children in their classrooms, but because of the preparation time required, they would use those lesson plans less often. However, when they did use those plans, the children were extremely engaged and really connected with the theme, book, or holiday. The teachers also reported an increase in the MLU of their students during snack time which is an important part of language development. The teachers also reported great success in gaining classroom attention and keeping that attention by making the snack into a mystery with clues. This also provided an opportunity to develop better listening skills in addition to critical thinking skills.

Children enjoy fun and engaging activities and if educators can create learning activities that support their individual needs, they can support an entire classroom develop the necessary skills to both prepare for Kindergarten and bridge the gap that their delay is causing. I hope to share this binder and believe that if all special education teachers will take a little extra time to plan engaging and language-rich snack activities, then children in special education preschool classrooms will be more successful in their future communication and language experiences.

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## Appendix

Formatted: Centered

### Appendix A:

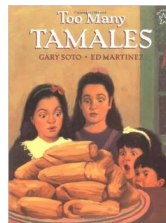
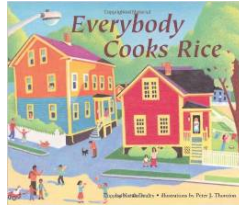
#### Book Ideas:

#### Cultural Books:

Everybody Cooks Rice (Norah Dooley)

Everybody Bakes Bread (Norah Dooley)

Everybody Brings Noodles (Norah Dooley)



Too Many Tamales (Gary Soto)

#### Food/Snack Books:

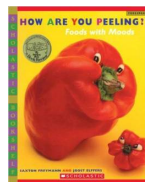
Snack time for Confetti (Kali Stileman)



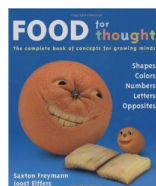
Snack Art Eat What You Create (Elizabeth Meahl)

Alphabet Recipes for Snacktime: Quick, No-cook Recipes with instant activities that teach each letter of the alphabet & turn Snacktime into learning time. (Tracy Jarboe)

How are you Peeling (Saxton Freymann & Joost Elffers)



Food for Thought (Saxton Freymann & Joost Elffers)



**Appendix B:****Ideas of lessons in specific Units.****Comprehensive Units/Holiday Example**

Holidays are a great time to create fun snack time activities. During Thanksgiving, the teacher could read, “Run Turkey Run.” The story talks about a turkey running and hiding from the farmer at Thanksgiving. The snack time activities could include; making a turkey out of food making a mud pit with the turkey hiding with the pigs, making a pond with the turkey hiding with the ducks, a barn with a turkey hiding with the horse, and making a tree with the turkey hiding in the trees. All of the snacks for this unit will include three pretzel sticks that are inserted into the snack to show the turkey’s tail feathers hiding in the snack to represent the turkey hiding in the mud, pond, barn, and trees.

The turkey would be made from a piece of bread, cheese slices as feathers (or more bread as shown below), raisins as eyes, Swedish fish as the wattle, and carrot slice as the beak. The teacher would discuss the parts of a turkey and the category the turkey belongs to. The children would talk about their turkey and how silly it was to eat the turkey. The teacher would refer back to the story and discuss the sequence of the story.

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The next snack time the teacher would make chocolate pudding with the children.

Literacy would be introduced while following the recipe. The ingredients would be counted as they are placed in the bowl. The children would help mix the ingredients and try to guess what they are making. For example, the teacher could say, “Hmmm, it’s turning brown, I wonder what it’s going to be.” The children would guess that it is chocolate pudding and pour the pudding in the bag, to mix it a little more, the teacher would explain that the pudding is squishy and messy. The children would all have the opportunity to squish the pudding in the bag. The teacher would then put pudding in each bowl and discuss how it is sticky and messy. The teacher would ask the children if the brown pudding looks like anything in their story. The children will remember the pigs rolling in the mud. The teacher would put his/her spoon in the chocolate pudding and say, “I don’t see anything hiding in my pudding” and “What should we hide in our pudding?” The children would remind the children that the pigs were rolling in the mud and the turkey was hiding in the mud. The teacher would use pretzels to represent the feathers sticking out of the mud. And the pigs would be made of pink marshmallows. The class will discuss pigs and that they are farm animals that enjoy rolling in the mud to keep cool. They will also discuss other farm animals and the sounds they make.



