Additional Handout:

Speak Freely
Student Workbook:

(selected pages)

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Catching the Stutter

There are probably times when you stutter really hard and it’s quite clear to you that you’re having trouble with your speech. However, there are other times when stuttering happens so fast that you may not even realize you’re stuttering.

If you don’t realize that you’re stuttering, then you can’t do anything to change it. Therefore, it’s important that you practice being aware of when you stutter.

*Catching the Stutter* is a way to help you become more aware of when you stutter. It’s something that you practice in the therapy room only.

It involves closing your hand every time you stutter (or pretend to stutter). When you close your hand, you want to try and match the tightness of your hand with the tension in your speech.

At first you’ll “catch” your moments of stuttering while you’re reading. Later on you’ll try *Catching the Stutter* while you’re having a conversation.
Listen to, and watch the following model. Then try *Catching the Stutter* as you read the passage below:

As I read these sentences, I’m going to try and pay very close attention to my speech. Whenever I stutter (or pretend to stutter), I will close my hand to show that I’ve “caught” that moment of stuttering. This will help me gain more awareness of what’s going on with my speech. Being more aware is one of the first steps of working with my stuttering.
Relaxing the Stutter

Stuttered speech has too much tension in it. With practice, you can reduce that tension. Relaxing the Stutter is one way to get that practice. Like Catching the Stutter, it’s a strategy that’s only used inside the speech therapy room.

Relaxing the Stutter does a couple things: It gives you a chance to figure out what you’re doing when you stutter, and it shows you that it’s possible to change how hard you stutter.

How to practice Relaxing the Stutter:

1. First, you’ll purposefully stutter on a word with 100% tension. (You’re going to try to stutter the way you ordinarily would.)

2. Then you’ll repeat the same word with half as much tension (50%). You can also say the word a third time with 25% tension.

3. As you work with these levels of tension, pay close attention to what the stuttering is like. Try to answer these questions:

   What kind of stuttering was it?

   Where was the tension?

   What part of your speech system was involved?

   How did it feel?
As you practice this strategy with a variety of words, you’ll learn a lot about what happens when you stutter. You’ll also see that you can change your stuttering behavior and stutter in a more relaxed way.

Be aware that your *pretend* stuttering may turn into *real* stuttering. If it does, don’t worry. This just gives you another chance to figure out what’s happening. And that’s a good thing because if you’re going to change your stuttering, you need to know what you’re dealing with.

Sometimes you can try to temporarily hold on to a moment of stuttering so that you have more time to tune into the tension in your speech muscles. Even though this may feel a bit uncomfortable at first, if you can “stay with” the stuttering in this way, it helps you to see what’s going on.

After you’ve practiced *Relaxing the Stutter* for a while, you’ll begin to get more comfortable with your stuttering. You’ll see that it’s *not* some mysterious thing that takes control of your mouth.

*In fact, stuttering is something that you can explore, work with, and change.*
Listen to the following models. Then try *Relaxing the Stutter* on the words below. When you pause between productions, be sure to let all the tension go.

100% Tension ➔ 50% Tension

**why** ➔ **why**

**block** ➔ **block**

**very** ➔ **very**

Now make your own list of words to practice with. Try to think of words that you have stuttered on recently.

100% Tension ➔ 50% Tension

_________________ ➔ ______________

_________________ ➔ ______________

_________________ ➔ ______________

_________________ ➔ ______________

_________________ ➔ ______________
How to practice Cancellation:

1. At first you’re going to practice Cancellation on words that you intentionally stutter on.

2. When you practice, you’re going to choose a word and purposefully stutter on it.

3. Then you’ll pause for two or three seconds. You’ll use that time to acknowledge that you stuttered and figure out what happened (for example: determine the type of stutter, where it was located, and how tense it was).

   Initially, you’re going to “think aloud” to yourself as you figure out what happened. Later, you’ll think silently as you analyze the stutter.

4. Then you’ll say the stuttered word again with less tension.

Listen to the following models and then use Cancellation on each word.

- talking
- what
- challenge
- does
- attitude
- lesson
- stutter
- remember

In the space below, make your own list of words to practice.

__________________________  __________________________  __________________________  __________________________

__________________________  __________________________  __________________________  __________________________

Now listen to the model of Cancellation with the Easy Voice Paragraphs on page 60. Then practice the paragraphs yourself.
How to practice Slow Stretched Speech:

1. After taking a Relaxed Breath, you’ll gently prolong the first stretchable sound of the word. Then you will slowly move through the rest of the word.

