>> Hello, I've got the okay to get started. Thank you for being here today. My name is Alexandra Lewis. I'm a teacher of the deaf at Spokane Hope in Spokane, Washington. And this is as simple as a sandwich. To start there are 8,760 hours in a year.

About 6,000 of those hours are spent awake. That's 6,000 hours of language opportunities to work with our children and teach them. I don't know about you, that's incredibly overwhelming.

So let's start simple, start small. Something routine, every day, and within our ability.

Let's start with something as simple as a sandwich. These are my learning objectives today.

I'm hoping to help guide you into understanding and identifying listening and spoken language strategies into daily interactions with food.

Identifying strategies that are best fit for your goals and for that language learner. And how to prepare your materials and your setting to require more language of the children you are working with.

Quick raise of hands, how many parents do I have in the room? Oh excellent, great. You guys are going to see a lot of craziness, maybe you craziness in the classroom you don't get to see at home. But you're going to get to understand the level of crazy, and I salute you for the 6,000 hours of work you do with your children every year.

So why meal time? Why is food perfect for language? It's something that is incredibly consistent. We all need to eat.

There are preexisting times and routines around meals. I usually suggest families start with meal time. Let's start there. It's meaningful. It's functional language and vocabulary for children. And I mean functional as in something they can use to get the outcome that they want.

This is going to help them control their lives which we know all children are seeking.

It's internally motivating. So it's something that we want. And we all know how important internal motivation is for a child. Parents, how many of you have tried toilet training when your child did not want to?

Good luck, yeah. We can guess the outcomes. It doesn't go well. We need that internal motivation, and food is so motivating. And it's time typically spent with family.

It's a time to connect just like our language is the way to connect with the ones we loved.

Food is engaging. It's about trial and error, putting different things together on the plate. It's about planning and problem solving especially if you're making food. What do we do if we're missing an agreement. It's about independence and choice. It comes down to the individual child and what they like best.

So let's meet my team. This presentation is a video I took last summer of five different children, all incredibly unique and different, which makes them so interesting. And I did get permission from all of the families to share this information with you today. This is Delaney, just barely five years old at the filming of this video. She has a bilateral neurosensory hearing loss. She sometimes has a lot of trouble with her intelligibility, with people being able to understand her. We have Joseph, age four and a half at this point.

Bilateral, mild sensorineural hearing loss. And the big thing for Joseph is he's had inconsistent use of his hearing aids for years. Which has led to articulation errors and some self-confidence issues. I have Xavier, just barely over four with a hearing age of only six months. Xavier was diagnosed with auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder. This is six months post implantation. We have Quinn who's a little over five. She was graduating this year. She was born profoundly deaf at birth with a sensorineural hearing loss. She was identified early, received birth to three services consistently and has a hearing age of 4 to 5 years. And last but not least is our hearing model, Lucas. The child of our school SLP, so he's not quite a normal child as most SLPs will tell you about their kids. But an invaluable member of our team. The dream team. Unique, beautiful, and so, so much fun to work with. Let's talk listening and spoken language strategies matched to our learner. Starting with Delaney, her biggest challenge to overcome in my classroom was confidence in communicating.

Delaney very early on understood that if she used more than 3 to 4 words, people wouldn't understand her. She would be completely lost. So she would answer in one word answers if possible. So my goal for her is confidence in her communication.

And to do this, I'm going to use sabotage, I'm going to use sabotage with all of the kids.

You'll find out why I love it.

Sabotage to get her to speak up, to forget about some of those insecurities and to jump up with information. I'm going to use direct questions, put her on the spot to get her to answer and to be able to show off. And I'll use expansion not only to make her sentences longer, but to show her that social connection, I understand what you're saying and I'm building on it. And that's so powerful for some of our students. For Quinn, it's a little different. She's graduating. I'm getting longer sentences and those tick tack tiny sounds at the ends of words are still tough for her. So sabotage, I'm going to highlight those sounds she's missing. I'll ask her direct questions, and I'm going to use the prompt tell me more. This is one of my favorite ways to get kids to provide more information, to have more of the work on them than it is on the teacher.

Xavier, he's at 2 to 3 words and learning new vocabulary. He's barely learning how to hear with these cochlear implants. I'm going to use highlighting, I want him to hear as much as possible. An auditory sandwich for new vocabulary. I want him to hear it and to see it and hear it as I show him and tell him. Expansion, I'm going to expand to add more words so he knows he can put more words onto his sentence. And self and parallel talk. This is to narrate what he's seeing, what I'm seeing, and what's going on around him. It's a great way to pick up some language. For Joseph, he knows that his intelligibility is lower. He knows it's hard for people to understand him. And he gets incredibly frustrated over this.

He cries, he throws himself on the floor if you don't guess what he's saying in two times.

Which like the pressure is on, good luck or you're going to have a meltdown in the class with eight other kids. So a lot of what I do is confidence and also emotional regulation. I'm going to use sabotage. Again he's going to forget those insecurities and jump up and correct me because he's not going to let anything. I'm going to use highlighting to help him hear those sounds he's missing.

Expansion to grow what he is saying and an expectant look which teachers and parents don't know you have, but you do. You pick someone to watch, sorry I'm picking on you, you lean forward, you open your mouth a little bit and you wait. And maybe they'll say something.

It's incredibly uncomfortable if you have that look on you. You will say something. And with our hearing modelers I want him to model higher language. I want to give him opportunities. I'll use sabotage so he can jump in with what he knows and he knows a lot and questions, direct questions to help model how to answer these harder questions for the other kids. Let's set the stage.

How do we prepare an activity to flow easily and facilitate the most language? I like pre-teaching vocabulary.