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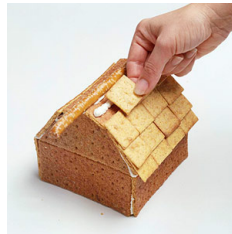
The turkey hiding in the pond would be made of a cupcake with blue frosting and little rubber ducks with the pretzel feathers of the turkey sticking out of the cupcake. The recipe would be read and introduced as literacy. The cupcakes would be made earlier in the day as a following directions activity. The children would see the white frosting and label the blue food coloring. The children would then count 5 drops of food coloring and watch as the frosting changed from white to blue. The children love to experiment and watch as things change right in front of their eyes. The teacher would then ask if the children could remember anything blue in the story. Maybe somewhere that animals swim. The children would remember the pond with the ducks. The teacher would then show the students how to make a pond on top of the cupcake. The activity would include prepositions in and on. They would then place the pretzels representing the feathers into the cupcake to resemble the turkey hiding in the pond.



The next activity would represent the turkey hiding in the barn with the horse. The barn would be made of graham crackers and the barn would have a horse. The horse would be made from a flat cracker, almond slices for the ears, chocolate chips as eyes and nose over a piece of

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cheese and peanut butter to stick the face to the horse and the horse on the barn. The pretzel feathers will be sticking out of the barn, showing the turkey hiding.



The last activity will be the turkey hiding in the trees. He finally escaped the farmer and the feathers blend into the trees because the autumn colors hide the turkey perfectly. The lesson would talk about autumn colors and the changes that take place during that season. Tree would be made from a large pretzel rod as the trunk of the tree and pretzel sticks as the branches the leaves would be made from green grapes and Reese's pieces to include brown, green and orange leaves on the tree. The pretzel sticks would be poking out behind the tree to represent the turkey in the trees. We would discuss these activities during art time and reinforce the autumn colors making trees with the same colors. The same language and information can be shared throughout the day to provide multiple repetitions to speed up the learning process.



## Appendix C:

### Snack Extension Activity Example

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The snack time activities will include a story, foods from the story, foods from a similar category, activity, and the sequence of events. One unit would include the “If you Give a Dog a Donut” story. The food would be donuts, apple juice, and apples. The teacher would ask the students if they know what category an apple belong to. After the children understood that the apple is a fruit, the teacher would introduce other fruits to the students and discuss that fruit grow on trees. The donut would then be introduced as a desert. The teacher would ask if donuts grow on trees. The teacher would ask the children to identify other deserts that they enjoy. The teacher would let the students decorate their own donut with frosting and sprinkles. The classroom would discuss the colors and type of sprinkles that were being used by each child. They would also discuss the texture of the donut compared to the apples. After the discussion of the differences between the donut and the apple, the teacher would pull out the book again and talk about the sequence of events that happened in the story. This snack time would be a language rich learning experience through the introduction to categorization of food, labeling food, the texture and differences in foods, and learning how to sequence a story and the importance of sequencing.

