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## Hearing Them Into Voice:

**An Instrument to Assess Current Communication Proficiency  
and to Plan Instruction for Children Who Do Not Speak**

**by Sharon M. Rogers, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

### Team Members

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Educator(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Speech/Language Pathologist \_\_\_\_\_

Team member completing this particular profile \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Here is the chance we have been waiting for, an opportunity to describe the real, everyday communication of a child who does not speak. All people communicate even without words and sentences. Each child communicates by using particular vocalizations, special looks in his/her eyes, even slight gestures as he/she moves his/her body. Little by little the children communicate who they really are, who they like to be with, and what matters most in life. We as the children's best communication partners are the most accurate and sensitive interpreters. Together, we form a team of experts: parents, educators, and speech-language pathologists. This instrument gives us the opportunity to collaborate in gathering more accurate communication information so that we can together plan for the best instruction for each child.

Please write your descriptions of what and how this child communicates in the space provided at the end of each statement. Your experience is what counts. The examples under each blank are ways others have completed the same statement. They are there to help you see what is being asked and to stimulate your own thoughts. Leave blank any sections you do not know or are inappropriate for this child. Your descriptions will form the basis for discussion at the first or next meeting of your child's educational team. Together we will make a more accurate assessment of each child's interests, strengths, and communication style so that we can plan to improve his/her communication at home, at school, and in the community.

I trust you will enjoy this process as much as others have and that you too will experience new vitality in collaboration as together you assess and plan instruction to improve the communication of children who do not speak.

**What I Like Best**

The activity/object I always like is \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: going outdoors, riding horses, looking at books, listening to music)

I show I like this by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: looking out the window, smiling; reaching for them)

I usually like \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: taking a bath, playing with blocks)

I show I like this by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: splashing in the water, choosing blocks)

I sometimes like \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: helping fix dinner, using the computer)

I show I like this by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: standing beside whoever is cooking, paying attention)

I usually like to be with \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: Mom, Dad, baby sitter, friend)

I show I like him/her by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: smiling when she gives me a kiss, going to him when I am upset)

My favorite foods are: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: corn, applesauce, bread)

My favorite books are: \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite movies/videos/TV programs are: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: Lion King, Baby Songs, Godzilla, Sesame Street, Reading Rainbow)



**My Personal Preferences**

I like it when someone \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: explains why things happen; strokes my arm;  
speaks to me in a caring way, speaks to me like an adult)

I don't like it when \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: I hear loud noises, someone brushes my teeth.)

When I am all by myself, I like to \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: write names; do puzzles; eat; watch action movies)

One of my family's/teacher's favorite story about me is \_\_\_\_\_

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**Significant Life Experiences I Contribute to Others**

What people who love me say I do for them:

(Person) \_\_\_\_\_ says I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: my sister, teacher) (Examples: give her courage, teach her/him  
to ask the right questions)

I make a difference in the lives of others when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: get next to them when they are sad, listen when they talk to me)

**I Communicate How I Feel**

I say "I love you" when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: smile when I hear my grandmother on the phone; go to my dad and sit on his lap)

I show my happiness by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: smiling and getting excited; getting quiet)

I express how sad I feel when \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: my face looks sad; tears come from my eyes)

My anger/frustration comes out when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: frown; cry; hit my head)

I show excitement/enthusiasm by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: kicking my legs back and forth; flapping my hand; getting closer to the action)

I express concern/worry by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: getting very quiet; pouting; fussing; wringing my hands on a new train ride)

When I get bored, I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: go to sleep; fuss; put in a different video)

I express surprise by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: smiling; jumping/startling; getting scared)

I am proud of myself when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: get new clothes; stand all by myself)

**My Social Graces Include**

I say hi or bye when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: smile and look at the person; reach out and touch them, wave my hand)

I thank someone by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: smiling when someone praises me; saying “a ou”)

When I ask, I say “please” by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: using a “nice” voice; smiling)

**My Family Follows These Communication Rules**

In our family we speak \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: Spanish, English, Japanese)

To show respect and interest, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: look directly at adults when they speak; repeat what the adults say)

When someone speaks, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: keep quiet before I reply; respond right away)

At home, we like to talk about \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: My grandmother is coming to live with us; sports on television)

**What Makes Me Laugh**

I laugh when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: watch cartoons, hear a joke, other people laugh, someone tickles me)

I act silly when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: know what to do, but do not want to do it; make faces)

I make you laugh when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: tease, draw a picture, do things that surprise you)

**What I Like to Play**

I show my enjoyment in board or computer games by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: watching as toy/game is opened; paying attention to others' playing.)

I tease other people by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: I hide the eraser; I go to Dad instead of Mom when Mom calls)

I make up and tell stories when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: draw a picture; type a princess story; play family with my dinosaurs)

**How I Take Care of Myself**

I show what is hurting me when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: show you my arm/leg; rub my stomach; point to where it hurts)

I say I am sleepy when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: yawn; fuss)

I dress myself when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: put on my own shoes; push my arms into the sleeves)

I tell you I need to go the bathroom when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: tug on pants; wiggle back and forth; have "that look" in my eyes)

I say what I want/need something when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: look at it a long time; open a cupboard and take out a jar)

I get confused when I am given more than \_\_\_\_\_ choices.  
 (Examples: two, three, four, five)

**How I Initiate and Take Responsibility**

I ask someone to pay attention when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: call out; cry.)

