

Speakable turns



# Speakable

**A magazine with news and articles  
about communication and confidence**

**Encouraging words to children**

**Positive teaching and parenting can  
generate amazing effects when properly used.**

**Exciting news: our brand new  
READ2LEAD Program**

**A multi-sensory reading and writing program  
for 10 years - adults.**



**Speakable Team**  
**#6 Issue | October 2021**

# Introduction

Hello achievers,

After some months of cold weather and challenges to adjust our lives to fight off the pandemics, we can finally see better and better perspectives for the rest of 2021. Speakable's commitment to provide the best services and support to our clients has never stopped, making sure we have done our best towards the wellness of clients and their families.

This month is also an opportunity to celebrate our **7th year of operations**, helping people from the most diverse social, cultural and medical conditions have a better life from our speech and language therapy programs, as well as COGMED, tutoring and other complementary services. We remain contributors to the World Food Programme and a new product is ready for use, **READ2LEAD**, an innovative approach to the phonograms with a multisensory strategy.

Our new issue is full of cutting-edge articles to inspire parents, students, teachers, speech pathologists and other health specialists.

We hope that you enjoy our sixth issue! Please feel free to share your reading experience and to give your feedback for us to be better and better!

**Binh Doan**  
**Managing Editor and Executive Director of Speakable**

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# Using Figurative Language in your Writing



When we are reading a book with a story or poetry, it's pretty likely that we will find some passages with figurative language, adding an extra layer of meaning to what we are reading. But what is figurative language? How to use appropriately?

Figurative language is a phrasing technique that goes beyond the literal meaning of the used words towards a better demonstration of emotions, mood and relevance of an action, character or event. In order to make it work, we can use a wide array of techniques from figurative language, such as:

- **Simile:** this happens when someone or something is compared to a seemingly unrelated thing. For example, when you write "they walked as elegant as a cat."
- **Metaphor:** you can write a metaphor when not comparing such as a Simile does, but connects the seemingly unrelated thing as a predicative, such as when writing "those kids are such busy bees."
- **Implied metaphor:** similar to the metaphor, the implied metaphor uses elements that connect to a metaphor, but without being so explicit. A use of implied metaphor could be "I can't stand this guy! He's quacking his opinions nonstop!"
- **Personification:** instead of putting qualities or comparisons onto people, we use personification to input human traits to animals, natural forces or inanimate objects. A good example is "the Sun is smiling to me on this warm day."
- **Hyperbole:** this one is very common, because everyone likes to make exaggerated statements, such as "I'm so busy today, I have a million tasks to finish until the end of the day!"
- **Allusion:** that happens when you refer to another person, place, text, event or artwork in order to compare one element to the other. A use of allusion could be "I'm very proud of this, that's my Monalisa of science projects!"
- **Idiom:** some expressions are figurative because they represent an action or event, such as when saying "hey, my friend, hold your horses, soon we'll get there."
- **Pun:** a play of words with a humorous meaning is a pun. A good example, many times explored, is "Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana."

# Using Figurative Language in your Writing

- **Onomatopoeia:** though with such a complicated name, an onomatopoeia is very common and very explored when we are learning how to speak, trying to simulate the sounds we hear. Words like “buzz”, “whoof”, “tick-tock”, “ding-dong” and others are great examples.

Now that you know about these nine techniques for figurative language, it's important for you to know that you shouldn't use them all the time, for any reason. Our tips for the appropriate use of figurative language are:

1. Know why you're utilising figurative language at all times. Why don't you just say "our love is dead" instead of "I don't love you anymore?" Is the expression in your character's mouth accurate? Is it appropriate for your tone and style? If it isn't, then don't use it.
2. Carefully select your figures of speech. Yes, you can write, "her beauty hit me in the eye like a squirt of grapefruit juice," but how would such a simile add to your story or expand on its meaning? If you have a character with major communication challenges, it's a good idea to include it; otherwise, avoid it.
3. Use figurative language only when necessary. A text densely packed with similes and metaphors can be difficult to decipher. Choose figures of speech that will help you achieve your goal (boosting mood, meaning, or subject), but don't use them just because you can.
4. Make sure that any figurative language you use in speech is appropriate for that character. Characters that speak plainly should not have flowery language in their mouths.

Watch a fun video which also explains about some of these figurative language techniques by [clicking here](#).