### **Appendix D:**

#### **Basic Snack Examples**

Teachers will not always have the time and resources to provide the in-depth activities explained above. The binder will have “Go-to” ideas and activities to allow the teacher to provide access to a language rich activity with minimal preparation time and financial expense. Teachers can use cereal as a great language activity. The teacher will talk about a special food that he/she enjoys in the morning. For example, it’s round and crunchy. The kids will know that the teacher is talking about cereal. The teacher will put the box on the table. The teacher will

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then try to pour the cereal into the bowl with the top closed. The teacher will have a confused look on his/her face and say, “uh oh, why isn’t it working, shake, shake, shake, it’s not coming out.” The children will remind the teacher to open the box. The teacher will expand the language to, “oh I need to OPEN the box?” or “Okay it’s open, now what do I do?” The children will say that he/she needs to pour it into the bowl. The teacher will pour it into her bowl and begin to eat it. The students will remind him/her that the cereal needs milk. They will discuss the texture and sounds that cold cereal make. Another day the teacher can compare the cold cereal to hot cereal (oatmeal).

Another great activity is ants on a log. The teacher can talk about bugs and insects while incorporate counting, colors, comparatives, and prepositions with celery and raisins. The class can discuss the number of ants on the log, the number of logs, the number of students that like ants on a log, etc. The class can discuss the different bugs and insects and their colors. They can add cereal, fruit snacks, Craisins on the celery to represent different kinds of bugs on the log. The children can compare their logs to see who has the longest or shortest log in the class. Who has the most ants and who has the least? They can also discuss the ants that are on the log, and the ants that fell off, or under the log.

All of the activities listed above allow children the opportunity to try new foods, to experiment and manipulate foods to create something that they can talk about. Snack is one of the most motivating times of the day. It needs to be used as a functional language learning time. The children will learn while having fun. They will be excited about snack and tell their parents about the fun snack they had at school, which again provides a language opportunity for the child. Children with language delays need access to language and snack is a great opportunity to

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provide the opportunities while creating a fun, and delicious snack to allow for such an opportunity.

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## Appendix E:

### Lesson Plan

**RUN TURKEY RUN:** Make a turkey

**Ingredients:** Bread, peanut butter, cheese slices, raisins, Swedish fish, baby carrots, pretzel sticks, chocolate chips or cereal.

Place all the items in a bag and hide them under the table.

**Reminder:** Always make your turkey first and explain what you are doing as the children watch. This will allow you the opportunity to make the turkey with their undivided attention.

Show the children the book: Run Turkey Run!

“Do you remember the story we read? Do you remember the “animal” that was hiding from the farmer? Yes it was a turkey, a turkey is an animal, and it is a kind of bird. We are going to make a turkey. Hmmm I have some things in my bag....., I see something that is soft and you can make a sandwich with it (wait) you can put peanut butter on it, or cheese (wait). Yes it’s **BREAD**. Okay I have something that you can put on bread, it’s brown and it can be creamy or crunchy. You use a knife to spread it on the bread. Yes, it’s **PEANUT BUTTER**. I have something else that goes on bread, it’s yellow and you can eat it plain or put it on bread. It’s **CHEESE**. I like cheese. I like yellow cheese. I have something in my bag that is crunchy, it’s orange, and some people like to eat it with ranch dressing. It’s a vegetable and it grows in the garden. It’s a **CARROT**. Here are some **CHOCOLATE CHIPS**, these are candy, and they are red fish. We call this red candy **SWEDISH FISH**. Does anyone know what these things are called (hold up the raisins)? They are wrinkly and they are a dried fruit. They are **RAISINS**.

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Did you know that raisins are dried grapes? Okay we are ready to make our turkey. (You can change this info to fit your style of teaching, but it needs to be a conversational experience with turn taking and wait time while expanding on their current knowledge.)”