2. In addition, you’re going to make a “bell curve” with your speech. That is: You’ll start your voice very quietly…slowly get louder…and then gradually get quiet again.

   If you could see it, it would look like this.

   ![bell curve diagram]

3. As you produce words in this way, pay close attention to the physical feeling as you stretch your speech.

Listen to the following models and then try using Slow Stretched Speech on these words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mmm</th>
<th>ma</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>www</td>
<td>was</td>
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<tr>
<td>thh</td>
<td>hat</td>
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<tr>
<td>yyy</td>
<td>year</td>
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<tr>
<td>zzz</td>
<td>zoom</td>
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<tr>
<td>lll</td>
<td>loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nnn</td>
<td>nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jjj</td>
<td>job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rrr</td>
<td>rug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vvv</td>
<td>vase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Smooth Movement Words**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. mmmm<strong>my</strong></th>
<th>1. <em><strong>low</strong></em></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(my)</td>
<td>(low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. mmmm<strong>man</strong></td>
<td>2. <em><strong>laugh</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(man)</td>
<td>(laugh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. mmmm<strong>mail</strong></td>
<td>3. <em><strong>like</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(mail)</td>
<td>(like)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. mmmm<strong>milk</strong></td>
<td>4. <em><strong>lead</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(milk)</td>
<td>(lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. mmmm<strong>mop</strong></td>
<td>5. <em><strong>learn</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(mop)</td>
<td>(learn)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. nnnn<strong>no</strong></th>
<th>1. <em><strong>run</strong></em></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(no)</td>
<td>(run)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. nnnn<strong>near</strong></td>
<td>2. <em><strong>rest</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(near)</td>
<td>(rest)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. nnnn<strong>nine</strong></td>
<td>3. <em><strong>ride</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(nine)</td>
<td>(ride)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. nnnn<strong>new</strong></td>
<td>4. <em><strong>rub</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(new)</td>
<td>(rub)</td>
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<td>5. nnnn<strong>neck</strong></td>
<td>5. <em><strong>red</strong></em></td>
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<td>(neck)</td>
<td>(red)</td>
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<tr>
<th>1. www<strong>what</strong></th>
<th>1. <em><strong>van</strong></em></th>
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<tr>
<td>(what)</td>
<td>(van)</td>
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<td>2. www<strong>when</strong></td>
<td>2. <em><strong>vest</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(when)</td>
<td>(vest)</td>
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<td>3. www<strong>why</strong></td>
<td>3. <em><strong>vine</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(why)</td>
<td>(vine)</td>
</tr>
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<td>4. www<strong>where</strong></td>
<td>4. <em><strong>vote</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(where)</td>
<td>(vote)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. www<strong>which</strong></td>
<td>5. <em><strong>voice</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(which)</td>
<td>(voice)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Smooth Movement Chart

Check off a box below each time you make a *Smooth Movement*.

**Remember**: Take an easy *Relaxed Breath*, stretch out the first sound, and make a bell curve as you slowly move into the next sound.

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<td><strong>mmeh</strong></td>
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<td><strong>yyyyah</strong></td>
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<td><strong>vvv voo</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>thhhha</strong></td>
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<td><strong>zzzzuh</strong></td>
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<td><strong>jjjjer</strong></td>
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How to make an Easy Voice:

1. After taking a Relaxed Breath, close your lips and hum very quietly. Notice the tiny vibration of your vocal cords. Put three fingers on your Adam’s apple so you can feel this small sound.

2. Make this quiet humming sound a few times.

3. Then make this tiny hum again, and this time open your lips so the quiet buzzing sound comes out of your mouth. This is the sound of your vocal cords vibrating in a very relaxed and easy way.

   When you use an Easy Voice, this same tiny buzzing is the starting sound for all vowels.

4. Now after taking your Relaxed Breath, let this little quiet buzz ride out on your exhalation and gradually build into an “aaaaaaahhh.”

   Feel the gentle buzzing of your vocal cords as you slowly turn on your voice. Make a bell curve as you’ve learned to do.

   Tune in and feel how you’re relaxing your vocal cords.
Listen to the models below and make an *Easy Voice* with each of the different vowel sounds.

