

SPEAKING UP FOR THE QUIET ONES:

Shy & Anxious Children at School

Robert J. Coplan, PhD

Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada



What is Shyness?

- temperamental trait
 - characteristic ways that children respond differently to their environments
 - early appearing
 - relatively stable
 - “*building block*” of



What is Shyness?

- Among younger children
→ wariness and fear of
social *novelty*



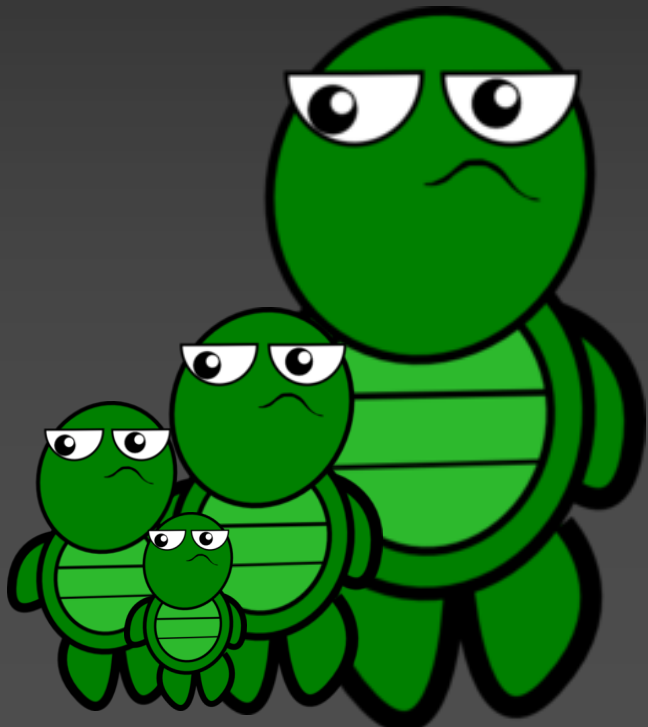
What is Shyness?

- Among older children
→ self-consciousness and embarrassment in situations of ***perceived social-evaluation***



What is Shyness?

- *Biological* foundations
→ low threshold for arousal



*Biology is
not Destiny!!!*



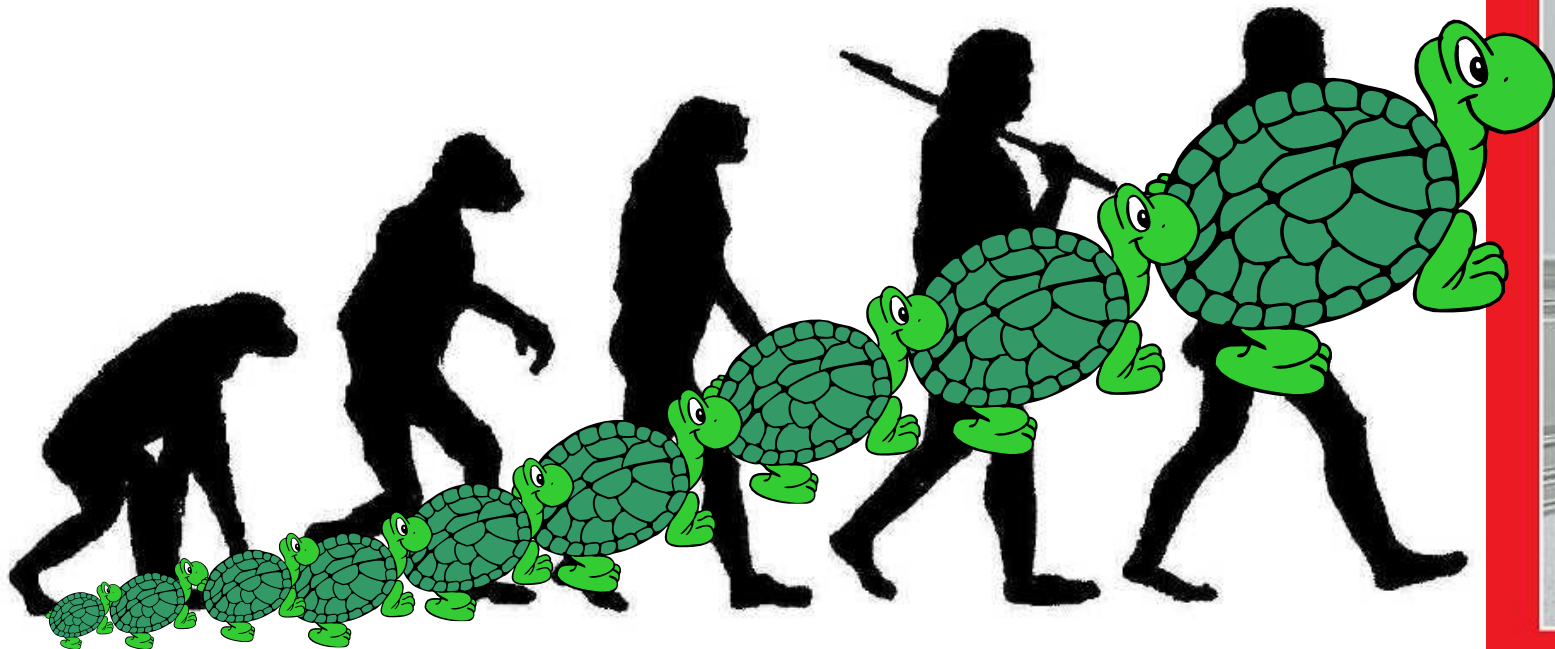
What is Shyness?

- *Motivational* perspective
→ *approach-avoidance* conflict



What is Shyness?

- *Evolutionary* perspective
→ is *shyness* adaptive?