# Types of Text



Writing skills are fundamental for primary and secondary Education, preparing children to express themselves and transmit information to other people. With such skills, individuals get ready for the workforce and for adulthood socialisation. However, the skilful writing needs from the student to know how to write their ideas, opinions and stories, requiring the understanding of the four types of text.

The four main types of text are descriptive, analytical, persuasive and critical. Each of these types of writing has specific language features and purposes.

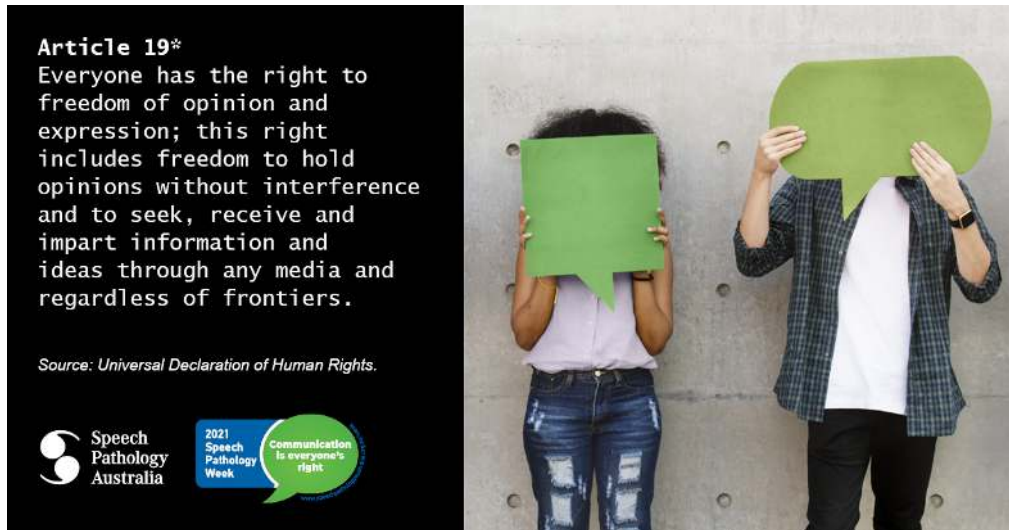
- **Descriptive:** The purpose of descriptive writing is to let the reader imagine a character, an event, a location, or all of these things at once in great detail. The author might use all five senses to describe the scene. Expository writing limits the writer's aesthetic flexibility, but descriptive writing does not. Examples include fiction, poetry, advertising, journals and diary writings.

- **Expository:** Because the word expository includes the word expose, it is a good descriptor for this form of writing because it exposes, or sets forth, facts. It's arguably the most prevalent type of writing you'll come across throughout your day. A topic will be introduced and laid out in a logical manner in an expository piece, with no reference to the author's personal ideas. Examples include textbooks, Journalism materials (except for opinion and editorial articles), business writing, technical writing, essays and instructions.
- **Narrative:** The goal of narrative writing is to tell a tale, whether it's a true story or a made-up one. Characters will appear in narrative pieces, and the reader will learn what happens to them through the narrative. Dialogue can be included in narrative writing.
- **Persuasive:** The goal of persuasive writing, also known as argumentation, is to persuade the reader to adopt the author's viewpoint. In the work, the author will express personal beliefs and provide evidence to persuade the reader to agree with him or her. Examples include advertising, opinion and editorial pieces, reviews and job applications.

A great video which summarises these four types of text is this you can visit by [clicking here](#), watch it!

This is the very beginning of the understanding about types of text, which can be expanded into much more subtypes and ways to use. However, without knowing the purpose and basic principles of each of these four types of text, students will face many challenges throughout their school years.

# Speakable in the Speech Pathology Week



All discussions and panels during Speech Pathology Week 2021 were conducted based on the five following facts:

- communication is a basic human right
- 1.2 million Australians live with communication disability
- communication disability is largely invisible. Unseen and out-of-sight
- confident communication helps maximise educational, health and social outcomes
- communication is more than just speech

Speakable's team of talented professionals followed all news from this special event, so you can know everything by contacting us! This is part of Speakable's commitment to continuous improvement and alignment with cutting edge methods and technologies for our services!

August is the traditional month when **Speech Pathology Australia** promotes its **Speech Pathology Week**, which was conducted from Aug 22nd to Aug 28th 2021. This extremely relevant annual event gathers the speech and language pathology professionals' community to discuss innovations, current challenges and recognise the main contributors to this area in Australia.