Remember to start with the tiny buzzing sound and then gradually shape it into the vowel you’re saying. Use a bell curve as you make the *Easy Voice*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel Sound</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aaaaaah</td>
<td>(as in “father”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeeee</td>
<td>(as in “feet”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aaaaaa</td>
<td>(as in “may”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iiiii</td>
<td>(as in “high”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ooOOh</td>
<td>(as in “low”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ooooo</td>
<td>(as in “soon”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aaaaa</td>
<td>(as in “hat”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iiiii</td>
<td>(as in “hit”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeeeh</td>
<td>(as in “bed”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uuuh</td>
<td>(as in “but”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ooow</td>
<td>(as in “cow”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ooooy</td>
<td>(as in “toy”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just like *Smooth Movement*, it takes a fair amount of practice to train your muscles to use an *Easy Voice*. Use the chart on the next page to your record practice.
### Light Contact Words

**1. bliiike**  (bike)  |  **1. bliiick**  (pick)  
**2. booook**  (book)  |  **2. paaark**  (park)  
**3. baaaack**  (back)  |  **3. peeeen**  (pen)  
**4. baaaang**  (bang)  |  **4. puuut**  (put)  
**5. buuut**  (but)  |  **5. paaaass**  (pass)  

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**1. doooon’t**  (don’t)  |  **1. taalk**  (talk)  
**2. doooown**  (down)  |  **2. tiime**  (time)  
**3. doooog**  (dog)  |  **3. taake**  (take)  
**4. diiiirt**  (dirt)  |  **4. teeach**  (teach)  
**5. daaaance**  (dance)  |  **5. taap**  (tap)  

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**1. geeet**  (get)  |  **1. kiiick**  (kick)  
**2. giiliirl**  (girl)  |  **2. caaat**  (cat)  
**3. gooood**  (good)  |  **3. caaall**  (call)  
**4. gooooot**  (got)  |  **4. coook**  (cook)  
**5. giiliive**  (give)  |  **5. keeep**  (keep)
Easy Voice Phrases

1. eee each ooo of uuu us (each of us)
2. a a a add iii it uuu up (add it up)
3. lll l a a a am ii ii in (I am in)
4. eee ears aaa and eee eyes (ears and eyes)
5. uuu up a aa and ooo out (up and out)

6. o o o o o o old a a a age (old age)
7. UUU Uncle EEE Eric (Uncle Eric)
8. a a a all ooo of uuu us (all of us)
9. O O O Oak AAA Avenue (Oak Avenue)
10. a a a after eee eight (after eight)

11. a a a all ooo our ooo own (all our own)
12. iii iii ii it ooo on (is it on)
13. eee eight ooo of uuu us (eight of us)
14. lll l l l a a a ask AAA Ann (I’ll ask Ann)
15. o o o off a a a and a a a away (off and away)
Smooth Movement Sentences

1. We laughed out loud.
2. They rarely make noise at night.
3. When will you make up your mind?
4. Maybe we’ll walk the rest of the way.
5. We listened to the radio all night long.
6. There was very little snow last winter.
7. My neighbor ran in the local marathon.
8. Mark wrote a long report for Geography.
9. We woke up at nine and were late for work.
10. Your jacket will be very useful this morning.
Smooth Movement Paragraphs

1. When the neighbors were away, little Jonny Jones walked their dog, Raider. Raider is a yellow Lab that weighs much much more than Jonny. Luckily, Raider is well trained and very good when walked with a leash.

2. Last night Roger dreamed that he lost his job. He realized that he was very late for work. Rather than making a large meal, he grabbed a glass of juice and ran to the corner of Main and Lake, where he waited for his ride. No ride came, so he jogged all the way to work. When he got there, his boss let him know that he would likely lose his job for being so late. Roger was very happy to wake up and realize that he was only dreaming.
For further information about the Speak Freely Student Workbook, or the accompanying Therapist Handbook, Instructional DVD, and Audio CDs, visit www.cfst.com and click on “Publications.”
Speak Freely: Frequently Asked Questions

Is Speak Freely: Essential Speech Skills for School-Age Children Who Stutter a comprehensive therapy program?

No, it’s not. Speak Freely is not intended to be a comprehensive program. While this resource is rooted in a multidimensional theoretical perspective of stuttering, it focuses entirely on one aspect of school-age therapy: that is, the development of stuttering modification and fluency-enhancing strategies.

