



Liberator

A Prentke Romich Company

Teaching core words across the day

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Introduction

As a therapist working in a busy special needs school I was always looking for quick resources that I could easily print and share with others. This ensured my clients were focussing on the vocabulary which would give them the best chance of successfully communicating with others across activities as quickly as possible. It was always a challenge to integrate my communication goals with pre-planned classroom activities so they could easily be worked on without feeling like a hassle for people!

This booklet draws on the work by Liberator and Lindsey Paden-Cargill in her document *Core Vocabulary Studies and Core Word Activities v2*. Following a review of common core words, we have looked at the 50 first words list, developed by Prentke Romich Company. This list was created following a clinical evaluation of word frequency lists (which words we use most frequently in our speech), with additional consideration given to developmental factors such as core words which can be used alone (i.e. for those at a single word level), words which can be used across settings and words which can be more easily taught in context.

We realise some clients who are starting out with AAC or learning vocabulary are older, we have tried to avoid referring to AAC users as 'children' or 'students'. Instead we have adopted the phrase 'People who use AAC' which you will see abbreviated to PWU AAC.

We hope you find this updated resource a useful tool to help support the vocabulary of the PWU AAC whom you support.

How to use this booklet

This booklet is designed to provide you with ideas and inspiration for developing the vocabulary of the PWU AAC, who you support, and encouraging development of both sentence length and language functions across activities and routines.

Content

The booklet has been divided into two areas.

Firstly, we take a ‘word first’ approach and provide activity ideas for the most common core words– something which is ideal for the initial stages of vocabulary development.

Secondly, we look at popular activities and routines and think about how we can model vocabulary, extend sentence length and encourage differing language functions within each activity.

Sharing the ideas

To support you to easily share the relevant resources, each core word or activity is separated onto handouts. This allows you to quickly print out the relevant pages for your client and pass them to the relevant people (i.e. classroom staff/parents/carers) for insertion into care plans, classroom planning or homework books.

Core and Fringe Vocabulary

When we think about vocabulary within AAC we can categorise the words we use as either *core* or *fringe* vocabulary.

Core vocabulary

Core or 'high frequency' words make up most of the speech we use as adults. These words tend to be small words which are not specific to a topic or activity. Core words consist of all word types including verbs (action words), determiners (this, that etc), descriptors (big, small etc), pronouns (I, you etc) and conjunctions (and etc). Core words can be harder to represent with a picture so lots of modelling is needed to teach them!

Fringe vocabulary

Fringe or 'topic' words occur less frequently in adult spontaneous speech. These words are nouns or proper nouns (names) and are much easier to represent with a picture. They are very topic specific. Whilst they are not as frequently used in speech they are still important to consider. Fringe vocabulary can be incredibly personal and so it may be that what is important to one person isn't to another.

Numerous studies have looked at the ratios of core and fringe vocabulary within differing language samples. Samples typically tend to consist of around 80% core and only 20% fringe vocabulary.

This booklet focuses on the first 50 core words as collated by PRC and some common fringe words that may be useful when starting out with AAC.

We've tried to avoid focussing on one client group and instead provide ideas for PWU AAC of all ages and abilities.

Teaching Common Core Vocabulary Words - Handouts

- Again
- All done
- Bad
- Big / Little
- Come
- Different
- Do
- Don't
- Down / Up
- Drink
- Eat
- Fast / Slow
- Feel
- Get
- Go
- Good
- Happy / Sad
- Help
- Hurt
- I
- In
- It
- Like
- Look
- Mad
- Make
- Me
- Mine
- More
- My
- Off
- On
- Open /Close
- Out
- Play
- Put
- Read
- Ready
- Sick
- Stop
- Take
- That
- Turn
- Want
- What
- You
- Interjections
- Colours

Again

Use in language

Vocabulary studies in both young children and adults have shown “again” to be a frequently occurring core word. In the early days of AAC vocabulary development it’s great for requesting repetitions of something enjoyable (and motivating!). Like many core words “again” is fantastic for use across contexts and activities.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Again, again!**
- Let’s play **again!**
- Sing **again!**
- I won’t tell you **again**

Teaching the word

Any activity that can be repeated is perfect to both model and encourage use of “again”. Activities that quickly run out are best as they allow us to model “again” multiple times in a short space of time. Ideas include bubbles, songs/rhymes, YouTube clips, stories, click clack tracks, spinners, music boxes and much more! If the PWU AAC is repeatedly asking for something you can also model “again!” in a comedic/exasperated way to make it more enjoyable and fun for them.

iPhone or iPad users can use the memories function in the photo gallery to play short photo compilations. They are usually brief and can be highly motivating to look at – especially when the photos include recent activities the PWU AAC may have participated in – model and encourage use of “again” following each memory slide show.