Since the pandemics affected the world's routines, communication among family members, friends and co-workers was affected as well. However, it represented even more negative effects for people with some communication disability. This specific challenge guided 2021's Speech Pathology Week's slogan: **Communication is everyone's right.**

# Encouraging words to children



Every day is a new day. For children, this means a new day full of developmental opportunities, no matter the age of the child or adolescent. Opportunities to develop body, mind and socialisation are amazing, which can reinforce either their self-efficacy and self-esteem, or their anxiety and fear of failure. This is the main reason that positive behaviour from parents, carers, teachers and allied health professionals towards children is so fundamental. Everyone around the child must provide a positive environment to encourage the child to take risks, be optimistic and be resilient when things don't work as expected. Proper wording is part of positive behaviour.

One of the most effective techniques to use positive behaviour to support children and encourage them is the famous Sandwich Method, also called Feedback Sandwich. It is comprised of three steps:

1. **Positive Input.** This first step includes encouragement words, praising for achievements and behaviour.
2. **Critique.** Then, the adult asks the child if they believe there's something they would like to improve, then coaching the child is started by pointing out opportunities for improvement, concerning behaviour or any other negative detail which should be reworked through constructive feedback.
3. **Positive Wrap-up.** The third and last step involves discussing and reaching a satisfactory conclusion for the child to keep improving and never feeling unsupported or demotivated. Positive support will make the child always remember their strengths and remarkable accomplishments, while keeping in mind that the child will have a supportive environment no matter what happens.

By conducting this 3-step technique, the child will feel themselves within a supportive environment with kind and proactive parents, carers, teachers and allied health professionals.



# Protecting the Mental Health of Teachers and Parents



We are undeniably in a “new normal” way of life: new ways of take care of our health and hygiene, new procedures at workplace and learning environments, new ways to socialise indoors and outdoors... And with all of it, the uncertainty of when the pandemics will be finally gone. This scenario affects children in a significant way, since they must adapt their expectations from the real world to the digital world when studying, having fun with friends and strolling at places they like. Their mental health is directly affected and need intense support from teachers, carers and parents, and allied health professionals.

However, what about those ones who are supporting children? Parents, carers, teachers, therapists and other allied health professionals are suffering from the same limitations. Everyone is facing mental health challenges, which makes it extremely important for these people to feel their mental health shielded against those challenges, so they can be more effective when providing support to children. Here is a list of effective strategies to help protect your mental health, especially if you are a parent, carer or teacher:

- **Don't forget the target.** As a parent or carer, you are taking care of a child for them to be happy and successful in life. As a teacher, you are stimulating a child's skills and providing knowledge for them to be prepared to understand the world when adults. Being a parent, carer, teacher, therapist or other allied health professional is not about causing laughs and a good time on a single say – it's about building blocks for a long-term effective and lasting outcome. Don't just do things to please children: do what's necessary for their life needs.
- **Take a deep breath.** Children suffering from anxiety and other emotional conditions might become overwhelming. When facing a challenge which is threatening your calm and balance, take a deep breath, take some time to think over the situation and respond after getting back to your balanced self.

# Protecting the Mental Health of Teachers and Parents

- **Setting boundaries.** Sometimes, compassion might make us sacrifice our willingness to take care of ourselves, driving our efforts only towards the wellbeing of students and children. Teachers need to be firm when defining the availability of replying to emails, answering the phone, marking assignments and other related activities. As well, saying 'No' is equally important for teachers and carers/parents – saying 'Yes' to every request is not good for the long term.
- **Recharging time.** Schedule for yourself time to rest, have fun, do your hobbies and stay with the ones who replenish your body and mind energy. No one can be seen as a machine, it wouldn't be fair to yourself prevent you from stop thinking and working only towards outcomes to children.
- **Be fair and reasonable to yourself.** As explained before, no one is a machine, so don't expect to achieve the best performance every time. Children can fail, parents can fail, teachers can fail. Keep trying the best but accept when you are simply 'enough' for a day, not comparing yourself to other people in the same condition (other parents, other teachers, etc.).
- **Self-compassion, always.** You can say to your children 'it's ok to not feel ok', but don't forget to say the same thing to yourself. Be your own best friend, admit your feelings and support yourself with supporting words, positive thoughts and hope.
- **Protect yourself among reliable people.** You must be your own best friend, but having more friends and people to lean on helps even more. Friends, family members, life partners, co-workers and therapists are the ones to strengthen your own mental health.