Shyness at School

- unique challenges for *shy* children in education contexts



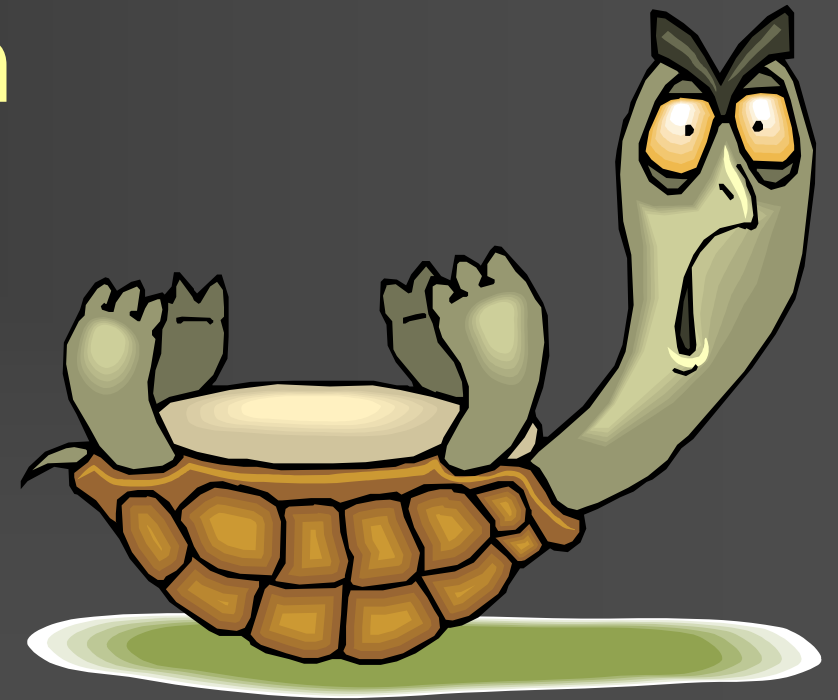
Shyness at School

- classroom as social context
 - presence of peers = **stress**
 - overshadowed by more **outgoing** peers



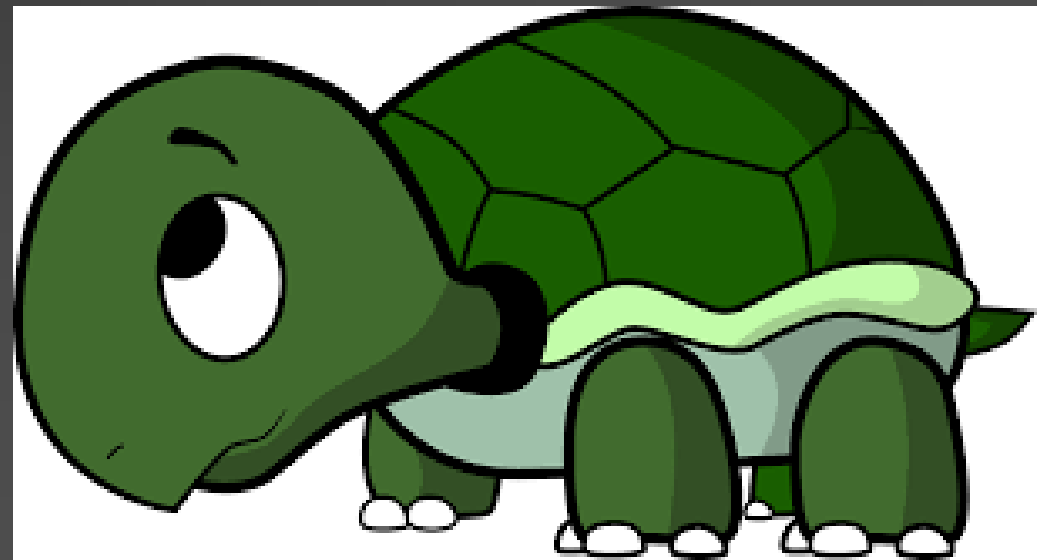
Shyness at School

- characteristic behaviors
 - watch others but not join in
 - speech aversion
 - lack of peer interaction



Shyness at School

- interactions with classmates
→ negative peer experiences
(e.g., rejection, exclusion, victimization)