For children, familiar nursery rhymes can often be motivating and require many requests of “again” – particularly if the songs include tickles or actions.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

Remember that when teaching new vocabulary there needs to be a combination of modelling and allowing the person you support to use the vocabulary. Swap roles – let the person you support both be directed and be the director!

All done

Use in language

A simple phrase which is often used early on in language development, “all done” is great for indicating the end of (or desire to end) an activity or item. It can be a great tool for those which emerging vocabularies to indicate rejection, ask questions, comment or respond.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **All done** Mummy!
- Are you **all done**?
- We’re **all done**!

Teaching the word

As an activity is approaching it’s end you can model “all done” through questioning – “Ok, are we **all done** now?” as you begin to tidy away or move away from the activity. This can be used across ANY activity including: -

- Arts and crafts
- Building games such as blocks or Lego
- Puzzles
- Loom bands
- Cars
- Bubbles
- Music

At mealtimes use “all done” to indicate that the PWU AAC has had enough to eat or drink. If they appear to stop eating or push their food away, model “all done” or if they clear their plate/empty their glass you can model the same!

Adding intonation to “all done” can make it become a question word for use in the same situations above.

When out and about use “all done” to indicate it is time to return home – for example when at the park you can model “I think we’re **all done** at the park, let’s go home”. Similarly observe the PWU AAC – if they appear to be wanting to go home you can indicate this by modelling “all done” and encouraging them to do the same.

“All done” can be used to indicate that a task has been completed – this can be anything from finding everything on the shopping list, pairing your socks, tidying things away, making the bed, brushing your teeth – most everyday activities will work with “all done”! Begin by modelling “all done” in this context before encouraging the PWU AAC to use the word.

When tidying up the pots after dinner or tea encourage the PWU AAC to clear the table. They can ask each person if they are “all done” before they take their plate.

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Bad

Use in language

Used to indicate something unwanted, undesirable or disliked – “bad” can be a great word to introduce to cover the concept of negatives. Studies across both young children and adults show “bad” to be a frequently occurring core word – showing us that it can be important for both adults and children.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- That’s **bad**!
- That smells **bad**
- That’s not **bad**!
- Stay away from the **bad** man

Teaching the word

It can be challenging to think of ways to model “bad” on its own, it’s often much more effective to teach alongside “good” to demonstrate contrasts. Find activities where you can show things which are “good” and “bad” alongside each other. Remember that some things we think are “bad” others may not...

Taste can be a great way to model “good” and “bad” as it can be accompanied by obvious reactions. Play tasting games with foods (always ensure the foods are a safe texture for the PWU AAC) such as jelly beans, different fruits (some sweet some sour), snacks such as crisps (try unusual flavours), veggie sticks or different dips. As you taste them give an obvious reaction such as “yuk! That’s **bad**!” using gesture and facial expression to emphasise this. As the PWU AAC tastes things and reacts comment on what they are showing you – “Oh no – does that taste **bad**?”, repeating the modelling until the PWU AAC can begin to develop confidence at commenting themselves.

Think about doing the above with smells, gather a collection of different perfumes, aftershaves, smell pots or even a smell bingo game which will contain a large variety of smells. Again, smell them and comment on if they smell “bad” or “good”.

Often films, TV programmes and stories will contain characters who are both “bad” and “good”. Comment on them as they appear and encourage the PWU AAC to do the same.

When using fruits and vegetables, either when cooking, buying them at the supermarket or when picking your own (if you have a vegetable patch) use “bad” to describe fruit and vegetables which are rotten or past their best.

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Big / Little

Use in language

The descriptive words “big” and “little” are some of the first to develop in a person’s speech and are some of the most frequently used. They are incredibly powerful for a new PWU AAC who can suddenly start to control the size of item they choose or action they initiate.

The words “big” and “little” can be used to describe the size of almost anything in a person’s environment.

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- Give me a **big** hug
- Can I have a **little** rest?
- I want a **big** piece of cake!
- It’s a **big** doggy!

