

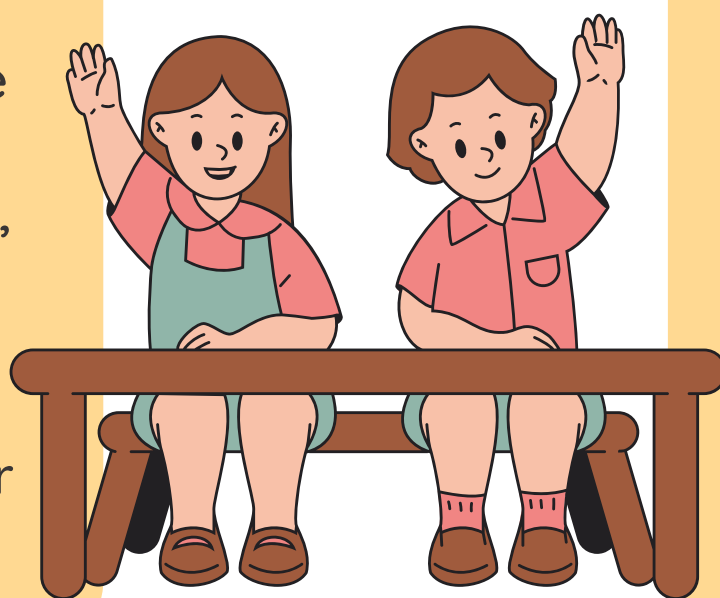
CREATING A COMMUNICATION-SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOM

Let's give all our students the chance to speak, listen, understand and participate!

If you have students struggling to understand instructions or express themselves, here are some ways to modify your classroom environment and embed strategies into your teaching activities:

Set up a conducive environment

- Minimise background noise and classroom clutter
- Use visual supports to enhance comprehension e.g. gestures, pictures, diagrams, mind maps, highlight/bold keywords
- Seating arrangements: place students who require more support to be facing and closer to the speaker



Teach new vocabulary intentionally

- Explore various features of the word e.g. meaning, phonological features, categories
- Link to students' personal experiences
- Regularly review, repeat and highlight keywords
- Provide plenty of opportunities to practice
- Encourage students to ask for help when they don't understand

Plan and facilitate opportunities for communication throughout the day

- Place items out of reach/sight so students have to verbally request for them
- Incorporate paired/group work
- Help repair communication breakdowns through rephrasing and clarifying



For students who need more support...

Modify your language

- Get the student's attention first
- Provide simple instructions
- Use familiar vocabulary
- Give time to process and respond
- Pair instructions with visual supports
- Repeat and rephrase
- Check for student's understanding

Scaffold and support language difficulties

- To increase sentence length: help expand by repeating what they said and adding one more detail (see video: "[Expanding and Recasting](#)")
- For grammatical/speech errors: repeat what they said, but with accurate pronunciation and/or grammar (see video: "[Expanding and Recasting](#)")
- Accept all verbal and non-verbal communication forms
- Be kind and honest if you can't understand
- If they are struggling to answer your question, provide choices
- Help structure their responses by providing visual supports or key words e.g. first, next, then, last