# Week 1: AAC Introduction and Overview

**Topics**
- Components of AAC
- Definition of AAC
- History of AAC

**Student Learning Objectives**
- Students will:
  - define the term AAC
  - identify components of an AAC system
  - become familiar with the history of the field of AAC
  - briefly describe the wide variety of types of people who use AAC

**Text Readings**
Beukelman & Mirenda, Chapter 1

**Additional Readings**


**Possible Learning Activities**
- Complete a Web-based scavenger hunt of AAC-related websites.
- Join ACOLUG.
- Interview a person using AAC or family members/caregivers involved with AAC use.
- Observe a classroom that includes a student who uses AAC.
- Observe an AAC treatment session.

**Outcome Products**
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
ASHA III-C – Nature of Communication Modalities.
Week 2: Messaging

**Topics**
- Messaging
- Vocabulary

**Student Learning Objectives**
Students will:
- identify factors influencing message and vocabulary selection
- organize components of a basic conversation (greeting, small talk, information sharing, storytelling, wrap-up, farewell)
- identify sources for vocabulary gathering for AAC systems
- explain the social purposes of communication (per Light)
- describe the four elements that contribute to communicative competence (per Light)
- discuss the ethical privacy issues raised by developing vocabulary for and conversing with AAC users

**Text Readings**
- Beukelman & Mirenda, Chapter 2
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 12

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**
- Devise communication board to be used for a specific activity (or for 24 hours) by self or other students.
- Have students develop vocabulary for and then participate in 5-minute conversations in class with one student acting as nonspeaking partners.
- Conduct observations and interviews to determine potential vocabulary items for a potential AAC user.
- Participate in “mock” team meeting re: development of AAC system for user who wants private messages included on device. Discuss confidentiality standards.

**Outcome Products**
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview transcripts and analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Videotape and analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Assessment.</td>
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<td>ASHA III-E – Standards of Ethical Conduct.</td>
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### Week 3: Symbols and Multicultural Issues in AAC

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Topics</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symbols</td>
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<td>Multiculturalism</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student Learning Objectives</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- define the terms “symbol,” “symbol set,” and “symbol system”</td>
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<td>- list the factors involved in symbol choice, use, and learning</td>
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<td>- explain and provide examples of items on the “iconicity” continuum</td>
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<td>- describe cultural influences that may affect AAC practices in symbol selection, assessment, and intervention</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Text Readings</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda, Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lloyd, Fuller, &amp; Arvidson, Chapters 5, 6, 13, 22</td>
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<th><strong>Additional Readings</strong></th>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Possible Learning Activities</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Interview a person using AAC or family members/caregivers involved with AAC use from a different culture.</td>
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<td>Take a classroom poll re: the iconicity of various AAC symbols. Discuss how you came to your decisions.</td>
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<td>Create mini-boards for use across cultural contexts and in a variety of community settings.</td>
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<td>Practice using Boardmaker and PCS symbols to develop boards for a variety of communication purposes; discuss the benefits and challenges presented by using these symbols.</td>
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<td>Visit the Bliss website on the Internet (<a href="http://www.blissymbols.org/">http://www.blissymbols.org/</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Outcome Products</strong></th>
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<td>Activity report</td>
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<td>Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of research (III-F)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication boards and accompanying analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed</td>
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<td>ASHA III-C – Nature of Communication Modalities.</td>
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<td>ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Assessment.</td>
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<td>ASHA III-G – Knowledge of Contemporary Issues.</td>
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# Week 4: Physical Access; Positioning; Rate Enhancement

## Topics
- Physical Access/Positioning
- Rate Enhancement

## Student Learning Objectives
Students will:
- identify the differences between direct selection and scanning
- determine factors involved in selecting a switch site
- define principles involved in identifying optimal positioning for clients with physical disabilities
- explain the need for rate enhancement
- describe at least 3 types of message encoding
- describe at least 3 types of message retrieval

## Text Readings
- Beukelman & Mirenda, Chapter 4
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson, Chapter 17

## Additional Readings

## Possible Learning Activities
- Video videotape of AAC users and define access technique used.
- Experiment with direct selection and scanning techniques on equipment or software downloaded from web.
- Case study activities for AAC user with access challenges and/or slow rate of formulation.
- Create "hypothetical" AAC devices out of various pieces of recyclable materials (boxes, cotton bowls, popsicle sticks) and provide a rationale for the features you include.
- Review the research on keyboard arrangement, speed of formulation, and access methods.