Teaching these words

Balls, bubbles, balloons, cars, dolls, books and other toys all come in many different sizes. The PWU AAC may have a preference of a larger or a smaller sized item. While playing, let them make choices between the “big” ones and the “little” ones.

Many playgrounds have varying sizes of equipment. Model the words “big” and “little” while guiding through an obstacle course (e.g., “go down the **big** slide, then under the **little** bridge”).

Mealtimes and snacks are another great opportunity to teach the words “big” and “little”. Give the PWU AAC the option of big and little cups, foods, drinks or crockery. Try breaking a biscuit or cracker into pieces and let them ask for the “big” or “little” pieces.

Art activities like painting or playing with clay are also great opportunities to model and teach “big” and “little”.

When getting dressed you can choose clothing using big and little. Is it the right weather for your “big” or “little” coat?

When getting moving we can use “big” and “little” to describe movements. Do a “big” stretch, go for a “little” run.

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Come

Use in language

A frequently used word across groups of young children, adults and older adults, “come” is an effective word to gain attention and initiate interactions.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **Come** here
- Mummy **come** play
- **Come** on you reds!

Teaching the word

Model the use of “come” with an accompanying gesture to encourage people to come to you. Position people whom the PWU AAC likes around the room and encourage them to “come” to you (it can often be paired nicely with “go”).

Similarly, “come” can also be modelled to gain attention across a room (for example if someone is in the room giving out sweets, items of interest, cups of tea or anything motivating!) to encourage a person to come to you and the PWU AAC.

Model “come” within play situations too – encourage characters to “come” and “go” – add a dramatic element to this to make it more enjoyable “**come** back!”. This can be really effective when playing hide and seek with younger children “Where have you gone? **Come** back!”.

Play a racing game with wind-up toys, each pick your ‘winner’ and cheer them on as they race – “**come** on dog!!”.

Sports are a great opportunity to model use of the phrase “come on” in both a positive and negative manner. Cheer on your team, the athlete, horse or motorcar with “**Come** on!”. Similarly, you can protest at an event in sports with the same phrase. What differentiates them will be the additional body language and gesture you use to support this. Begin by modelling frequently gradually encouraging the PWU AAC to do the same.

“Come” can be a great phrase to use when waiting for something – i.e. when watching adverts before a YouTube video loads, waiting for something to download or buffer, waiting for the washing machine to finish, waiting at the traffic lights – the list goes on! Model “**come** on” with an impatient tone of voice and gesture.

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Different

Use in language

A frequently occurring core word for both younger children and adults, “different” can be used to indicate items which are not similar, to select alternatives or change direction.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- That one is **different**
- Let’s talk about something **different**
- Can we play a **different** game?
- Let’s read a **different** story

Teaching the word

To increase meaning “different” can often be taught alongside “same” in activities where they may be matching, sorting or grouping.

Use activities which require matching to model “different”. For example, play a matching pairs game and comment if the cards are “different”. Snap! Is also a great and fun game to do this in.

Get some coloured bowls and choose one per person. Get a feely bag with coloured items in and encourage the PWU AAC to take an item out of the bag. See if it is the “same” or “different” colour to their bowl. If it is “different” put it back in the bag. Model “different” each time the colours don’t match. After time encourage the PWU AAC to tell you if the colours are “different”.

The above activity can be adapted into any type of sorting/category game where the PWU AAC has a category they must collect. You can choose items from a feely bag, hide them around the room or in a sandpit/bran tub. Categories can be anything appropriate from boy/girl, animals, fruits/vegetables, transport, clothes etc.

When participating in an activity use “different” to change the activity i.e. “OK it’s time to do something **different**”. Model the word as you do this. If you think the PWU AAC (or other people taking part in the activity) are beginning to show disinterest acknowledge this and comment “I wonder if you want to do something **different**”. After time encourage the PWU AAC to tell you they want to do something “different”.

During daily routines use “different” to indicate an alternative from the one offered – “something **different**”. This can be when choosing clothes when dressing, choosing something to eat, choosing an activity, TV show or radio station. Model “**different**” if the PWU AAC doesn’t appear to want the option offered (you can engineer these situations to ensure the first choice offered will likely be rejected). Even if the PWU AAC isn’t making a clear choice you can interpret the situation and provide comments, modelling “different”.

After frequent modelling encourage the PWU AAC to begin to indicate when they want to change activities or items by using “different”.

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Do

Use in language

The word “do” is one of the most versatile and common core words in our vocabulary and can be applied in almost any activity. We can use it to direct other people’s behaviour, ask questions, describe actions and much more.

