

## Cancellation

Catching the Stutter, Relaxing the Stutter, Slide, and Easy Stuttering all set the stage for Cancellation, the next stuttering modification strategy. Students have learned to catch moments of disfluency, to assess the location and degree of physical tension, and to reduce that tension in a variety of ways.

Cancellation utilizes all of these skills. It involves pausing for a couple seconds after a moment of stuttering (to acknowledge and analyze the disfluency), and then saying the stuttered word again with less tension (Guitar, 1998; Van Riper, 1973; Williams & Dugan, 2002).



It is important to note that the goal is not fluency. Indeed, the stuttered word will not necessarily be fluent when it is repeated. The goal is to center oneself, courageously revisit the disfluent word, and modify the tension in some manner.

Thus, Cancellation is intended to increase feelings of control, desensitize concerns about stuttering, and decrease tension.

***Cancellation can be taught in the following way:***

1. Explain the rationale (described above and on page 17 of the Student Workbook).
2. Remind students that Cancellation is a strategy that is used *after* a moment of stuttering has occurred.
3. Preview steps 1–4 of “How to practice Cancellation” (see page 18 of the Student Workbook).

4. Model the technique using a word listed on that page.
  - » First, purposefully stutter on the word with significant tension. Finish stuttering through the entire word and then pause for two to three seconds.
  - » During the pause, “think aloud” as you assess the type of disfluency and the location/degree of physical tension (e.g., you might say, “That was a very tense block. I felt the tension in the tip of my tongue, right behind my front teeth.”)
  - » Then repeat the word with less tension. This might involve slowing down, producing lighter articulatory contacts, making gradual transitions from sound to sound, or using Easy Stuttering.
5. Ask students to produce a Cancellation in the same manner on the same word.
  - » Be sure that students do not rush the pause. Initially, have students “think aloud” to themselves as you did when assessing the stutter.
  - » Re-emphasize the fact that Cancellation is *not* a matter of simply repeating the stuttered word and moving on. Students should analyze the stutter, and recognize how they changed it.
6. Model, and have students practice Cancellation on the remaining words on page 18 of the Student Workbook.
  - » Have students practice with different types of disfluencies (e.g., repetitions, prolongations, blocks).
  - » Once students have demonstrated the ability to “think aloud” as they pause, shift the practice so that students assess the stutter silently.

7. Have students make their own list of words to practice.
8. Model, and have students practice Cancellation while reading the Easy Voice Paragraphs on page 60 of the Student Workbook. Use Cancellation on one to two words per sentence.
9. When they are proficient at this level, have students use Cancellation during conversation in structured therapy activities.

## A/V Resources for Cancellation

### Audio Files

[Track 1.11](#): Cancellation [1:08]

[Track 1.12](#): How to practice Cancellation [3:00]

[Track 1.13](#): Easy Voice Paragraphs read with Cancellation [1:32]

### Video Files

[V21](#) Therapist Instruction [4:26]

[V22](#) Student Example #1: Reading Text [3:57]

[V23](#) Student Example #2: Conversation [2:22]

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