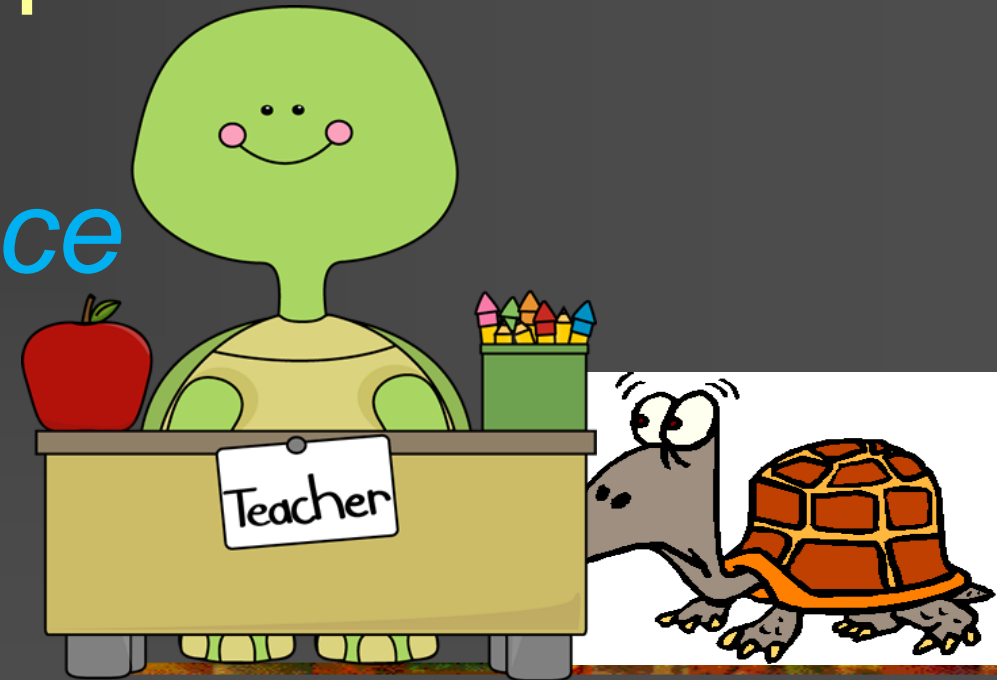
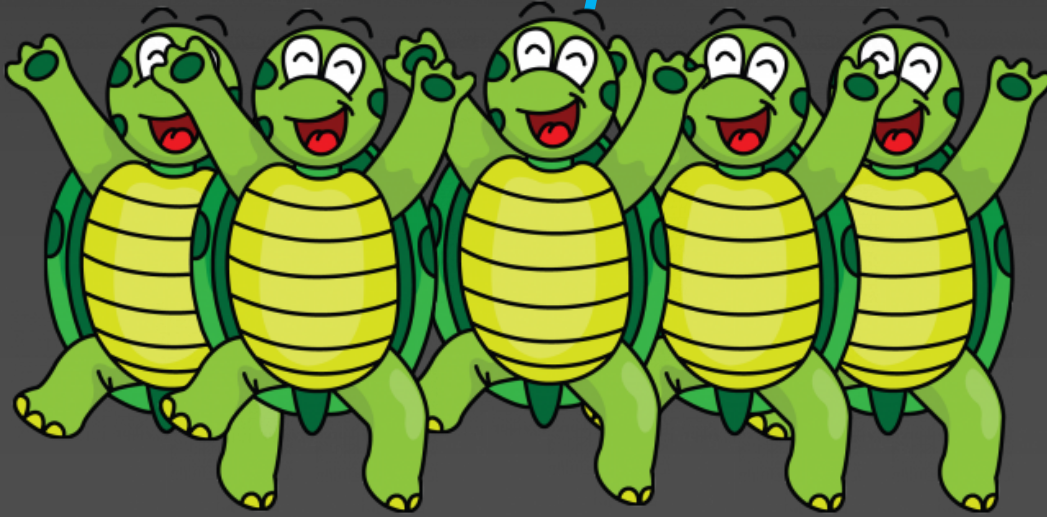
Shyness at School

- emotional difficulties
 - *internalizing* problems (e.g., anxiety, depression, loneliness, low self-esteem)



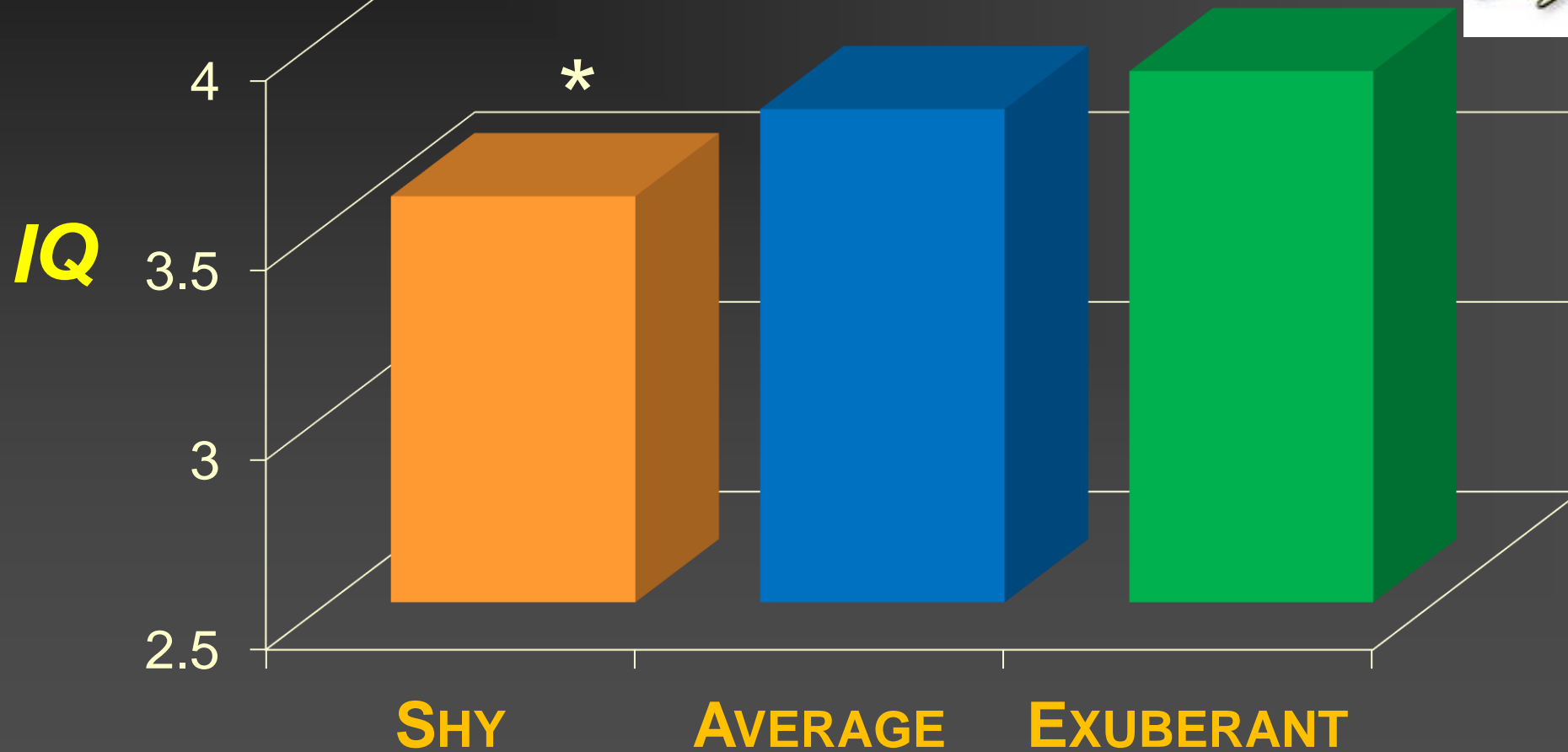
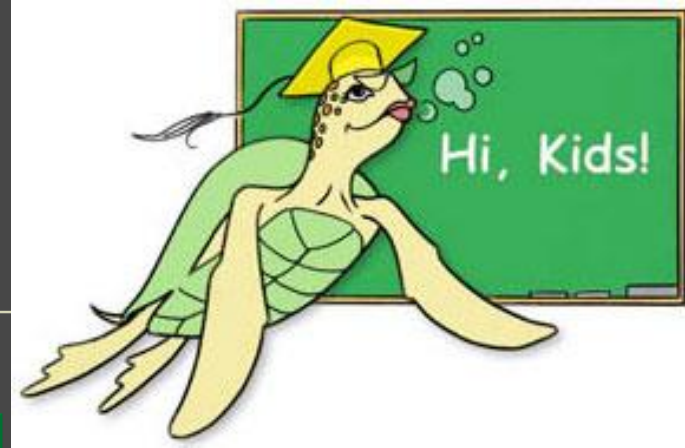
Shyness at School