The word “do” is also a great word a PWU AAC can use in place of other verbs they haven’t learned.

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- Mummy **do** it
- I **do** it
- What should we **do**?
- Can you **do** it for me?
- You **do** that well

Teaching the word

Let the PWU AAC direct you or his/her peers to “do” different activities. When it is another person’s turn to perform an activity, let them say “**do** it” or “you **do** it”.

Many people enjoy having others imitate their behaviour. You can model for them “I **do** it”, and “you **do** it” during silly social play like making faces, pretending to sleep or be sick or doing gross motor activities such as dancing and jumping.

Let the PWU AAC use the word “do” to ask for help. When dressing, manipulating items, toys or opening food containers, they can direct you to “do” it.

The word “do” is frequently used when asking yes/no questions. When engaging in activities, ask the PWU AAC “**do** you like it?” or “**do** you want a turn?”. You can also model the answer to questions by saying “I **do**”.

When assigning out activities of part of a task think about who will “do” what and when offering out tasks encourage the use of “do” to indicate a person wants to complete the task.

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Don't

Use in language

“Don't” is commonly used to indicate a negative. Adding it to common verbs such as “want” can turn a request into a rejection – “don't want”. We can also use it to restrict or prevent actions.

Let's look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **Don't** want
- I **don't** like it!
- **Don't** do that
- **Don't** go in there!

Teaching the word

Combine “don't” with “like” and comment on things you dislike when watching TV or films, looking through catalogues or magazines. Model “don't” frequently before expecting the PWU AAC to begin to use it.

With children, pretend play can be great for modelling “don't” - have one of the characters be naughty and tell them “**don't** do that!”.

When watching TV, films or reading stories use “don't” to comment on the actions of a character – for example if a character is doing something mischievous, comment “**don't** drop it/touch that etc”.

If a peer or family member is doing something the PWU AAC doesn't like, encourage them to tell them “don't!” to stop them.

At snack or mealtimes if the PWU AAC appears to dislike or reject the offer of food or drink model “**don't** want”, encouraging the PWU AAC to use “**don't** want” following frequent modelling.

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Down / Up

Use in language

The prepositions “up” and “down” have meanings beyond directions in the simplest sense. We can use these words for multiple purposes! They are a great way to indicate things such as direction, mood, levels (as in volume/lighting etc) and much more.

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- Get **up/down**
- Turn it **up/down**
- You seem a bit **down**
- Lie **down**
- **Up** to bed

Teaching these words

Gently sabotage music, TV and computer activities by adjusting the sound volume. Have the PWU AAC direct you to turn it “up” or “down”.

Lights on a dimmer switch can be turned “up” and “down”. Being able to ask for undesired sounds to be turned “down” or for lights to be turned “up” empowers someone to modify his/her environment to a more comfortable sensory level.

Encourage the PWU AAC to ask you to retrieve specific toys or items from a shelf by asking for them to be put “down,” then when the person is done playing, you can put the toys “up.”

“Up” and “down” are great words to use when doing physical activities. Talk about jumping “up” and “down” or even rolling a barrel or a ball “up” and “down” a large wedge or hill. Go “up” and “down” a slide, stair, escalator or lift.

When in a shopping centre look at the map and think about whether the shop you want is “up” or “down” stairs.

A person can ask to be picked or lifted “up” or put “down.”

Many songs and word plays use the words “up” and “down.” Let children fill-in-the-blanks for Ring-a-Ring-of-Roses, Itsy Bitsy Spider, and the Grand Old Duke of York.

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Drink

Use in language

Often taught early on, “drink” is a popular item to request and can be modelled frequently throughout the day. Most commonly taught forms of “drink” include the noun “a drink” and the verb “to drink”.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- More drink
- I want a drink
- Drink it up!

Teaching the word

How many drinks do we have in a day? Loads! What a great, naturally occurring opportunity to model this word in an everyday context. When you have a drink, model “drink” or ask the PWU AAC “do you want a **drink**?”. If when having a drink, they finish their drink or indicate that they want more model “more **drink**”.

When out and about in cafes and restaurants ask the PWU AAC “what **drink**?” they would like. If sharing a jug or pot of something model “drink” when you pour some more. Try subtle sabotage and slightly underfill the PWU AAC’s glass so that they may ask for more (NB don’t restrict the amount you give them too much as this will become frustrating for the PWU AAC).