I ask for help when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: put your hand on the candy to unwrap it; look at you until you notice)

I want to help you when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: tug on your arm; go stand beside you)

These are consequences I understand \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: you will finish brushing my hair after you count to ten,  
I can watch a video after I take my medicine)

I remind you when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: repeat or vocalize; get the car keys and hand you your purse.)

I take responsibility when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: keep my mom awake when she is driving; get milk out when I am  
thirsty, feed my pet turtle)

I make sacrifices when \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: others speak to mom like I am not there; I have to repeat what I say  
again and again; you give someone my candy without my "OK")

### How I Get Along with Others

I show "I like you, you are my friend" when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: give a kiss; give a hug)

I want you to leave me alone when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: put my head down; get quiet; look away)

I listen and \_\_\_\_\_ do as I am told.  
 (Examples: usually, sometimes, never)

I say let's share this by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: offering you part of my snack; bringing a book to read; looking for your response)

I want you to give me more or to keep on doing something when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: sign more; reach for your hand; smile)

I say "I agree" when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: smile, use "uhun")

I protest/show I don't like a person or activity when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: vocalize angrily; close my eyes)

I show I take turns when I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: insist by making an "uh" sound to get my turn, wait while someone else talks)

I show you I understand how others feel by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: sitting beside them; getting excited with others; anticipating their needs)

I say "Come be with me" by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: using my hands to pull you towards me; fussing)

When someone is new, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: go to my room, sit by my mother, smile and watch them)

I trade/barter objects or activities, give and take with others \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: offer to trade my toy with another person, give someone my turn)

**Ways I Show I Am Thinking**

I show I understand when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: blink my eyes; nod my head)

I show I am interested by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: getting quiet; looking at the person doing something special)

I say "I don't know" when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: raise my eyebrow; stop and walk away)

I ask you to tell me another way when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: look confused; raise my eyebrow)

When I make a mistake/have a problem, I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: say "oops," "oh-oh")

I show you I remember a time like that when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: smile; open my eyes wide)

I learn and follow routines when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: watch what others do and copy them; take my plate to the sink after eat; cheer when my team makes a touchdown)

I show I know names of people when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: write people's names, look at the person whose name I just heard.)

I show I know actions when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: imitate swimming motions when I hear someone say "swim")

I show I know places when I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: point to places in the book, look and/or go to the place someone named)

When something is new I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Examples: listen; watch; push it away; feel it with my hands)

**I Know That My Timing Works Best**

I'll do what you ask, if you just \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: wait while I think about it, touch my arm, tell me again)

When I keep doing the same thing over and over, I will stop when someone \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: says "Stop;" points to a different picture/word, touches my arm)

I say I am finished by \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: signing "all done"; closing my eyes)

I find changing activities is easier when I \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: am told what is going to happen next; have extra time to get ready)

I wait by \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: sitting quietly; fussing; getting organized if given enough time)

I will complete a job if \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: I am interested; it is not too hard for me to do; I take my time)

**I Am Having a Bad Day When**

I am just "out of it" when I \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: do not respond; don't initiate play or talking)

I get my own way when I \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: kiss to say "I'm cute;" have a temper tantrum)

One way to help me get back on track is to \_\_\_\_\_

(Examples: touch my chin; give me a choice; remind me with a word or two)

### Ways I Have Begun to Read and Write

Give me photos and I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: fold them over; look at them for a long time)

I recognize the signs for \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: McDonalds, cereals I like, TV ads)

When I have a book, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: ask someone to read; turn pages left to right; look from front to back; read to myself)

When I see my name, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: write it down; put my backpack beside it)

When I see other words printed, I \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: look at the words in flyers and catalogs; go look for picture books)

When I have a pencil and paper, I like to \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: scribble wavy and straight lines, draw figures; write names and/or stories)

When I see the alphabet, I can \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: point to letters of my name; point to the letters you say; spell words)

I \_\_\_\_\_ know the beginning sound/letter in a word.  
 (Examples: usually/ sometimes/hardly ever)

I can complete a sentence by \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: choosing an answer from multiple choices; typing/writing in my own word)

When I am upset, I can \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: write/type an important word telling my concern; type other words to explain what I mean)

When I hear a story or participate in doing something, I can \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Examples: arrange pictures to tell what happens first, middle, and last; retell the story by typing/writing words and sentences)



**SUMMARY OF COMMUNICATION**

**My most consistent mode of expression is \_\_\_\_\_**  
(Examples: eyes, pointing)

**I am most interested in \_\_\_\_\_**  
(Examples: videos, books, Teletubbies)

**I'd like to add to my communication with \_\_\_\_\_**  
(Examples: signing, picture boards, alphabet boards, electronic device)

**My biggest need in class is to \_\_\_\_\_**  
(Examples: participate in discussions, choose activities, get others to understand why I am whining)

**(ESPECIALLY for PARENTS)**

**What communication behavior would you like help in stopping?**

**What skill would you like your child to have?**

**What else would you like us to know about your child?**

**What is your greatest hope for your child in school this year?**

**Thanks for completing this form.**