## Outcome Products
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
- Review of research (III-F)

## ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed
- ASHA III-C – Nature of Communication Modalities.
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Assessment.
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention
## Week 5: Assessment Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>AAC Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• define opportunity and access barriers</td>
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<td>• explain the importance of partners in AAC</td>
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<td>• discuss the issue of acceptance in AAC</td>
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<td>• list the components of an AAC assessment</td>
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<td>• define a “criterion-based” assessment approach</td>
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<td>• explain how to perform various aspects of capabilities assessment (motoric, switch-assessment, linguistic, cognitive, sensory)</td>
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<td>• provide examples of modifications to standardized tests for AAC users</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• explain the “feature matching” process in device selection</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Text Readings</strong></td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda – Chapters 6, 7</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Lloyd, Fuller, &amp; Arvidsen – Chapter 11, 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Readings</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible Learning Activities</strong></td>
<td>Develop sample assessment protocols for actual AAC users or assessments based on case descriptions.</td>
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<td>Role-play assessment activities with class members assuming roles of various team members and stakeholders.</td>
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<td>Given the features of 2-3 devices/systems and a potential AAC user, use “feature matching” to determine the best technology alternative.</td>
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<td>Assess the communication participation patterns of a classmate and develop a low-tech communication system for them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide examples of how you would modify standardized cognitive or language tests to administer to AAC users.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Products</strong></td>
<td>Activity report</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Journal entry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample assessment report</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Addressed ASHA Competency(ies)</strong></td>
<td>ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Assessment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 6: Beginning Communicators (Nonsymbolic)

**Topic**
- Beginning Communicators (Nonsymbolic)

**Student Learning Objectives**
- Define term “beginning communicator”
- Provide examples of communication opportunities for beginning opportunities who are young children, school-age children, and adults
- Identify three basic communication signals employed by beginning communicators [attention-getting, acceptance, rejection]
- Formulate intervention goals to teach the three basic conversational signals
- Describe techniques for introducing symbolic communication
- Illustrate how teach basic choice-making, requesting, and refusal

**Text Readings**
- Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 10
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson – Chapters 18, 24

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**
- Develop a treatment portfolio for a beginning communicator based on an actual client or case studies.
- Given a case study, develop appropriate communication IEP goals for a beginning communicator.
- In small groups, utilize a limited number of symbols and/or a talking switch to demonstrate approaches for including a beginning communicator in classroom activities.
- Develop a step-by-step instruction guide for paraprofessionals to teach them how to implement one of the treatment techniques described in the text.
- Deliver a “mini-lecture” on one of the intervention techniques for beginning communicators described in the text.
- Observe a treatment session with a beginning communicator or observe a classroom that has a beginning communicator in it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Products</th>
<th>ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Activity report</td>
<td>ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment report, including treatment goals</td>
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</table>
Week 7: Beginning Communicators (Symbolic)

**Topic**
- Transition to Symbolic Communication
- Challenging Behaviors
- Increasing Communication Repertoire

**Student Learning Objectives**
Students will:
- explain how to analyze behavior in order to select appropriate communicative responses for training
- list functional alternatives to challenging behaviors
- describe techniques to enhance communication repertoire of beginning communicators in a variety of environments and contexts

**Text Readings**
- Beukelman & Mirenda, Chapter 11
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson, Chapter 18

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**
- Develop a treatment portfolio for a beginning communicator based on an actual client or case studies.
- Given a case study, develop appropriate communication IEP goals for a beginning communicator transitioning to symbolic communication.
- In small groups, utilize symbols and digitized devices to demonstrate approaches for including a beginning symbolic communicator in classroom activities.
- Develop a step-by-step instruction guide for paraprofessionals to teach how to implement one of the treatment techniques described in the text.
- Deliver a “mini-lecture” on one of the intervention techniques for beginning symbolic communicators described in the text.
- Observe a treatment session with a beginning communicator or observe a classroom that has a beginning communicator in it.