Given that Speak Freely only addresses the physical dimension of a child’s stuttering, it’s imperative that it be used together with additional therapy activities that target cognitive, affective, linguistic, and social aspects of a child’s stuttering problem.

What age students can use these materials?

These materials are appropriate for students aged 7 to 18. The content and language style of the strategy descriptions, rationales, and teaching methods are designed to suit elementary, middle, and high school students.

Is this resource appropriate for preschool children who stutter?

No, Speak Freely is not appropriate for use with preschool children. See Scott Yaruss' web site for information on preschool stuttering therapy (www.stutteringcenter.org). The Stuttering Foundation (www.stutteringhelp.org) and The Stuttering Homepage (http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/stutter.html) also have excellent information, resources, videos etc. regarding preschool therapy.

Can the strategies presented by Speak Freely be used with adults who stutter?

Yes. The same stuttering modification and fluency-enhancing strategies can be used with adults. After therapists learn how to use and teach these strategies, materials can be modified for use with adults (e.g., by creating rationales and practice exercises that are age-appropriate.

Can these strategies be used with struggling readers or non-readers?

Yes. While it’s convenient to use the written materials with children who read, the use of written materials is not imperative. Once therapists learn the various strategies, they can use them with any variety of therapy materials. Non-readers can also utilize the two Audio CDs which contain recordings of the entire Student Workbook and it’s associated practice exercises.

Can Speak Freely be used with Down syndrome and/or cognitively disabled students?

This depends on the severity of the cognitive impairment. Generally speaking, many of these students are able to learn the various strategies. They tend to do well with the structured aspect of the therapy and
often enjoy using the different speech patterns. The most challenging part of therapy for cognitively
disabled students has been related to maintenance and transfer. This may be due to the fact that using the
skills, particularly in the beginning, requires a fair amount of focused attention.

**Are these strategies helpful to children who clutter?**

Cluttering is different from stuttering, and therefore one’s overall approach to treatment will be
different. Unlike stuttering, cluttering appears to involve disorganized speech planning. It’s
characterized by rapid and irregular rate of speech, excessive disfluencies, and often other symptoms
such as language or phonological errors.

While the *Speak Freely* materials were not specifically designed to work with cluttering, they do involve
a number of elements that help students who clutter. First, clutterers typically demonstrate reduced
awareness of their speech, and the stuttering modification strategies such as “Catching the Stutter” and
“Relaxing the Stutter” increase that awareness as students identify and analyze their speech behaviors.
In addition, some students who clutter have difficulties with motor coordination and rhythm. During
early stages of therapy, *Speak Freely* includes strategies that exaggerate various rhythmic patterns (e.g.,
Linked Relaxation Rhythm) and this can be helpful to children who clutter. Finally, over-articulating,
tuning into the tactile sensation of speech production, and using a slow, prolonged rate can help students
who clutter. Many of the fluency-enhancing strategies help clutterers to modify their speech in these
ways (before gradually speeding up to normal rates of speech). Thus, *Speak Freely* materials can
provide useful elements to cluttering therapy, but would need to be accompanied by intervention
techniques that address the other aspects of cluttering noted above.

**Are there some students for whom *Speak Freely* is not appropriate?**

There may be. It’s important to identify individual needs and tailor our therapy accordingly. For
example, in certain cases it may be appropriate to spend less time on speech skill development and
more time on affective and cognitive reactions to stuttering (e.g., desensitizing concerns about stuttering,
reducing speech anxiety, addressing embarrassment and shame, promoting openness and acceptance,
building self-confidence) and general communication skills (e.g., maintaining appropriate eye contact,
resisting time pressure, using natural pausing and phrasing, developing self-advocacy skills).

**Why are the stuttering modification strategies taught first?**

Stuttering modification skills are typically taught first because doing so may (1) desensitize children’s
avoidance behaviors related to stuttering, (2) improve students’ kinesthetic awareness of speech and
speech tension, and thus allow them to repair moments of stuttering more easily, and (3) enable students
to transfer learned skills earlier, and thereby experience the benefits of therapy sooner.
Do we have to teach the strategies in the order they are presented in the Student Workbook?

While the strategies are usually taught in the order presented by the Student Workbook, clinicians can modify this order when necessary. Some of the fluency-enhancing strategies do build upon each other and need to be presented in a relatively linear fashion. This will become apparent as one learns about the strategies.