- academic challenges
 - importance of verbal participation
 - **anxiety** impedes learning
 - *competence* vs. *performance*



Shyness at School

Teacher Beliefs

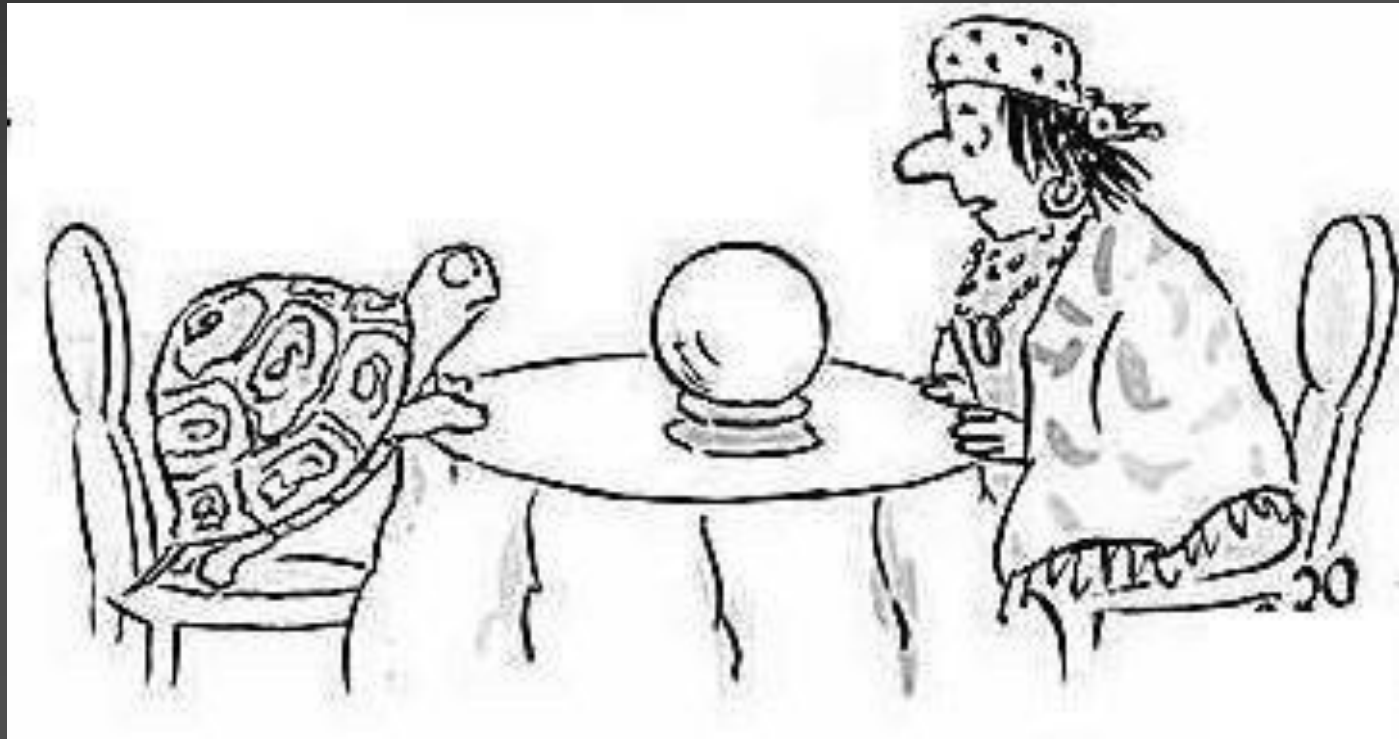


(Coplan et al., 2011)