These seven tips would make wonderful outcomes on your mental health, which would help your students, patients and children have so much more from you. Take care of your mental health and help yourself enjoy the best from your time with children!

# National Disability Outlook expands knowledge about NDIS



The annual issue of National Disability Outlook magazine was released at the end of July 2021 and reflects the main news in the disability and special needs matters across Australia. For this new issue, the main articles are the following:

- Dr Jeffrey Chan, National Senior Practitioner from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, discusses how he has oversight for the behaviour support plans of people with disabilities and monitored the use of restrictive practices.
- A deep debate about the reporting date for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, which was extended by 18 months to 29 September 2023.
- Reported effects of COVID-19 on the lives of NDIS participants.
- An article emphasising that home care for people with disabilities cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach.
- Strategies to attract workers from industries hard hit by COVID including customer service workers in aviation, hospitality, and retail to try the disability sector.

The magazine can be read online with no cost, just [click here](#) to read it!

# HSC Exams during the pandemics



COVID-19 is an unprecedented event that has changed, maybe forever, the way we live and relate to each other. New social dynamics, workplace operations and even school practices. One crucial detail of Year 12 is the **HSC exam**, the threshold to the student's academic future.

However, the pandemics and lockdown procedures have caused a huge impact over the students' confidence and curricular consistency throughout the year. It made the government reschedule the date for HSC, which is not determined by the time of this post.

Nevertheless, when the day finally comes, you can help your children not only with emotional support, but also by helping them focus at the day. There are some interesting techniques and habits to perform well during an exam. We have listed some of them for you to recommend to your children and train them with those techniques.

- Read the paper thoroughly, making sure there are no surprisingly hard questions that demand more attention, identifying compulsory questions and estimating how much time to spend in each question to solve them with no extra pressure.
- Try to solve the questions in the easy-hard-moderate order: the easy ones help calm down the anxiety and sparks brain connections to better access the memory; with high confidence and the brain properly stimulated, the hard ones become easier and time management in the middle of the exam can be better conducted.
- Make notes whenever thinking about an answer or essay – such written keywords help the brain focus on the question and bring knowledge from the brain to surface.
- When thinking about higher-mark questions, organise keywords related to them in order to make sure you are answering exactly what's asked. As well, try to visualise your long answers before writing them, ensuring you use the expected number of paragraphs and in the expected formatting.

# HSC Exams during the pandemics

- When you finish all questions, don't consider that the exam is done. Double-check the answers (especially the complex ones), check if all of them are properly answered and your personal details were correctly put on every booklet.
- Once you really finish this double-check, you are free to go! However, make sure you really left the exam: stop thinking about it and try to relax doing other activities!

These tips can make that anxiety-causing day a lot better to be conducted with lower stress levels. If you want more tips for the days before the exam to be better prepared, please read our blogpost about it by [clicking here](#).

Speakable wishes great results for all the children and we are always here to help you improve your study habits!

# Purpose and Recognition



Every single day, we wake up and start doing something. It could be related to work, studies or personal interests, the reasons for every activity done during the day could be the most varied ones. However, sometimes we perform activities which not only benefit ourselves, but affect the rest of our communities in a positive way. In moments such as these, we feel we can make a difference in the world, and it inspires us to keep doing more and more because it's a win-win situation.

Still, sometimes we can't notice how good we do to other people, we just do it because there's an internal force driving us for that. It could be called purpose. Some people don't even think they have a purpose for what they do, but they keep doing and generating benefits for themselves and others. Others, lose their energy after some attempts to do something and not feeling whether to stop or to go on. In cases like these, recognition is necessary, some external input to reassure that the person should keep doing that. And of course, receiving recognition when you know your purpose is the best scenario, when you boost yourself and is boosted by others.

Our Executive Director, **Binh Doan**, is this kind of person who knows his purpose and drives his activities for the wellbeing of others in each and every activity he performs. And his services are worth recognition as we can see in his recent Area Director Merit Award in recognition for outstanding service, given to him by [Toastmasters Area 10 - Waratah Division](#).

