Robust Vocabulary Instruction for Children with AAC Needs

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Overview of vocabulary instruction

Theoretical aspects of and current research on semantic development by children who use AAC

Case study of vocabulary instruction in a preschool classroom

Guiding principles in facilitating semantic knowledge by children who use AAC

Challenges and recommendations
How are new words taught?

Depends on age and who is doing the instruction

- Young children are taught new words primarily through thematic language experience activities in play and daily routines
- School-age children are taught primarily through explicit tasks
How do we typically teach new words?

New Word

- Explain it
- Strategies (Color Coding)
- Specific Tasks
- Model it
- Experiential Activity
- Play Activity
Vocabulary skills are linked to academic and literacy achievement.

Children who use AAC experience numerous vocabulary-related problems:
- Disproportionately small expressive lexicon, mostly nouns
- Poor vocabulary knowledge
- Absence of grammatical morphemes in utterances
- Typically developing children start combining words when they have acquired between 25-50 words.

- The emergence and development of grammar is dependent on vocabulary size, more strongly in early development as the child transitions from single word utterances to sentences (Bates & Goodman, 1999).
It is around the age of 2 that children begin to attend to the grammatical context in which words are used (P. Bloom, 2000).

A similar relationship between vocabulary size and structure is NOT observed among children who use AAC.
In addition to the disabilities that make AAC a necessity, the use of AAC changes the typical path of language development:

- Representation
- Inter-modal translation
- Production
- Acquisition (Interaction) Contexts
Children who use AAC have few opportunities for social interaction and authentic conversations.

The majority of communicative exchanges described in the AAC literature focus on children’s requesting or answering yes/no or close ended questions: planned communication opportunities.
Compounding this, the vocabulary available to AAC users consists mostly of nouns and often lack combinational power.
What do we know from AAC research?

- When provided with grammatical morphemes, there is an increase in multi-symbol utterances & syntactical improvement (Nakamura, et al., 1998; Koul, 2003)

- When afforded with time, there is an increase in multisymbol utterances (Brekke & vonTetzchner, 2003; Solomon-Rice & Soto, 2011)
Large body of work on what vocabulary should be selected *but not on how to teach it.*

Lack of guidelines on how to teach core vocabulary words to beginning users of AAC.
Intervention studies have focused on teaching the use of individual lexical items or two-symbol combinations on a communication aid in highly scripted situations (e.g., Harris & Reichle, 2004), play scenarios (Binger & Light, 2007) or shared book reading (e.g. Soto & Dukhovny, 2009)
None of these studies has examined the generalization of learned vocabulary to interactive discourse contexts such as conversations with naïve (i.e., blinded) listeners or conversations about novel topics.
When children are expected to learn and drill words only for highly-specific activities, their understanding of the words is based on a narrow context, and it is unlikely that the words will be generalized to other contexts.
CASE STUDY: PRE-K CLASSROOM
THE CHALLENGE

- Focus on core vocabulary
- Frequent opportunities for practice
- Activities appropriate for children of different ability levels
- Different AAC tools and strategies
- Group and individual activities
- Interface with literacy activities
- Make it easy on staff
- Involve families
Teaching Early Language and Literacy Through Multimodal Expression

- Repeated reading (2 weeks per book)
- Vocabulary teaching all day long
- 4-8 core words per book

Developed with Special Educator and Autism Specialist, Lori Wise, M.Ed., from NSU-UM CARD
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- **TELL ME** Co-Author: Lori Wise, M.Ed.
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Focus Core Word Teaching

- Repeated reading of books
  - 10 shared reading lessons with a predictable format and structure
- Predictable chart writing activities
  - 10 shared writing lessons with predictable structure and format
- Typical classroom routines, like circle time, snack, & outside play
  - Activities tailored to the weekly core words
- Centers & work time
  - Activities tailored to the weekly core words
TELL ME:
Teaching Early Language and Literacy through Multimodal Expression

Curriculum Guide
Developed by Carole Zangari, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, & Lori Wise, M.S.