Shyness at School

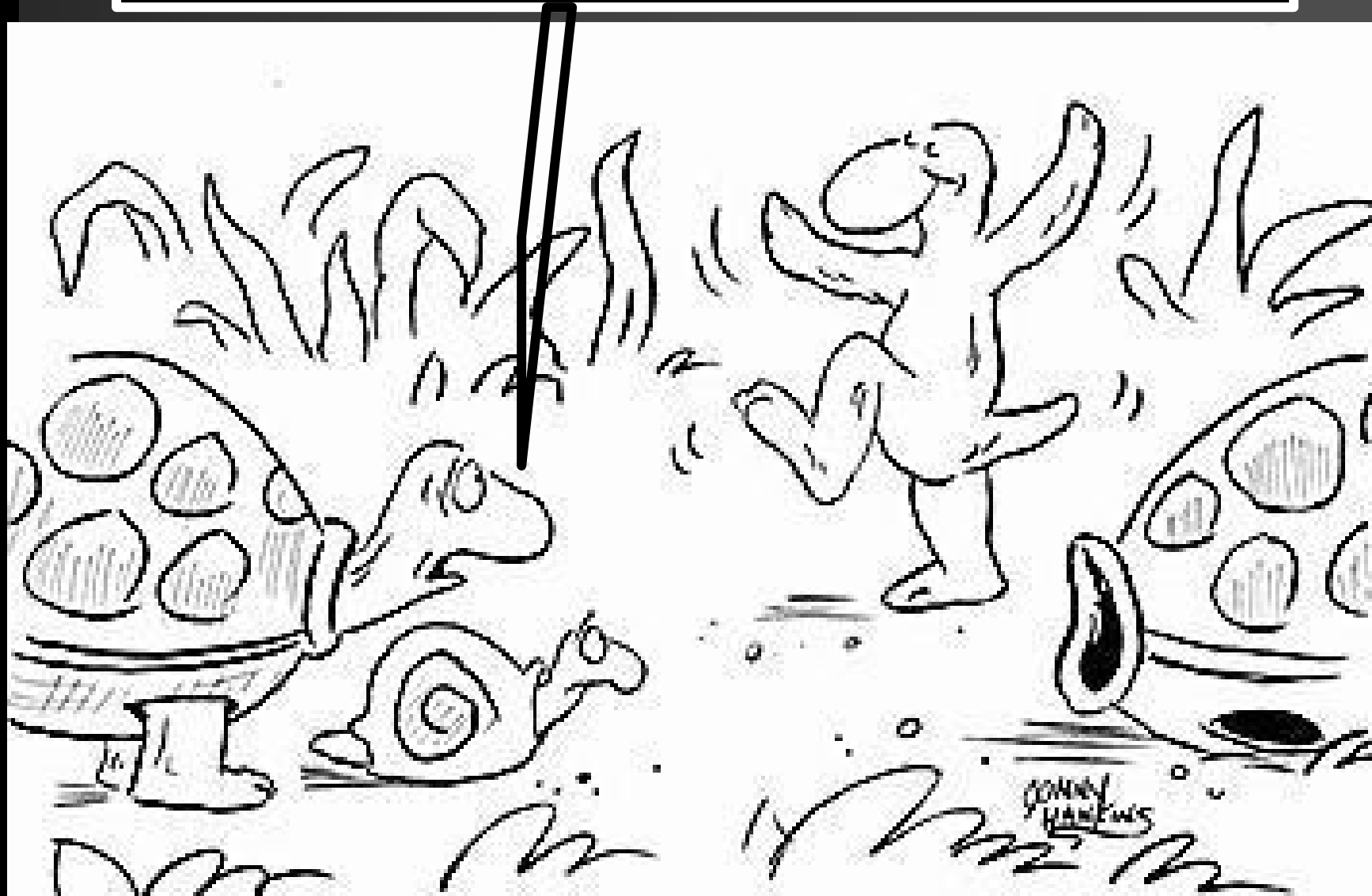
Teacher Beliefs

- Pygmalion effect
→ self-fulfilling prophecy



*Many
SHY
students
do not
have
problems
at school*

*“... he’s never been the same
since he came out of his shell...”*

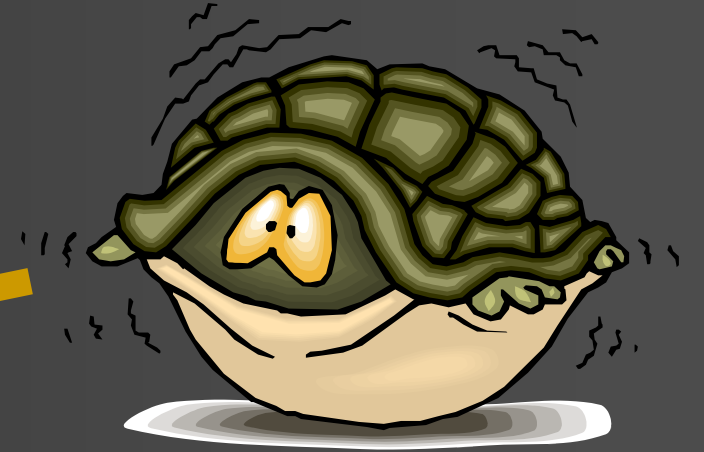


Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches



???



Research at the *University of Oslo*





INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1711538>

 **Routledge**
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 Check for updates

Teachers' strategies for enhancing shy children's engagement in oral activities: necessary, but insufficient?

Geir Nyborg ^a, Liv Heidi Mjelve ^a, Anne Edwards ^b and W. R. Crozier ^c

^aDepartment of Special Educational Needs, Faculty of Education, University of Oslo, Norway; ^bThe Department of Education, University of Oxford, UK; ^cSchool of Social Sciences, Cardiff University, UK

British Educational Research Journal
Vol. 45, No. 6, December 2019, pp. 1295–1311

DOI: 10.1002/berj.3563

Teachers' understandings of shyness: Psychosocial differentiation for student inclusion

Liv H. Mjelve^{a,★}, Geir Nyborg^a, Anne Edwards^b and W. Ray Crozier^c

^aUniversity of Oslo, Norway; ^bUniversity of Oxford, UK; ^cCardiff University, UK

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK (JESPAR)
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2020.1854760>

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group

 Check for updates

Working Relationally with Networks of Support Within Schools: Supporting Teachers in their Work with Shy Students

Stine Solberg^a , Anne Edwards^b , Liv Heidi Mjelve^a , and Geir Nyborg^a 

^aDepartment of Special Needs Education, Faculty of Education, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway;

^bEmerita at The Department of Education, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- emotion coaching
→ establish difference between feelings and actions

“it is ok to be mad but it is **not** okay to hit”

“it is okay to be afraid but sometimes even when you are scared you have to **be brave...**”

Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- emotion coaching
→ acknowledge feelings
...but set expectations

