

SPEECH/LANGUAGE GROUP THERAPY

“Poker Game” (45-60 minutes)

PURPOSE: To provide a rich communicative experience for patients that includes problem solving, decision making, symbolic language, turn-taking, sequencing, math skills, attention/concentration, expression and comprehension.

PARTICIPANTS: Ratio of therapists to patients should be 1:4

PATIENT SKILL LEVELS: A variety of skill levels could participate. Some portions of individual sessions could be devoted to learning the rules of the game and practice. **Voice** patients could work on their vocal intensity, hygiene, pitch, etc.; **aphasia** patients could work on verbal production; **aural rehab** patients could work on speech reading in a group setting; **cognitive linguistic** patients could concentrate on attention, concentration, pragmatics, behavior, memory, etc. Cognitive linguistic patients could be seen in two different groups.

MATERIALS: A deck of playing cards, poker chips, memory jogger cards/sheets (more on those later), paper and pencil for score keeping. Optional: “Fabulous Prizes”.

DOCUMENTATION: Either the SLP or an assistant can tally scores, or a patient who is working on writing could keep score. Additionally, SLP will want to keep a pad handy to note how well pt. performs targeted tasks (e.g. independence of play, addition, pragmatics, etc.) A short note should be completed immediately after group therapy session and placed in the working folder of each participant to record data for inclusion in weekly progress note.

PROCEDURE: The actual game is “**BLACKJACK**” or “**21**”. (Actual poker could be played, but the rules may be too difficult for some patients to grasp.) Explain to the participants that the object of the game is to get 21 points or as close as possible. It may be wise for the SLP to pick up a set of the common rules of the game for reference. A few “memory jogger” sheets/cards should be printed up with the values of the face cards (e.g. A= 1 or 11, K= 10, etc.), but verbally explain that the numbered cards are worth face value. Additionally a “memory jogger” should be made to remind players of the values of the poker chips (e.g., blue = 5 points, red = 25 points, etc.). The sheets/cards could be phased out as needed.

Each player is issued 5 (or 10, whatever) each of the poker chips. They are told to “Ante up”, or place poker chips in the middle of the table. The dealer/SLP deals two cards around the table—one face down and one face up. Play ensues. Players have to determine the value of the cards they are dealt, determine whether they want additional cards and when they have enough cards.

Winners can be determined on the number of games won and/or who has the most chips. This could become a weekly or monthly event and “Fabulous Prizes” awarded (i.e., dollar store or flea market items such as small statues, toiletries, make-up, aftershave

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A = 1 or 11



K = 10



Q = 10



J = 10