BOOK PACKET

BOOK #1
I WENT WALKING
By Sue Williams

Core Words: YOU, WHAT, SEE
[“BOW WOW Words – Book of the Week Words of the Week”]
Other Key Words for Lesson 1: FRONT, READ, TELL
[Tiger Talk Words]

Story Toys: cat, horse, cow, duck, pig, dog
Letters:

Book Packets contain:
1. Book-at-a-Glance
2. 10 Shared Reading lessons
3. 10 Shared Writing lessons
4. Suggested Infusion Activities for centers and other classroom routines
5. 2 packets of Home Extension Activities
6. 4 sets of core word cards (1 each: PCS, Pixons, SymbolStix, Manual Signs)

BOOK PACKET

BOOK #2
FROM HEAD TO TOE
By Eric Carle

Core Words: CAN, DO, HELP, IT
[“BOW WOW Words – Book of the Week Words of the Week”]
Other Key Words: FOR, SING, WRITE LIKE
[Tiger Talk Words]

Story Toys: Homemade puppets of animals in the book (penguin, giraffe, buffalo, monkey, seal, goat, bat, mouse, elephant, dog)
Letters:

Book Packets contain:
1. Book-at-a-Glance
2. 10 Shared Reading lessons
3. 10 Shared Writing lessons
4. Suggested Infusion Activities for centers and other classroom routines
5. 2 packets of Home Extension Activities
6. 4 sets of core word cards (1 each: PCS, Pixons, SymbolStix, Manual Signs)
Teaching Core Words

• 4-6 new words each week for all children
  – BOW-WOW Words: Book of the Week Words of the Week
• An additional set of 2-4 words for selected children
  – Tiger Talk words
• As the weeks progress, we keep using words covered in previous books.

Words are shared with families
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Title/Author</th>
<th>BOW WOW Words</th>
<th>Tiger Talk Words</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book 1</td>
<td>I Went Walking Sue Williams</td>
<td>I, see, what, you</td>
<td>front, read, tell</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 2</td>
<td>From Head to Toe Eric Carle</td>
<td>can, do, help, it</td>
<td>first, like, sing, write</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 3</td>
<td>Here Are My Hands Bill Martin Jr &amp; John Armbrecht</td>
<td>good, have, here, my/mine,</td>
<td>and, hand, head</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 4</td>
<td>What Do You Like? Michael Gajda</td>
<td>Review words from previous books</td>
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<td>t</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book 5</td>
<td>Go Away Big Green Monster! Ed Emberley</td>
<td>away, go, not, stop</td>
<td>again, big</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 6</td>
<td>No, David David Shannon</td>
<td>bad, come, no, play</td>
<td>messy, now</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 7</td>
<td>Come Out and Play, Little Mouse Robert Krause</td>
<td>busy, father, little, mother</td>
<td>brother, later, sister, today</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 8</td>
<td>The Lunchbox Surprise Grace Maccarone</td>
<td>boy, eat, girl, happy, sad</td>
<td>friend, give, ready</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 9</td>
<td>If You’re Angry and You Know It Cloely Kaiser</td>
<td>and, angry, mad, foot/feet, walk, show</td>
<td>know, feel</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 10</td>
<td>Max’s Breakfast Rosemary Wells</td>
<td>all gone, down, get, on, where</td>
<td>different, there</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Core Vocabulary

- **Pronouns**: I, you, it
- **Verbs**: have, give, see
- **Descriptors**: busy, good, little
- **“Function Words”**: and, not, on
- **Nouns**: boy, friend, hand
- **Other**: away, here, what
Choosing Books

• Predictable and repetitive sentences
• Pictures that support the text
• Not too much print per page
• Interesting and appealing to the students
• Book should be “follow-up friendly”
• Filled with opportunities to engage students in CORE WORD practice
### BOOK at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOW WOW Words:</th>
<th>Tiger Talk Words:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY 1</th>
<th>DAY 2</th>
<th>DAY 3</th>
<th>DAY 4</th>
<th>DAY 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared Writing</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infusion Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Arrival</td>
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<td>• Circle Time</td>
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<td>• Outside</td>
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<td>• Snack</td>
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<td>• Goodbye</td>
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<th>DAY 6</th>
<th>DAY 7</th>
<th>DAY 8</th>
<th>DAY 9</th>
<th>DAY 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Writing</td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infusion Activities</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arrival</td>
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<td>• Goodbye</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This section contains information about the 10 Shared Reading Lessons in the TELL ME Curriculum. More detailed instructions on how to apply this information to each specific book is provided in each of the 10 Book Packets.

Note: We use primarily lower case letters in creating word cards and other materials. Children see mostly lower case when reading so these are prioritized. Conventional rules of capitalization, such as capitalizing first words of sentences and all proper nouns, continue to be observed. However, we do try to use lower case letters whenever appropriate.