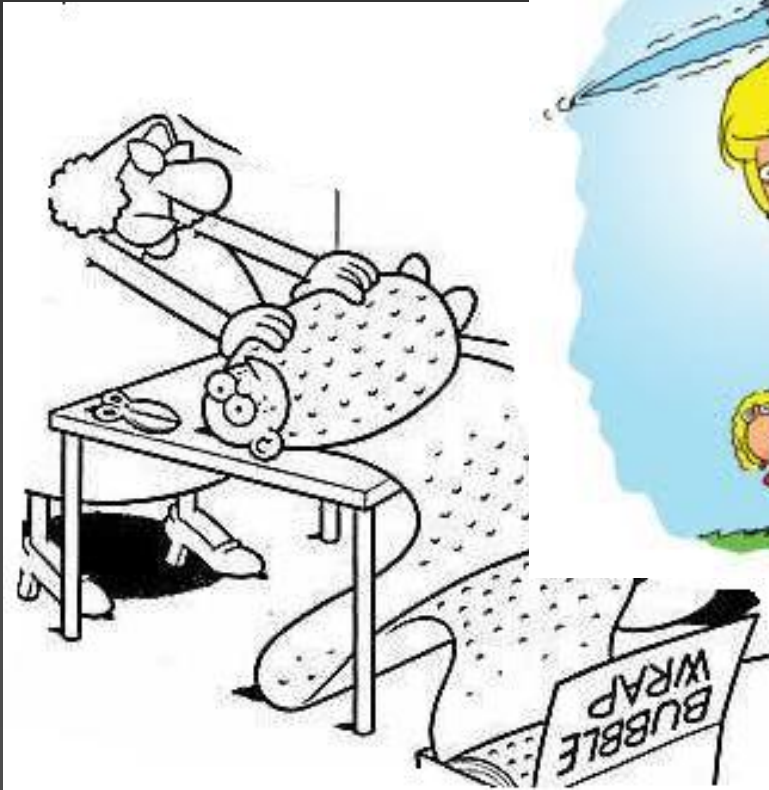
(lose the
label!)



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

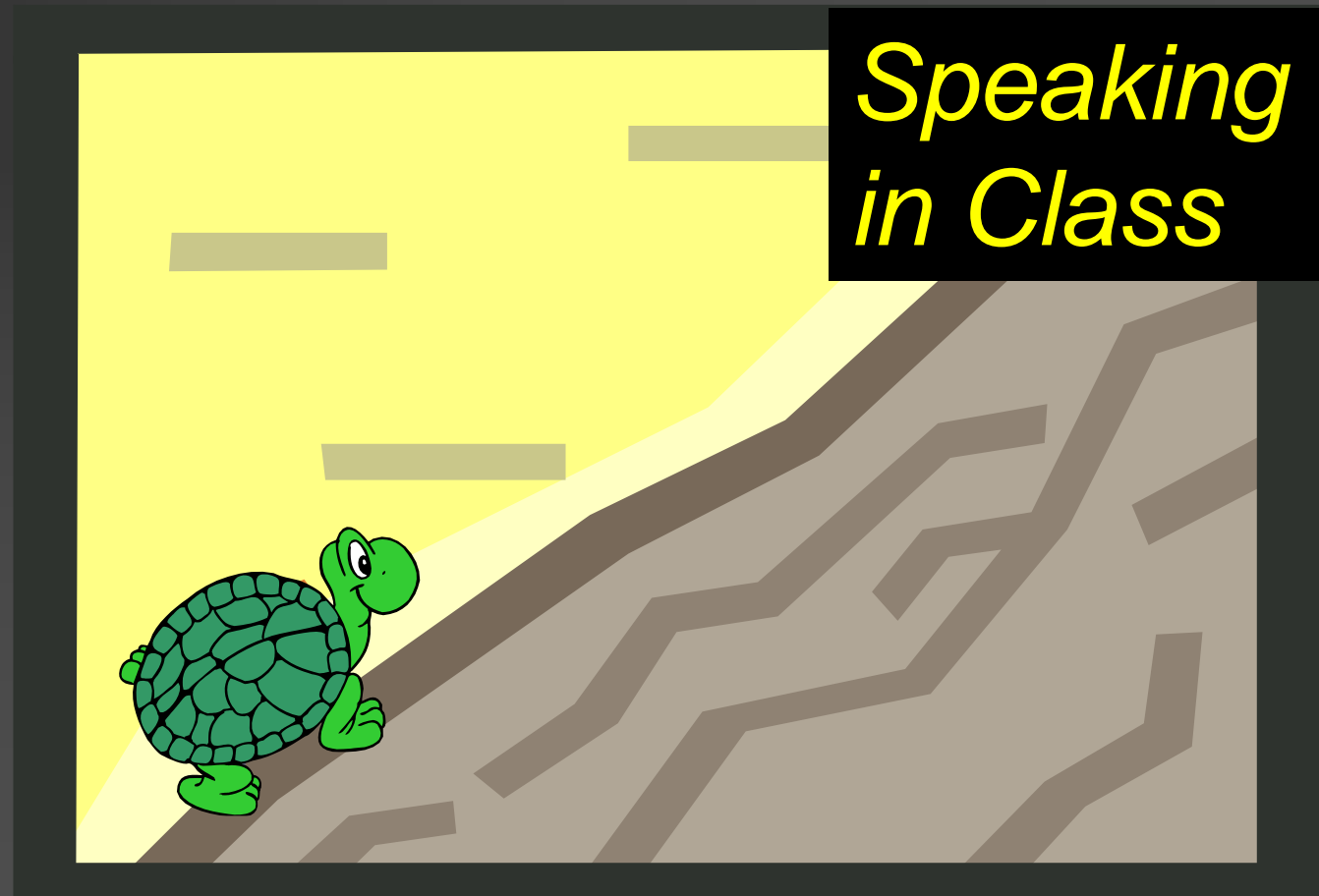
- encourage *independence*



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- graduated exposure
→ one small step at a time



***Speaking
in Class***

Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

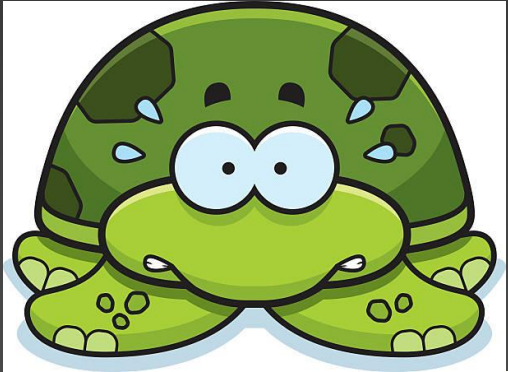
- graduated exposure
→ don't push too hard...