However, Binh emphasises that recognition should not be only big things such as awards. There are many ways to recognise people and boost their spirit, no matter if it's a learning environment, a workplace or a family home. He listed some interesting tips to recognise students, children and employees, reassuring their value and inspiring them to keep going in their activities:

# Purpose and Recognition

- **Positive phone call.** While parents are usually afraid of receiving calls from school because they tend to be about negative events involving their child, there's an opportunity to invert it by calling parents/carers to make sure they know about an important accomplishment or milestone achieved by the child.
- **Certificates of achievement, accomplishment boards.** When the child completes some especially challenging activity or module, a symbolic certificate is a material way to recognise their accomplishment. This works as well in a corporate environment: Employee of the Month is an example of this.
- **Positive achievement economy.** The teacher, parents or manager generates a system that rewards good behaviour, project milestone, or personal improvement with a currency. The achiever can use this currency to "buy" things from their interest: a special chair or desk, a better parking spot, a voucher to the movies, extra time to use the computer, stickers and other options.
- **Model board.** When the student or worker performs some activity or project with special quality, that work could be put on a board to become the expected standard, recognising the impressive quality of that performer.

It's very important that you recognise children or employees for outstanding achievements, and not rewarding them just by doing their minimum effort. There must be a standard, and recognition comes from two aspects: achieving (or surpassing) the standard and honest effort to achieve it. Sometimes, there are barriers preventing the child or employee to achieve the expectation, but true effort must be recognised – which is different from rewarding.

Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for educators, parents and managers, so recognition systems must be present to reveal how important these kids or workers' performances are to themselves, and to the whole community. We congratulate Binh Doan for the recognition of his performance and we are happy that his purpose keeps benefitting people in so many aspects!

# READ2LEAD comes to celebrate Speakable's 7th year of operations



After the impressive success of **Speakaboo Cards** as a solution to stimulate and improve reading, writing and speaking skills to children in the last nine months, we celebrate in September the release of a variant tool, called **READ2LEAD**. This release comes in a great timing, since September is also the month when Speakable celebrates the beginning of its activities in 2014. This 7th birthday represents a great achievement for the clinic, for our team and for the released tools and programs throughout the year.

Still as an evolved adaptation of the [Spalding Phonograms](#), READ2LEAD phonograms are based on multisensory instructions. Learners see, hear, say and write the phonograms using all sensory channels to the brain, improving retention and providing opportunities for practice.

The READ2LEAD phonograms follow the Spalding program so teaching the sound is integrated with handwriting instruction. Precise handwriting is as important as precise pronunciation. Unless learners write, they do not see the correct symbols for the sounds and may not readily recognise them when reading.

READ2LEAD is not only a powerful instrument to reinforce communication skills for people who have English as a second language but also for individuals experiencing neurodiversity conditions such as dyslexia, dysgraphia and similar learning difficulties.

This new tool just reassures Speakable's commitment to the wellness of our community and the continuous innovation of tools and techniques to ensure individuals can have better communication skills and confidence. We share this same commitment by assuming some of the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) designed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030. Here is how Speakable is part of this global initiative:



# READ2LEAD comes to celebrate Speakable's 7th year of operations

- **Goal #1: No Poverty.** Speakable is engaged in creating balance in citizens' finances, applying fair prices, negotiating fair relationships with suppliers and contributing to charities such as UNESCO's **World Food Programme**.
- **Goal #4: Quality Education.** The team of SLPs and Education Advisor are completely engaged in using the best teaching-learning techniques to provide effective and involving sessions to all clients.
- **Goal #17: Partnerships for the Goals.** Through the Sub-Goal #17-5 (Invest in Least Developed Countries), initiatives such as The World Food Programme aim to provide better conditions for kids from poor areas to be healthy to study and have a potentially better quality of life while growing.

Anyone can purchase READ2LEAD for the use at home, classrooms or clinics. Part of the cost is directed for Speakable's corporate social responsibility regarding UNESCO's World Food Programme, in the form of the inspiring initiative called [ShareTheMeal](#). Feel free to contact us by [telephone](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [email](#) to purchase your **READ2LEAD** deck!

# Thank you for reading!

This was the sixth issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2021's school term 3.

In case you are interested in following Speakable's social media profiles and blog, please check the list below:

Speakable Blog: [www.speakable.com.au/blog](http://www.speakable.com.au/blog)

Facebook Page: [@SpeakableOz](https://www.facebook.com/SpeakableOz)

Twitter Page: [@speakableoz](https://twitter.com/speakableoz)

LinkedIn Page: [@speakable-speech-language](https://www.linkedin.com/company/speakable-speech-language)

Instagram Page: [@speakable\\_speech\\_pathology](https://www.instagram.com/speakable_speech_pathology)

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