Total Lesson Time
To guide lesson planning, the approximate time it should take to complete each part of a lesson is suggested in the Lesson At a Glance tables. Implementers should use their discretion and modify the time frame based on the number of students, their ability levels and behavioral needs, teaching style, and personal preference. The times listed in each segment of the lesson tables can and should be varied to maximize effectiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON 1 At A Glance</th>
<th>MATERIALS YOU NEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting the Stage</strong></td>
<td>Word Cards Word Card Board Personal SGD Shared SGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td>Word Card Board Personal SGD Shared SGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce new core words Review prior words</td>
<td>Word Card Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting Ready to Read</strong></td>
<td>Book Tiger Talk Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce book</td>
<td>Tiger Talk Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Follow Up Activity</strong></td>
<td>Story toys Personal SGD Shared SGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core word practice (words from current + previous book)</td>
<td>Story toys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the note regarding total lesson time on page 9.
Sample: Book 2, Day 5

- **Teacher:** “Let’s sing! I like this song!”
- The students and teacher **sing** “If You’re Happy and You Know It”.
- The teacher reviews core words. “Everyone say **CAN**.”
- **Teacher:** “Let’s find our special words in the book... Oh! Here’s one of our words! Let’s say IT together... CAN.”
- **Teacher:** “I need HELP! Who **CAN** show me the FRONT of the book?”
- **Teacher:** “Let’s read to find WHO was in the book.”
- The teacher will support the students in **creating a WHO Poster**.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
WHO Poster

Zangari & Wise, 2011
The Lunch Box Surprise

The kids have food to EAT.

Sam is SAD. He has no food to EAT.

Sam’s FRIENDS give him some of their food. He feels HAPPY.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
## Shared Writing Lessons

This section contains information about the 10 Shared Writing Lessons in the TELL ME Curriculum. More detailed instructions on how to apply this to each specific book is provided in each of the 10 Book Packets.

### Lesson 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials You Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting the Stage</td>
<td>Book, Pocket chart (or board for word cards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Word/symbol cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locate new core words on SGD's &amp; review all core words (say &amp; repeat)</td>
<td>Individual SGD's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce chart</td>
<td>Individual SGD's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing 1 minutes</td>
<td>Chart paper, marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce title of chart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow Up Activity 3 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter-sound song for the target letter for this book</td>
<td>Song Board, Low tech SGD's with target letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Activity: Letter Stamping</td>
<td>Stamps, ink, paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the note regarding total lesson time on page 6.

### Before Writing

Show the book to set the topic. The teacher will hold up the book to show to the students. She will say, “Here’s our book. It has lots of words we know.”

Locate core words on SGD’s & review story core words (say & repeat). The teacher will review the story core words one by one, showing the cards that have the word and AAC symbol for each. The facilitators will help each child find those words on their SGD’s. They will also support children learning Tiger Talk words by pointing out those words on the child’s SGD as the teacher says them. The teacher will present each card, say the word, and have the students repeat it using their natural speech or personal SGD’s. “Let’s do it together. Let’s say our words...Ready?...” students
Shared Writing

• Based on the Structured Language Experience Approach created by Patricia Cunningham.

• Uses predictable charts to engage all students in the writing experience.
  • “I see __________.”
  • “At the park, I like to ______.”

• Teacher and students compose text together. Teacher supports and writes as students dictate.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Predictable Chart

- Teacher chooses a topic.
- Teacher chooses a structure/predictable pattern for the students to follow. (“I feel happy when _____.”)
- Students learn that they can dictate their sentence, using the structure chosen.
- Students learn that they can read their sentence, using the structure chosen.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials You Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting the Stage</td>
<td>Pocket chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review story core words (say &amp; repeat)</td>
<td>Word/symbol cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Predicable chart with title &amp; carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin sentence dictation w/ 2 adults +</td>
<td>phrase [&quot;I <strong>LIKE</strong> to __.&quot;]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>Individual SGDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read back sentences using SGDs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find an ‘d’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow Up Activity</td>
<td>Song Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter-sound song for ‘D’</td>
<td>Low tech SGDs with /d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Activity: Crayon Rub</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample: Book 2, Day 2

• Teacher: “Let’s WRITE about how we CAN move. Ms. Amy, your turn.”

• The teacher reads the first part, “I like to _____,” pausing so that the student/adult can finish the sentence with an SGD.

• The teacher transcribes the response. “I like to jump.” (Amy)

• Teacher: “Let’s READ WHAT we wrote.” The teacher will read the chart line by line pointing to each word as she reads it. She will pause at certain points when the children can read along using their SGDs.