For younger children use pretend play as an opportunity to model “drink” when having a tea-party or giving dolly or teddy a drink. Play kitchens are another great resource to pretend to make a “drink”.

Model the verb “drink” as people are drinking. Model phrases such as “**drink** up” when it may be time to finish a drink etc such as when leaving a café or when break time has finished.

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Eat

Use in language

A frequently occurring core word for both adults and young children and often taught early on in language development, “eat” is a popular to use to request and can be modelled frequently throughout the day.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- Eat that
- I want to eat
- Mummy eat
- Shall we grab a bite to eat?

Teaching the word

How many meals and snacks do we have in a day? Loads! What a great, naturally occurring opportunity to model this word in an everyday context. When you have something to eat, model “eat” or ask the PWU AAC “do you want something to **eat**?”. If when having a meal or snack, if they finish or indicate that they want more model “more **eat**”.

When out and about in cafes and restaurants ask the PWU AAC “what would they like to **eat**?”. If sharing something model “eat” when you offer them some more. Try subtle sabotage and offer the PWU AAC slightly less so that they may ask for more (NB don’t restrict the amount you give them too much as this will become frustrating for the PWU AAC).

For younger children use pretend play as an opportunity to model “eat” when having a tea-party or giving dolly or teddy some food. Play kitchens are another great resource to pretend to make things to “eat”. Model frequently before encouraging the PWU AAC to use the word.

Model the verb “eat” as people are eating. Model phrases such as “**eat** up” when it may be time to finish a meal or snack etc such as when leaving a café or when break time has finished.

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Fast / Slow

Use in language

Essentially “fast” and “slow” describe the speed of something. How they can be flexible is in *what* they describe the pace of. They can describe physical movement, the movement of something that can be seen, felt (i.e. a heartbeat) or heard. “Fast and “slow” can also have other descriptive functions too.

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- **Slow** down
- That car is moving **fast**
- Traffic is **slow** moving today
- It’s stuck **fast**!

Teaching these words

Set the pace of physical activities such as swinging, jumping, rolling in a barrel, running, crossing balance beams, riding bikes and climbing. Teach the meanings of “fast” and “slow” by having the PWU AAC complete an obstacle course at different speeds.

Music class or music therapy is another great environment for the PWU AAC to learn about “fast” and “slow.” Alternate playing instruments or singing “fast” and “slow” and allow them to make choices about how they would like you to sing routine songs. They may also control the speed at which he/she and his/her peers dance and move during music time.

Some video and audio equipment allows for varying speeds. The PWU AAC may enjoy watching familiar videos or even videos of himself/herself while asking you to change the speed of the video by saying “fast” or “slow.”

Talk about popular movie characters, athletes or characters from literature (the Tortoise and the Hare is a great example) and think about whether they are fast or slow.

During daily routines such as cooking and bathing, encourage the PWU AAC to direct your actions. Turn the tap to run fast or slow when washing up, stir fast or slow when mixing or cooking and pour things at either a fast or slow rate.

Model “fast” and “slow” when playing with vehicle toys, Scalextric and remote-control cars etc.

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Feel

Use in language

“Feel” is a great core word with multiple meanings. On first thought you may think of “feel” in respect to feelings and emotions however we can also use “feel” to refer to touching items and to offer our opinions. Remember it is important to teach the multiple meanings of a word to ensure it can be generalised.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I feel happy
- This feels soft
- I feel that this isn’t working
- Feel this

Teaching the word

Use sensory activities to model “feel” as you explore different textures. Model the phrase frequently and use it to request a turn having a “feel” of a sensory item.

Play feely bag games where you “feel” what’s in the bag to guess what it is. Model “feel” as you reach into the bag to feel the item. As the PWU AAC develops confidence at using “feel” you can prompt them by asking “what do we do?”.

Tactile story books such as “That’s not my....” Or other alternatives can be great to model “feel” as you progress through the story.

Model “feel” when out and about to feel different textures such as the soft grass, knobbly bark on a tree or smooth steel on a fence.

Pair “feel” with emotion words such as “happy/sad” (once learned) to model the use of “feel” in this context. Use the phrases to talk about characters in stories or films, to refer to their own emotions or to talk about during pretend play.

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Get

Use in Language

A powerful word, “get” pairs nicely with nouns, pronouns and prepositions for so many different communicative functions.

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- I’ll **get** that
- Can you **get** the door?
- What did you **get**?
- Mummy **get** it!
- **Get** in!