“First we need to put the bread on our plate. Put it on the plate (say what you are doing as you do it). Next, I need to make him brown, look at the ingredients, what do we have that is brown? Something creamy and smooth. Yes we have creamy peanut butter. Wait, I can’t get the peanut butter out of the jar (shaking the jar upside down). What could I use (tapping your chin and waiting).....? Oh I could use a knife. That was a great idea John. I have the knife and I need some peanut butter on my knife. Okay now I spread the peanut butter on the bread. Spread it....on the bread. Perfect! What does the turkey need on his face? What do you have on your face? Yes you have 2 eyes, 1 nose, and a mouth. Now let’s look at the book. Here’s the turkey’s face, he has (wait) that’s right 2 eyes, a beak, and that funny red thing is a wattle. We are going to use raisins for the eyes, here are my 2 eyes, one, two (count as you place the raisins on the turkey) I put the 2 eyes on the turkey’s face. I forgot how many beaks do we need? Just one that’s right. Here is the beak, but it’s too big. What should we do? Yes Tom, we need to cut it, cut, cut, cut. Cut the carrot to make it smaller. Okay put the beak on the turkey (say what you are doing). Our turkey needs something to run? What does he need to run and hide? He needs feet to run, that’s right. Here are the pretzels, we are going to make his feet with 3 pretzels. But these pretzels are too long. How could we make them short? We could cut them, or we could break them. Break the pretzels. Okay I need 3 short pretzels, one, two, and three pretzels for each foot. Lets make another foot, 1,2,3 pretzels. Now my turkey has 2 feet. He can run and hide from the farmer with his feet. The turkey needs something on his back, they are colorful and they keep him warm. Yes he needs feathers, I am going to use something yellow for

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my turkey's feathers. What is yellow on the table? My cheese is yellow, okay put the cheese on the turkey (whole piece), wait a minute that doesn't look right. That is 1 big feather, we need 4 little feathers. What should we do? We need to cut the cheese and make smaller feathers. Tell me what to do..... cut, cut, cut. Let's count our cheese slices 1,2,3,4. We have 4 small feathers. I put the feathers on my turkey. Now I get to decorate or make my feathers pretty. Quickly place chocolate chips, cereal or anything else that you want to use on the cheese to make the feathers colorful. Finally, I made a turkey. Okay who wants to make a turkey?"

Ask the children what they need to make a turkey and allow them the opportunity to request the items. Depending on the level of your children you can allow each child to have an ingredient and they share the ingredients with their peers.

Let the children that have more language skills to model for the children that have lower expressive language skills. Also use the paras to model requesting.

For example, Jenny (para) what do you want? "I want some bread for my turkey's body."  
Here's the bread, her turkey needs bread to make a body, what do you need?

Go through each ingredient with all children, then move to the next ingredient giving clues as needed to remind them of the name if the ingredients.

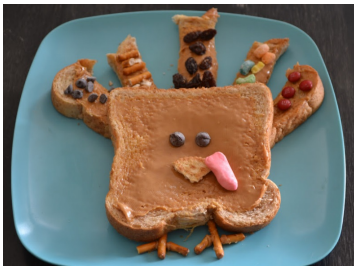
As the children are making their turkey discuss what they are doing and ask wh questions to support their language.

For example, what are you putting on the face, what color is your turkey, what color is the wattle, what does he need to run, etc?



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As they finish making their turkey talk about how you are going to eat your turkey, and how silly that is to eat the turkey. As you are eating your turkey label the body parts. “I am eating the eyes. I am eating the yellow feathers, my feathers are made of cheese. I love yellow feathers, they are yummy. I am eating the turkey’s feet. They are crunchy, etc. Describe the characteristics of the food while using the body parts to remind the children of the vocabulary. You can have a para photograph the process of making the turkey and use those pictures to sequence how the turkey was made and that can be sent home in a newsletter or email to reinforce the vocabulary and story.