• The teacher leads the students in singing the letter song.

• Students participate in a Letter Activity.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
My monster is big, Go away.

My monster is big, Go away.
Jackson

My monster is loud. Go away.

My monster is loud, Go away.
My monster is hairy, Go away.

My monster is hairy, Go away.
Infusion Activities

This section explains various activities that enhance the direct instruction of new core words in the TELL ME Curriculum. Language and literacy experiences are infused into each aspect of the daily routine so that children get hundreds of opportunities to practice their new words each week. Teachers should infuse as many activities as possible from the list below. In each one, staff should create opportunities for use of as many of the core words as possible. Remember that our list of core words is cumulative, it grows longer with each book.

A suggested sequence of activities is provided in the Book At A Glance table that is in each Book Packet. Teachers may vary from this suggested plan as long as there is a similar number of learning activities that include the core words. In other words, teachers may substitute one activity for another but should not reduce the number of TELL ME activities that are done each day.

FOR ARRIVAL: These activities are designed to be completed every day.

1. Have a sign announcing the Book of the Week and Words of the Week (BOW-WOW) and Tiger Talk Words in the Arrival Area.
   a. Point out the new book and words to students and discuss with them.
   b. Be sure to include any words learned in previous books.
2. Sing the NAME-O Song (tune of BINGO). Use visual supports with photos of the children and their names.
   This song is sung using the names of all participants.
   I like to say good morning to
   A friend I like a lot, oh!
   L-O-R-I, L-O-R-I, L-O-R-I,
   And __ Lori __ is her name, oh!
3. Search the signs in the Arrival Area for the Special Letter; Talk about the sound it makes.
4. Use as many previous core words as possible, as well as the new core word vocabulary.

FOR CIRCLE TIME
1. Introduce BOW WOW and Tiger Talk words.
Arrival Time

- Sign announcing book of the week
- NAME-O Song
- Search arrival area for the Special Letter

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Circle Time

• Introduce core words
• Say & Repeat
• Modify songs to allow for students to say (or use SGDs) core words
• Search for Special Letter in Circle Time
Outside Time

- Monkey See / Monkey Do
  - Animal Action with Puppets
  - Balloon Bump
  - Blow Bubbles
- Froggie Find

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Quick Quack Questions

• During Snack Time
• Questions that give practice with book-related concepts and/or additional practice on core words and Tiger Talk words.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Who has fruit in their snack? “I do” with chart of fruit/no fruit

Who has an animal at home? “I do” with chart of animal/no animal

WHAT is your snack in? “I have bag/lunch box” with chart of bag/lunchbox

WHAT are YOU drinking? “I drink ___” with beverage chart

Zangari & Wise, 2011
who likes to eat fruit or cookies?

- Sammy
- Simon
- Jorge
- Jackson
- Olivia
Centers: Buried Treasure

Bury animal story toys in rice/sand/shaving cream table. Prompt students to find the toys and practice saying BOW WOW (core) word. For example:

“I found ______.”
“YOU found ______.”
“I SEE a ____.”
“What DO YOU HAVE?”

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Vocabulary Sort

• Students are provided with pictures or objects of story-related concepts (e.g., animals and people).

• They are asked to sort the pictures into their appropriate categories. Two shallow boxes, labeled with pictures representing each concept, can be provided for the sort.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Vocabulary Bingo

• Core words are made into laminated Bingo-type game board.
• The Spin It All is set up with the same vocabulary.
• Children can be helped to activate the spinner, say the word that they get, and cover it on the game board.
• They can label each word again at the end before finishing the activity.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Collage Building

- Students are provided with a prepared set of magazine pictures (related to book and core words) to be glued onto paper.
- These can be reviewed later and sent home for further discussion about the BOW WOW (core) and Tiger Talk words.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Home Extension Activities are designed to be sent home so that the children can share what they are learning with their families. This provides them with additional practice in learning the language skills targeted for each book. It also helps families stay current with what is happening in the classroom.

These activities are developed into packets (TELL ME SHARE Packets). There are two packets per book (one per week) contained in each Book Packet. In the beginning, the SHARE Packets are rather simple and place few demands on families in order to get them accustomed to this approach. As the curriculum progresses, new information is introduced. This gives families additional options for activities to extend the learning into the home environment.

Our Sharing Sheep is the symbol for the SHARE Packets. SHARE stands for Send Home Activities Ready to Enjoy. Here is a sample of what the SHARE Packets contain.