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- graduated exposure
→ don't push too soft...



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- graduated exposure
→ one small step at a time



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

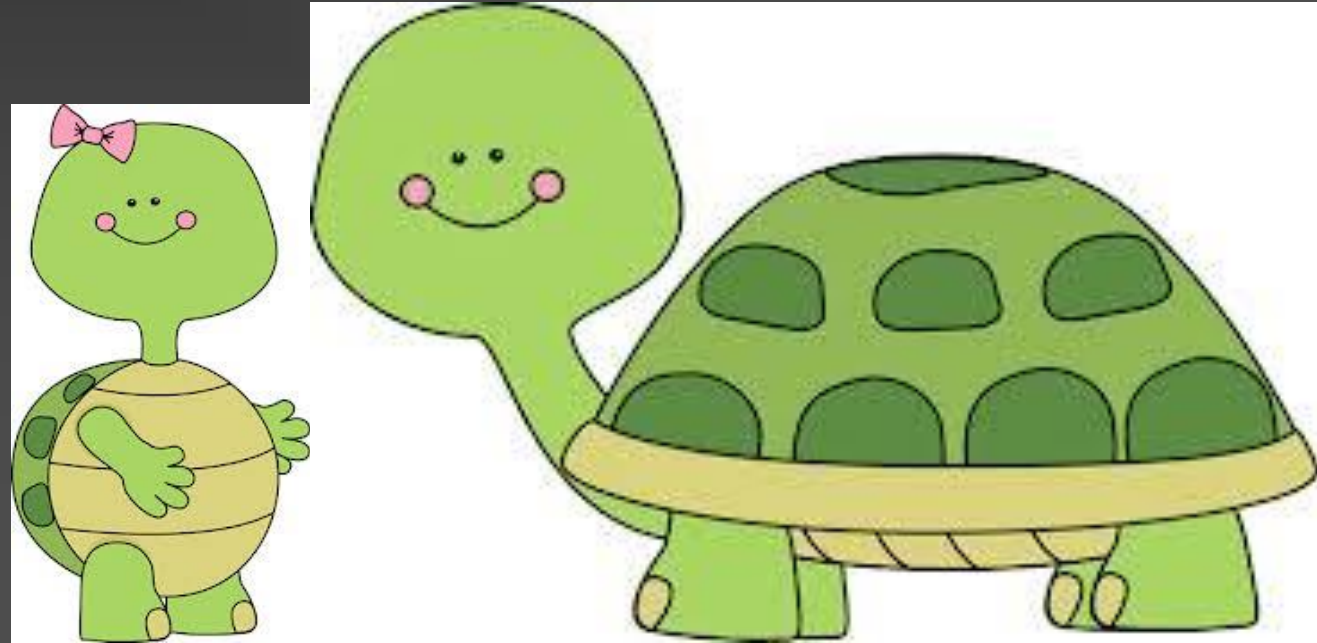
- Challenge negative thoughts
→ cognitive biases
 - e.g., threat perception, negative attributions, catastrophizing



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

- be sure to **emphasize**, **reinforce**, **attend to**, and **reward** even small positive social gains
- but consider more **subtle** forms of praise...



Shyness: Best Practices

General Approaches

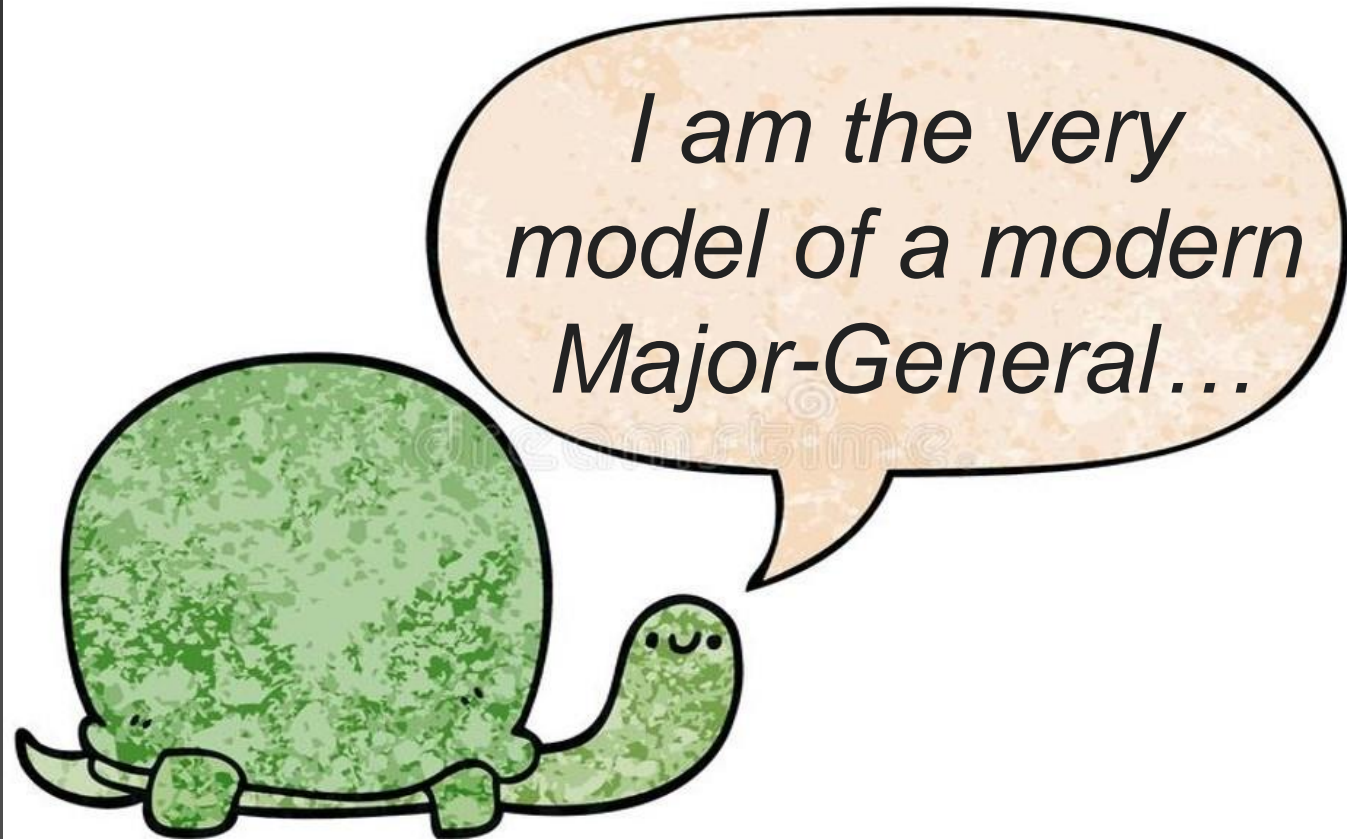
- open communication between educators and parents