### Appendix F:

#### Enhancing Language Opportunities During Snack Time : Teacher Feedback Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate the snack language suggestions provided in the lesson plans:  
(1=strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree)

	Strongly Disagree <span style="font-size: 1.2em;">→</span> Strongly Agree				
The lesson was easy to develop and use with the class	1	2	3	4	5
The activities were meaningful and functional for each child’s developmental level.	1	2	3	4	5
The lesson required an acceptable amount of prep time	1	2	3	4	5
The children were engaged in snack time	1	2	3	4	5
The lesson helped promote the language targets for	1	2	3	4	5

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each child in the class.					
I would use this lesson again in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
I could adapt this lesson for future use to meet a variety of language targets	1	2	3	4	5

**Please describe the most positive aspects of this lesson** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please describe any feedback for improving this lesson** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please offer any additional comments or suggestions** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix G:

### Language Support Guide

#### Lesson Plan: Run Turkey Run-Make a Turkey

#### Language skills:

##### **Preposition-on**

**Vocabulary:** animal, bird, turkey, eyes, beak, wattle, foot/feet, feathers

**Colors:** brown, yellow, orange, red, and colorful/many colors

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**Comparatives:** big, small/smaller, long, short

**Descriptives:** crunchy, smooth/creamy, soft

**Categories:** fruit, vegetables, animals

**Verbs:** cut, run, break, spread

**Strategies:**

**Self-talk**-describe what you are doing as you do it. (I'm putting the bread on the plate.)

**Parallel Talk**-Talk about the child's needs. (You need a beak for your turkey. You put the beak on the turkey's face.)

**Expansion**-If the child says turkey funny, the teacher would say, yes, the turkey IS funny.

**Extension**-If the child says feet, then you can say, yes, the turkey needs feet, the turkey needs feet so he can run.

**Commenting, Modeling, Repetition:** Remember to talk throughout the lesson to provide additional language exposure. Repeat, repeat, repeat. Repetition is very important. Model when needed, but provide sufficient time for the child to process the information before answering for the child (each child may need a different amount of wait time).

**Sabotage**-dump the peanut butter upside down to try and get it out, put the whole cheese slice on the turkey (The cheese needs to be cut into smaller pieces.).

**Appendix H:**

**Description of Strategies**

**Self-talk** is used when the adult is using short sentences to talk about what he/she is doing, seeing, or hearing. The teacher could describe the ingredients and what he/she is doing with the ingredients. For example, I am putting the flour in the bowl, Pour the flour in the bowl. I need a spoon to scoop the peanut butter

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**Parallel Talk** is used when the teacher is talking about what the child is doing. For example, you need some butter, good, you're putting the butter on the bread. I like how you are spreading the butter on the bread. You are eating bread and butter.

**Expansion** is used when the teacher takes what the child says and adds the missing words or grammar. It turns a child expression into a more adult expression. For example, "dog run" could be expanded into, dog is running, yes the dog is running.

**Extension** is when you extend what the child is already saying, so the teacher would repeat the information in adult-like language then add new information. Using the example above, "dog run" the teacher would say, "the dog is running, the dog is running fast." The teacher repeats the expression, then adds more information.

**Commenting, Modeling, Asking Questions:** Commenting and modeling are used to provide opportunities to hear more language. Examples of commenting can be, look at Jenny she is putting peanut butter on her celery. Wow Suzie, you have 5 oranges on your plate. Johnny is thirsty today, he is drinking a lot of milk. Modeling can be used by saying what is needed or modeling what you want the child to say, the modeling can happen by a peer, the para, or the teacher. Some children will need the model from multiple people before they can use the language necessary for the activity. For example, the teacher can ask a peer, "Tommy what do you need?" Tommy says I need bread. Annie what do you need? Bread, yes, you need some bread. Questions are used to elicit information from the child of what they know and what needs to be modeled.

**Sabotage** is used to get a response from the children and allow them to use language to describe what is wrong or what needs to be done differently. The teacher is doing something tricky or silly to obtain the child's attention, and to provide opportunities to problem solve. For example,

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the teacher might try to pour the unopened cereal box into a bowl. This provides the child the opportunity to remind the teacher that she has to open the box before she can pour the cereal.

**Wait time** is one of the most important strategies as children struggle with language they need adequate wait time to allow them to think and process what has been asked, find the information, and then expressively respond. Some children can need up to 10 seconds of wait time. The teacher will learn that each child is different and may require a different amount of wait time.