Are students ever resistant to using a particular strategy?

While most students readily engage all strategies, occasionally a student might be reluctant to practice a particular skill. If this occurs, just give the child the time he/she needs. There is no reason to push anything. Some students might be resistant to practice the Stuttering Modification strategies because it involves stuttering in some way. Other students might be reluctant to practice the more exaggerated, slow speech patterns. If this occurs, make sure the student understands the rationale for learning and practicing the strategy, and then revisit it later.

If a student is resistant, it can be helpful to show him/her video clips of other students practicing the strategy that’s being resisted. I’ve never had a student who didn’t eventually demonstrate the willingness to learn all the strategies. That said, at the end of the treatment students may prefer to use particular strategies – and that’s fine. We just want to make sure that they have as many options available to them as possible.

When and how do you work on the secondary characteristics of a child’s stuttering?

Secondary characteristics are directly addressed early in therapy as students identify, explore, and change their stuttering with “Catching the Stutter” and “Relaxing the Stutter.” When students practice “Relaxing the Stutter,” they are encouraged to stutter in the way that they ordinarily would – this includes secondary characteristics. As they relax their tense speech behavior, they find that they can also reduce the magnitude and number of secondary characteristics. In addition, when students learn and use the fluency-enhancing strategies, secondary characteristics often decrease.

Much of the Audio CDs repeats what’s in the Student Workbook. What’s the rationale for this?

The two Audio CDs do include a word-for-word reading of the Student Workbook. Thus, it provides spoken models of all strategies and speech patterns. Therapists can play these recordings to students as they move through the Student Workbook. This reinforces what has been taught and allows clinicians to make simultaneous comments on different aspects of what is being presented.

Finally, given that speech-language pathologists in the schools are typically pressed for time, having the Student Workbook and its associated speech models on CD allows clinicians to learn these strategies by listening to the recordings during other activities (e.g., while driving etc.). This may sound trivial, but it’s important that clinicians hear the speech models and practice them over and over so that they develop a high degree of skill using the strategies.
How do you help students to transfer their skills to the home environment?

When students’ skills are well-developed, we need to help them create hierarchies of increasingly difficult speech situations, and then provide support (e.g., discuss, plan out, rehearse, go with them, etc.) as they transfer what they have learned into settings outside of the therapy room. Initially, it’s helpful to choose a limited number of easier situations in which the strategies will be used (e.g., with particular people, in particular places, and/or at particular times). Gradually, speech skills should be used in increasingly difficult situations. As we do this, we need to enlist the help of others (e.g., teachers and staff at school and family members at home) and include them in the therapy process. Students need to feel comfortable with the way in which they modify their speech – ultimately, they will use the strategies that “feel right” to them.

The onus of carry-over should not be on the children alone. They need to be fully supported. We need to find ways to encourage, inspire, empower, and motivate our students – to help them see the value of being strong, effective communicators. Finally, parents, teachers, family, and friends should have realistic expectations. They should realize that (1) students will not be using their strategies all the time, and (2) there will be times when the skills breakdown. Indeed, the issue is not whether or not speech skills breakdown: It’s how the child is able to manage it when it does.

What’s the origin of these strategies? Is there any empirical evidence to support their use?

These stuttering modification and fluency-enhancing strategies are drawn from the work of numerous respected specialists who have treated stuttering over the last forty years. This resource was created in an effort to present these well-established practices to clinicians and clients in an explicit, integrated, and user-friendly format.

To date, outcome data for Speak Freely has not been systematically evaluated. Unfortunately, this is true for most stuttering therapy materials. Indeed, when Bothe and her colleagues (2006) reviewed stuttering treatment literature published between 1970 and 2005, they found that only 39 studies met widely accepted trial-quality inclusion criteria. Furthermore, only 9 of these involved school-age children. Findings from these nine studies showed that improvements in speech fluency can be achieved when various therapy techniques (e.g., prolonged speech, gentle onset, light contact) are employed in the context of structured programs that also provide intensive practice and a variety of response contingencies (Bothe et al., 2006, p. 335).

While Speak Freely is a highly structured program and includes strategies similar to the techniques noted above, outcome data has yet to be assessed. Given the importance of evidence-based practice and the paucity of school-age efficacy studies that meet appropriate methodological criteria, there is clearly a need to conduct research that evaluates the effectiveness of the strategies presented by this resource.