**Outcome Products**
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
- Treatment report, including treatment goals

**ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed**
ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention.
Week 8: Language Learning

**Topic**
- Language Learning
- Literacy

**Student Learning Objectives**
Students will:
- explain how the language development of AAC users differs from typical language development in terms of speech acts, pragmatics, phonology, semantics, morphology, and syntax
- describe two different graphic symbol approaches [semantic compaction, dynamic display]
- provide examples of organizational and teaching strategies for language-learning by AAC users
- learn to transcribe conversation by AAC users in order to take data
- define the term “literacy” as it applies to individuals who use AAC
- discuss why people who use AAC may experience challenges with literacy
- devise a classroom-based technique to enhance literacy of AAC users

**Text Readings**
Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapters 12, 13
Lloyd, Fuller & Arvidson – Chapters 15, 23

**Additional Readings**
- Explore websites of Prentke Romich Company (http://www.prentrom.com/), DynaVox Systems (http://www.dynavoxsys.com), and Enkidu Research (http://www.enkidu.net/). Investigate the different language systems used on their products.
- View and transcribe (according to established transcription guidelines) a videotape of a conversation between an AAC user and a peer.
- Using “standard” storybooks from a regular education classroom, formulate goals and plan an activity that will incorporate literacy goals and include the AAC user in
class.

- Role play a conversation with a parent who is concerned about not meeting the literacy needs of her child who uses AAC; offer 3 techniques that the parent can use at home to enhance the child’s reading and writing skills.
- Role play a conversation with a parent who is concerned that introducing AAC will cause his/her child to stop speaking. Introduce relevant research findings.

**Outcome Products**

- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
- Lesson plan for classroom-based literacy activity

**ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed**

- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention.
- ASHA III-F – Knowledge of Research.
Week 9: Inclusion, Communicative Competence, Partner Training

**Topics**
Inclusion
Communicative Competence – Teaching AAC
Partner Training

**Student Learning Objectives**
- define the term “inclusion” as it applies to individuals who use AAC
- describe the levels of integration, academic participation, and social participation
- contrast isolated and integrated AAC goals
- explain strategies for improving the quality of conversation with AAC users
- define “communicative competence” for AAC users
- formulate intervention goals for AAC users and their communication partners to improve communication competence
- explain how communication partners can improve the quality of communication for a variety of AAC users
- define the concept of social networks (Blackstone & Hunt-Berg, 2002) for AAC users

**Text Readings**
Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 14 (Inclusion)
Lloyd, Fuller & Arvidson – Chapter 15 (Intervention Principles)

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**
- Review case studies and determine levels of inclusion of various AAC users.
- Develop treatment activities that target communication partner behaviors.
- Formulate integrated treatment goals for specific AAC users that enhance communicative competence.

**Outcome**
Activity report
| **Products** | Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)  
|             | Journal entry  
|             | Lesson plan for communicative competence goals/partner goals.  
| **ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed** | ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention.  

Week 10: AAC in the ICU and Acute Care

**Topics**
- AAC in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
- AAC in Acute Care

**Student Learning Objectives**
Students will:
- explain the purposes and features of an ICU
- utilize a decision-making flow chart to make assessment and intervention decisions regarding case studies
- describe “voice-banking” intervention for temporarily nonspeaking clients
- list the steps involved in two different eye-gaze strategies for patients with severe motoric limitations

**Text Readings**
- Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 18
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson – Chapter 19

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**
- Review case studies of AAC users in ICU and acute care and formulate appropriate treatment goals using the ICU flow chart.
- Develop a hypothetical equipment “toolkit” for an ICU/Acute Care facility.
- Discuss the emotional and psychosocial experience of being nonspeaking in an ICU.
- Practice various eye-gaze and eye-link strategies with a partner and report on success and ease of use; after demonstrations vote on which technique you would like to use if you were nonspeaking.