Shyness: Best Practices

Verbal Participation

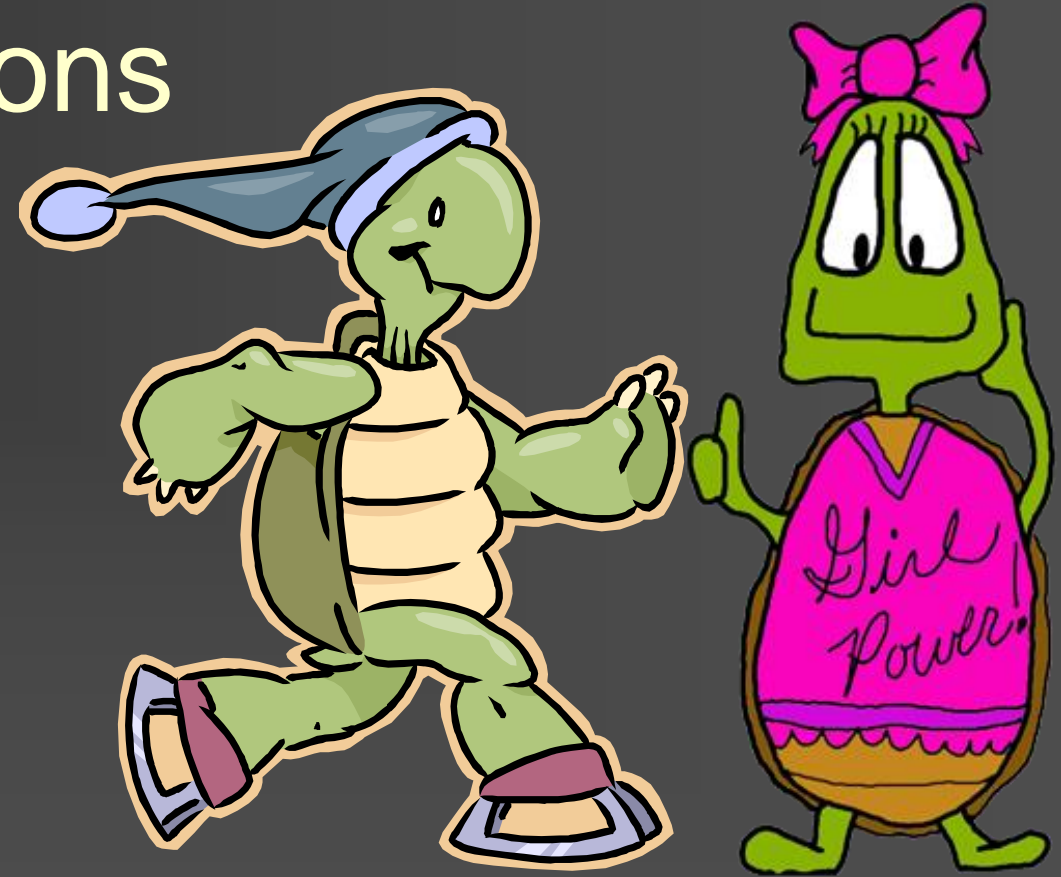
- use less direct questioning
 - phatics (e.g., mmm hmmm)
 - volunteer personal information



Shyness: Best Practices

Peer Engagement

- encourage social interactions
 - model and reinforce positive social skills
 - **scaffold** appropriately



Shyness: Best Practices

Coping with Novelty

- ease strain of encountering uncertainty
→ change of routine = **stress**
(e.g., special event)
 - prepare child ahead of time



Shyness: Best Practices

Dealing with Ups and Down

- be prepared for ***failures*** and ***setbacks***
 - realistic expectations
 - long term goals



Shyness: Best Practices

When Should We Worry?

- personality vs. disorder
→ degree, consistency, and
interference
-

Anxiety

- Most common form of mental health problem among children, teens, and adults
 - can be debilitating
 - ...but often hidden...
-

Anxiety

*Anxiety
is very
treatable...*

GOOD
NEWS

BAD
NEWS

*... but people
with **anxiety**
rarely seek
treatment*

Mental Health

INCREASE AWARENESS

and

REDUCE STIGMA

Thank you

Robert J. Coplan, PhD

Founding Director, *Pickering Centre
for Research in Human Development*

Professor, Dept of Psychology

Carleton University

robert.coplan@carleton.ca



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QUIET AT SCHOOL

An Educator's Guide
to Shy Children

ROBERT J. COPLAN AND
KATHLEEN MORITZ RUDASILL

Foreword by Sandee McClowry