



ORLA[®] Version 1.0

Oral Reading for Language in Aphasia

Center for Aphasia Research and Treatment

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Oral Reading for Language in Aphasia (ORLA®) is a treatment technique that was developed specifically for people with aphasia. The technique involves repeatedly reading sentences aloud together with the clinician. **ORLA®** was initially developed to improve reading comprehension in individuals with aphasia. Interestingly, the earliest studies of **ORLA®** showed that some people with aphasia improved not only in reading comprehension, but also in other language areas, including oral expression (speaking), auditory comprehension (listening), and writing.

This computer version of **ORLA®** was designed to allow people to practice **ORLA®** by themselves. It was developed as part of a research study. The repetitive reading aloud of sentences gives a person practice in listening, speaking out loud, and reading.

There are several steps in the program:

Step 1 – Look and Listen. You will hear a sentence. Don't say anything, just listen to the sentence.

Step 2 – Now you point to each word. Point to each word in the sentence as it is highlighted in red. Don't say anything, just listen and point.

Step 3 – Now you say it. Say the sentence out loud with the computer voice so that you are saying the words together.

Step 4 – Say it again. Say the sentence with the voice, but the voice on the computer will fade out and become quieter (if you have chosen that command).

Step 5 – Point to _____. Point to the word you hear. The computer will circle the correct response. You will do this 2 times.

Step 6 – What is this? The computer will ask you to say the circled word. You will do this 2 times.

Step 7 – Now you say it all. Repeat the sentence one more time with the computer.

The program allows you to choose the difficulty of the sentences that you want to practice. The different levels of difficulty are as follows:

- 3–5 word sentences and phrases
- 8–12 word sentences
- 15–30 word sentences
- 50–100 word paragraphs

There are three groups of sentences or paragraphs that you can choose at each level.

When you choose a level and a group, the sentences will show up in random order each time you practice. A speech–language pathologist can help you determine the best sentence length at which to start.

Research has indicated that language improvements occur in aphasia with intensive practice. Therefore, we suggest that you practice every day for at least 30 minutes.

Note that each individual person is different and we cannot guarantee improvement.

Instructions for Use

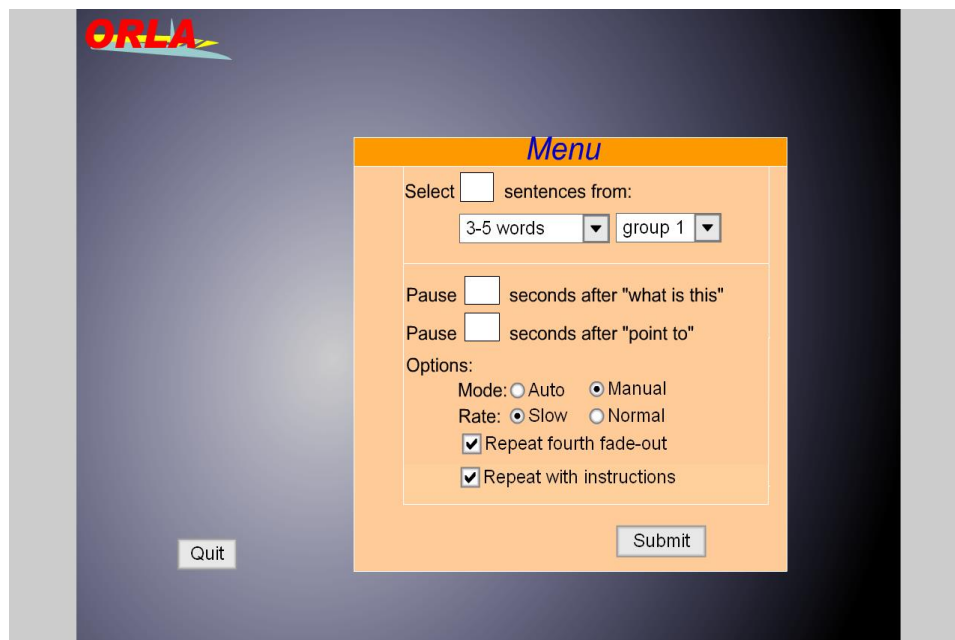
Download and save the digital files.

Then click on the executable file to start the **ORLA**[®] program.

The executable file looks like this:



You will see the following screen which allows you to enter your practice choices:



- Enter the number of sentences you wish to practice.
- Choose the Length of Stimuli from the drop-down menu:
 - 3–5 word sentences and phrases
 - 8–12 word sentences
 - 15–30 word sentences
 - 50–100 word paragraphs
- Choose Group 1, 2 or 3 from the drop-down menu.
- Enter the number of seconds for response time after “What is This?” prompt. We recommend 2 or 3 seconds, but you can increase or decrease this time as you become familiar with the program.
- Enter the number of seconds for response time after “Point to ____” prompt. We recommend 2 or 3 seconds, but you can increase or decrease this time as you become familiar with the program.
- Make sure the circle for **Manual Mode** is selected. The Auto function is not working at this time.
- Click a circle to select the rate of reading out loud.
 - For 3–5 word phrases and 8–10 word sentences, you can choose **Slow** or **Normal**.
 - For 15–30 word sentences and 50–100 word paragraphs, the **Slow** button should be selected. These sentences and paragraphs will **NOT** work on the Normal selection.
- Check or uncheck the box to play the voice fade-out sentence.
 - When you are just learning the program, we suggest this box be checked.
- Check or uncheck the box to play the instructions with each sentence.
 - We suggest that you listen to the instructions each time when you are starting to use the program until you are familiar with all the steps.
- When working in the program, click **Next** or press the **Spacebar** to go on to the next sentence.
- When you have reached the end of the program, click on the **End** button or **Spacebar** to exit the program.
- Click the **ESC** key if you want to end the program before the last sentence. The screen will minimize on your computer, then click the X in the top right corner to close the program.

Important note:

15–30 word and 50–100 word sentences **ONLY**
work on the Slow selection. These levels will
NOT work on the Normal selection

Computer Requirements:

The program is compatible with a Windows PC. It may **not** be compatible with Apple computers.

Troubleshooting:

If you have difficulty with the program, try one of the following to restart the program:

- If you do not hear the voice, check the volume on your computer. If you do not have volume control on the speakers or computer go to:
 - Start
 - Settings
 - Control Panel
 - Sounds and Audio DevicesCheck that the volume is up and the mute box is not checked.
 - 15–30 word sentences and 50–100 ONLY work on the Slow selection. These levels will NOT work on the Normal selection.
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Proceeds from the sale of the ORLA® CD will benefit the programs of the Center for Aphasia Research and Treatment. The purpose of this Center at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab is to enhance the communication skills of individuals who are living with aphasia and facilitate their engagement in life activities. We do this through:

- **Conversation support groups and classes:** Weekly meetings provide an opportunity to discuss relevant topics such as current events, sports, TV/movies, and living with aphasia. Class offerings have included: Chicago Architecture, Photography, Music, Art, Summer in Chicago.
- **Aphasia book clubs: A life-participation approach to reading:** Individuals with aphasia can participate in a book club that is designed to support the needs of those who have difficulty reading. Each book club series runs for 8–14 weeks. Books, audio-tapes, chapter summaries, and weekly worksheets are provided.
- **Research Studies:** The center is investigating novel ways to treat aphasia and conducts clinical research studies to establish the efficacy and effectiveness of these aphasia treatments. Several studies are investigating how technology can help in the treatment process.

For information about classes or research studies, please call or contact the Center for Aphasia Research and Treatment at (312) 238-6163 or www.sralab.org/aphasia