**Outcome Products**
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry
- Sample low-tech eye gaze system with accompanying instructions for caregivers

**ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed**
- ASHA III-C – Knowledge of Users and Nature
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention
# Week 11: Acquired Physical Disease

**Topics**
- Acquired Physical Disease

**Student Learning Objectives**

- Students will:
  - describe a basic model for assessment and intervention for adults with acquired disorders
  - describe communication characteristics of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
  - define the important features of AAC intervention during a degenerative disease process (e.g., ALS)
  - describe communication characteristics of locked-in syndrome (LIS)
  - demonstrate low-technology AAC intervention techniques for LIS

**Text Readings**
- Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 15
- Lloyd, Fuller & Arvidson – Chapter 19

**Additional Readings**

**Possible Learning Activities**

- Interview an AAC user with ALS and a family member.
- Create a timeline that documents user characteristics and AAC interventions for an individual with bulbar onset ALS; with spinal onset ALS; with LIS due after a brainstem stroke.
- Create an inservice presentation for an ALS support group focusing on the role of the speech-language pathologist.
- Attend an ALS clinic.

**Outcome Products**
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry

**ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed**
- ASHA III-C – Knowledge of Users and Nature
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention
### Week 12: Acquired Cognitive-Linguistic Impairments (Aphasia, Dementia, TBI)

#### Topics
- AAC and Aphasia
- AAC and Dementia
- AAC and TBI

#### Student Learning Objectives

To demonstrate understanding of aphasia and AAC, students will:
- define five basic types of communicators
- describe issues in assessment of aphasics for AAC use
- formulate AAC intervention goals for three types of aphasic communicators

To demonstrate understanding of dementia and AAC, students will:
- describe three AAC intervention techniques for people with dementia

To demonstrate understanding of traumatic brain injury and AAC, students will:
- identify and describe three phases of recovery [early, middle, late]
- explain clinical issues related to speech recovery, natural speech issue, and AAC intervention
- provide examples of AAC goals appropriate for each phase of TBI recovery

#### Text Readings
- Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 16 (Aphasia)
- Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 17 (TBI)
- Lloyd, Fuller, & Arvidson – Chapter 19 (Acquired Disorders)

#### Additional Readings

#### Possible Learning Activities
- Practice using Augmented Input and the Written Choice Communication Strategy with a partner in class.
- Review case studies and determine appropriate AAC interventions.
- Formulate AAC-based treatment goals for:
  - an 82-year old woman with dementia living in
an assisted living facility
- a 49-year old attorney with acquired aphasia in a university clinic
- a 12-year old with a severe traumatic brain injury at early, middle, and late stages of her recovery

- Think about an adult you know well and sketch out the sections of a communication book for them.
- Create a device overlay appropriate for someone with aphasia who wants to shop at the mall.

**Outcome Products**

- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry

**ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed**

- ASHA III-C – Knowledge of Users and Nature
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention
# Week 13: Service Delivery, Funding, Teaming

## Topics
- Service Delivery
- Funding
- Professional Issues
- Teaming

## Student Learning Objectives
Students will:
- explain the basics of the funding process for Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance payors
- list members of an AAC team based in a school, hospital, rehabilitation facility

## Text Readings
Lloyd, Fuller & Arvidson – Chapter 21 (Service Delivery and Funding)
Lloyd, Fuller & Arvidson – Chapter 20 (Professional Concerns and Issues)
Beukelman & Mirenda – Chapter 5 (Team Building)

## Additional Readings
- Visit [http://www.aac-renc.com](http://www.aac-renc.com) for answers to Frequently Asked Questions, the entire AAC assessment protocol, and sample reports.
- Given report of an assessment, create a sample funding report for Medicare.
- Determine ethical responsibilities given a variety of case situations.
- Participate in a “mock” team meeting with each member of the class assuming the role of a different team member.

## Outcome Products
- Activity report
- Formal assessment (quiz, exam, test)
- Journal entry

## ASHA Competency(ies) Addressed
- ASHA III-D – Knowledge of Intervention
- ASHA III-E – Knowledge of Ethical Conduct
- ASHA III-G – Knowledge of Contemporary Professional Issues