I'll read a story about making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich before we do it. They get to see it and experience it first. Set up your ingredients, and in the words of my mother, keep it simple, stupid. We are not making beef wellington. Keeping it simple reduces the number of steps which can reduce frustration, fatigue, and issues later on in your lesson. Use a variety of containers or materials to increase the difficulty instead of having multiple toppings for our sandwich, I used a twist top and a pop top container. They had to figure out new language to tell me how to open each container.

It provides more opportunities.

And as we just did, identify your goals and the best strategies for each child.

My favorite tool, sabotage. It's funny, it's about engagement. Are they actually listening to me when I say the sky is purple and are they going to correct me? It puts the child in the driver's seat because the teacher is not going to correct themselves, the child needs to jump in and correct the teacher, the parent, the SLP.

And it lets students show off what they know. This is self-confidence building in its purest form. And ultimately it's silly. You're going to hear a lot of noise and most of it is laughter in these videos because what is happening is so outrageously silly. And it's humor. Humor is a higher cognitive skill for children to gain. We don't see it develop early on. We see it usually coming out 6, 7, 8 years old.

And one of the interesting things about humor is that for individuals who have suffered a brain trauma or damage, the first sign that they are recovering is their sense of humor comes back. This is one of our first higher level cognitive skills that is coming into play.

Sabotage and its forms. I'm going to tell you a couple of things I do to sabotage my children. I'm going to say the wrong thing. That's one of the easiest ways to sabotage. Do the opposite of what you're going to say, was your child listening and are they going to correct you? Pretend you don't understand or don't know what's going on. My favorite, take the children hyper literally, it's going to drive them nuts. They know there are other steps and other words, why aren't you getting this? They love it.

>> I use sabotage here and there throughout the whole piece. But I make sure with my students who are a little more prone the frustration that I don't do as much sabotage to them. Because sometimes they catch on that you're really forcing their hand and making them work. So I gave Joseph a little bit of a break.

I told him oh I rub my arm.

Quinn and Lucas were not exactly leading me astray, but I did take the power away from them and the words from them so that I could facilitate language from my other quieter children who weren't jumping up. A simple opportunity does not mean simple language. A language lesson with multiple steps, lots of different toppings and things to go on our sandwich, I want to keep it down under six steps.

Six steps seems to be the maximum, be it making food, an art project, or even a game. Six steps is your max at this age around five years old. So keep it simple, stupid. To make it harder, I use different containers. I have my twist lid and a pop lid. You're going to see how the children have to interact with that. And I want to point out and you'll see it, Joseph tries to apply the same language that we used for the twist top container to the pop top and then realized he needed to problem solve in a different way. This was a great opportunity for him. And sometimes sabotage doesn't work.

I say the jelly smells like French fries and no one corrects me. I feel it's important to correct yourself if no one jumps in just so you're not teaching the wrong thing.

So the joys of a hearing model with those little incidental righty tighty, lefty loosyloosy lessons. I'm using a lot more sabotage against Quinn who has more language who's able to do that versus my other students. Lucas and Quinn both don't like parts of our sandwich. Now at home as a parent, you can plan to have foods that your child likes that they want to eat, but when you're planning for this group and another group of five other students, you don't really have that luxury. So let's go through our options. Let's encourage them to try it anyway, is that going to work? No, I see lots of no faces. It's not going to work. Let them use the elements of the sandwich that they do like. I know Lucas likes peanut butter and that worked out for us. He made a peanut butter sandwich. I still got the same language even without all of the ingredients. I got more negation by him saying I don't like jelly. Make it for someone else.

She doesn't like peanut butter and jelly period, at all. So I asked her what can we do. We problem solved together and she came up with the amazing idea let me make it for a volunteer.

The big thing is at first I didn't solve the problem of Quinn not liking peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It came back to bite me. Kids remember and they will stand up for themselves. So if there's an issue, address it early on. Then it's the most important time.

After you've modeled, it's time to let the kids take the lead.

After the model, your child needs to do it. This gives them trial and error and independence. And this is so internally motivating. They want that independence, they want to do it themselves. So give them that opportunity. I'm going to pause it a little earlier than intended because we're almost out of time. In summary, if there's anything I can have you take away from this talk is that simple activities don't mean simple language. There are so many words that you just heard here from making a sandwich and we can all make a sandwich.

Language is about connecting and what better thing to connect over than food? Thank you and a big thank you to Nicole Jacobson who saw this video, my mentor, and told me I had to present and to Annie who on my first day as a student teacher covered herself from wrist to shoulder in peanut butter to show me how amazing making a sandwich can be. Thank you. Do we have any questions? Can we get a microphone? .

>> My question is when you're coaching families, do you ever get the push back of I just need to get them fed. So how do you tell them that yes, you need to get them fed, but also then get them to expand their routine to include more language?

>> Excellent question. There are moments of thriving and surviving. So you're going to have those survival moments, you don't have time to make a sandwich, you need to feed your kid, they're in meltdown mode.

This is when your child is calm, you have extra time, and you have the capacity yourself to do that. If you don't have time to do it, there are other daily routines that you can use to still integrate language, like we all need to put away dishes.

That's colors, that's sorting by type. That's really helpful language. There's laundry, again sorting, colors, language, matching, same and different. So if you can't do it in the moment, don't beat yourself up, you are surviving. But when you have those moments to thrive where things are running well, think about bringing your child into the mix when making everyone food. The best thing is and really encouraging for a kid is if you're making kid for the whole family too. They want to be connected, they want to be engaged. And they'll make it easy for you when they're ready for it, when they're motivated for it. Any other questions?

The age of the children was the question. Our youngest was four years two months old ranging up to almost five and a half years old. Thank you for being here today. I hope you have a good EHDI conference.