

## Nearly Natural Speech

While Extra Intonation integrates students' fluency skills in a continuous and free-flowing manner, it still involves using a speech pattern that sounds quite unnatural. This unnatural quality comes, in large part, from the way in which students exaggerate



their intonation. It also results from the way in which students prolong the duration of particular sounds and words.

Nearly Natural Speech brings students one step closer to speaking in a natural sounding way. It incorporates and integrates previously learned fluency skills (Relaxed Breath, Stretched Speech,

Smooth Movement, Easy Voice, Light Contact, and continuous phonation) with a greater degree of sophistication.

It involves increasing speech rate, using a more normal intonational pattern, and shortening the duration of longer stretches. Nevertheless, many sounds continue to be stretched and a strong physical awareness of speech is maintained.

Nearly Natural Speech *approximates* natural speech. It does not sound totally natural. While it does fall within the range of normal limits, it sounds somewhat slow and deliberate.

Nearly Natural Speech is an important strategy to master for two reasons. First, students will use it to begin the process of transferring their new fluency skills into situations in everyday life. Second, after students move to Natural Speech, they will likely encounter situations in which they experience difficulty and/or find that their old habitual speech patterns are returning. Nearly Natural Speech offers a physically grounded, well-integrated modification that students can “downshift” into when necessary.

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*Nearly Natural Speech can be taught in the following way:*

1. Explain the rationale (described above and on page 57 of the Student Workbook).
2. Guide students through steps 1–3 of “Using Nearly Natural Speech” (see page 58 of the Student Workbook). Provide models as indicated.
  - » As you model Nearly Natural Speech, eliminate the over-exaggerated quality of Extra Intonation and decrease the length of the longer stretches.
  - » Use a normal range of intonation and stay physically connected to your speech.
  - » Tell students that the first stretchable sound of each utterance should be particularly emphasized.
  - » If the students’ speech is still over-exaggerated or has a sing-song quality, remind them to say whatever they are saying “like they mean it.”
3. Students should do additional practice with Nearly Natural using all the Smooth Movement, Easy Voice, and Light Contact Sentences and Paragraphs (see pages 51–53 and 59–61 of the Student Workbook).
4. Have students integrate the use of Slides, Easy Stuttering, and Cancellation when practicing at this level.
5. When students are proficient at using Nearly Natural Speech in combination with stuttering modification strategies, introduce activities that involve conversational speech.

## A/V Resources for Nearly Natural Speech

### Audio Files

- [Track 2.22](#): Nearly Natural Speech [1:17]
- [Track 2.23](#): Using Nearly Natural Speech (NNS) [0:55]
- [Track 2.24](#): Smooth Movement Sentences read at NNS [1:29]
- [Track 2.25](#): Easy Voice Sentences read at NNS [1:25]
- [Track 2.26](#): Light Contact Sentences read at NNS [1:18]
- [Track 2.27](#): Smooth Movement Paragraphs read at NNS [1:27]
- [Track 2.28](#): Easy Voice Paragraphs read at NNS [1:36]
- [Track 2.29](#): Light Contact Paragraphs read at NNS [1:18]

### Video Files

- [v55](#) Therapist Instruction [1:41]
- [v56](#) Student Example #1: Workbook Sentences [2:59]
- [v57](#) Student Example #2: Reading Text with Easy Stuttering [2:33]
- [v58](#) Student Example #3: Conversation [4:30]
- [v59](#) Student Example #4: Telephone [1:25]
- [v60](#) Student Example #5: Game with Friends [2:45]

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