The Week 1 Share Packet includes:
1. Introduction to the TELL ME curriculum
   a. Families will get a handout packet explaining the TELL ME curriculum and the role of the Home Extension Activities.
   b. They will also get a list of books in the curriculum in case they would like to purchase them for home use.
2. A list of BOW WOW (core) words for the book
3. A list of TigerTalk (additional vocabulary) words for the book
4. A short note from the teacher relating curriculum activities to each specific child. This should address things that are unique to that individual. For example:
   a. How the child is making/using manual signs
   b. Where the new vocabulary is on his/her AAC device
   c. Word approximations the child uses for the BOW WOW or TigerTalk words
   d. Things that you would like families to know or do that are highly specific to this child.

The Week 2 Share Packet includes
1. BOW WOW (core) words
Share Packets

• Weekly materials that include:
  – Info on the book and core words
  – Word cards
  – Suggested strategies and activities

BOOK 2, WEEK 1

BOOK 2: From Head to Toe (by Eric Carle)

BOW WOW Words: can do help it
Tiger Talk Words: first like sing write
TELL ME Book 2: Words We Are Learning

We are learning more new words in TLC! Every week our list grows longer. Some are new and some are from other books we’ve read. Here are the words we are learning. Will you say them with me?

- can
- do
- first
- front
- help
- I
- it
- like
- read
- see
- sing
- tell
- what
- write
- you
Things We Can Say with These Powerful Words.

I can.
You can.
I do.
You do.
I help.
I write.
I see.
I read.
I sing.
Write it.
Read it.
Sing it.

Can I?
Can you?

I do it.
I like it.
I see it.

I write it.
I read it.
I tell you.
Do it first.

Can you help?
Can you see?
Can you sing?
Can you read?
Can you write?
Do you see?
Do you see it?
Do you like it?
I can see you.
I can tell you.
I can help you.
What do you like?
What do you see?
All About CARS!

The CAR Strategy is used to help children put language to the world around them. It uses short sentences that focus on what the child is doing, saying, or looking at. It’s a simple, but powerful strategy.

C = Comment  
A = Ask a question  
R = Respond and expand

- C: Comment on what the child is doing, saying, or looking at. Then wait 5-15 seconds.  
- A: Ask a related question that the child can actually answer. Wait 5-15 seconds.  
- R: Respond & expand on their answer.
3. Scavenger hunts are another fun way to practice language. Put things around the home that relate to the core words. Look for them together and use the core words to talk about what you found.
   a. Take some time to review the language collage that your child made.
   b. Make it a fun, interactive experience by modeling the core words using AAC or the word cards.
4. Read the Mini Book sent home with your child.
   a. By reading it over and over, we give them lots of opportunities to hear and possible use the BOW WOW words.
   b. Remember to keep it fun.

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Froggie Find

Looking for

Found it

___ is for

___ is for

By:

---

Alphabet sort

There are two ways to do this. Each uses a pair of words.

1. Sort target word (e.g., read) and the target word with a NO/HOP symbol (e.g., draw with a pair) on top.
2. Sort target word and another word (e.g., read and see)

Once you decide which type of sort you are doing, print out the appropriate block word, flash words, and symbols cards and a board to sort symbols.

Set up the table top sort so that it looks like the drawing below. Assemble pictures that represent the concept in each column. Look at the pictures one at a time and help the child place them in the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Word</th>
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<tr>
<td>PES</td>
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<table>
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WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

- Oriented the staff and parents to a focus on core words rather than wants/needs and thematic vocabulary
- Ensured that all kids had a beginning AAC system that included core vocabulary
- Provided frequent practice opportunities
- Increased family involvement in language learning processes

• Concentrated vocabulary and AAC models
  • Multi-modal: Hear it, see it, say it
• High frequency of structured opportunities for language practice across a variety of classroom routines
• Adult use of appropriate language facilitation strategies
LANGUAGE FACILITATION STRATEGIES

- Vocabulary bombardment
  - Vocabulary models
  - AAC modeling
- Carrier phrases (cloze)
- Expectant delay
- Recasting and expansions
- Open-ended question asking
- Increased responsivity
PRIORITIES FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Design AAC systems that allow mastery of core vocabulary
- Develop/adopt and implement a long range plan for building language through multimodal AAC
- Build a classroom communication environment that prioritizes linguistic expression and participation.
- Train communication partners to use appropriate language facilitation strategies
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Practically Speaking
Language, Literacy, & Academic Development for Students with AAC Needs

Gloria Soto & Carole Zangari