Teaching the word

A person who loves to be chased and tickled may very quickly learn to use the 2-word combination “get me” to initiate rough and tumble play. After catching and tickling them, continue teaching pronouns by saying “I **got** you” while modelling on their device. During play time encourage the PWU AAC to initiate chasing games to “get” their peers.

“Get” can be a powerful word for a person to use to request items that are out of sight or out of reach. Teach the PWU AAC to use “get it” or “get that” and they can direct you to retrieve desired items. We can use “get” to request people as well – “**get** Mum”.

During everyday routines, model the use of “get” when directing the PWU AAC to prepare for activities (e.g., “get” your books, “get” your coats). During dressing and self-care routines “get” can be an effective word to support communication. The PWU AAC can choose to “**get** washed/dressed”, “get” up or they may ask you to “get” that.

Pair “get” with prepositions during physical activity. Try creating an obstacle course in which the PWU AAC must “**get** down” to crawl under a barrier, “**get** in” and “**get** out” of a tunnel or ball pit, “**get** over” a barrel, “**get** on” and “**get** off” therapy ball and then “**get** up” a set of stairs. Let the PWU AAC direct you or their peers when it is their turn to do this activity. “**Get** up” is a great phrase to use after sitting on the floor, falling down or pretending to sleep.

Ask “What should I **get**?” when in shops, café’s, bars and restaurants - encouraging a response of “**get** eggs”, “**get** coffee” etc.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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Go

Use in language

Search for a definition of “Go” on the internet and you will be met with an incredible number of definitions. In fact, the word “go” has so many meanings and uses in English that it can be applied in almost any activity! The most obvious applications are those involving movement but it can also be used to indicate turns, compatibility, attempts and so much more!

Let’s look at some examples from our everyday speech:

- Let’s **go** out
- Make it **go**
- It doesn’t **go** with that
- **Go** on!
- I want to **go**
- Give me a **go**

Teaching the word

The word “go” comes with a built-in socially relevant verbal prompt: “ready... steady...**go!**” which can be modelled in pretty much any activity where something must be initiated.

For those who are motivated by moving toys, bubbles, videos and music, “go” is a great word for them to ask for initiation.

Many PWU AAC enjoy being able to control the behaviour of other people. The word “go” can empower a person to direct his peers to “go” during dancing, movement games or other action games.

A PWU AAC can direct music to “go” during a game of musical chairs.

Use “go” to indicate the start of a race (be that running, egg & spoon, relay or whatever you fancy!).

Encourage use of “go” to reject something or someone by perhaps telling them to “go” away or “go” over there.

During group activities ask, “Who’s **go** is it?” encouraging PWU AAC to reply with my “go”, your “go” etc

During activities requiring matching such as jigsaws, shape sorters, lock and keys use “go” to indicate if something fits together i.e. it “go” in there, it doesn’t “go”.

Similarly, when dressing (either themselves or others such as dolls) encourage PWU AAC to say if an item of clothing they have selected “goes” with the outfit. I.e. I need to choose some shoes – “What colour will **go**?” “Blue **go**”.

When tidying up, pick up an item and ask where does it “go”?

When teaching “go” it is often best paired with another word to demonstrate the contrast. Common pairings include:

-COME & GO – Sneak up or run up to the PWU ACC when they say “come,” then leave when they say “go.”

-STOP & GO – Most activities that can “go” can also “stop.” Play and pause music and videos, make a fan “stop” and “go.”

-GO UP/DOWN – Physical activities like climbing and sliding are great opportunities to teach the prepositions. Many toys have slides, ramps and chutes for action figures, cars and balls to “go up” and “go down.” Computer games may often require a character to explore an area and they can be directed using “go” (i.e. “go up”).

Be creative! Remember to follow the PWU AAC’S lead and help them find appropriate vocabulary to request, comment, protest and direct.

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Good

Use in language

Used to indicate something approved, desirable or liked – “good” can be a great word to introduce to cover the concept of positives. Studies across both young children and adults show “good” to be a frequently occurring core word – showing us its importance for both adults and children.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- That’s **good**!
- That tastes **good**
- That’s no **good**!
- **Good** boy!

Teaching the word

“Good” when coupled with a positive facial expression and body language can frequently be modelled to reinforce appropriate behaviour, effort and engagement. We tend to reinforce the positives in life much more frequently and so we have ample opportunities to model “good” through the day. Whenever the PWU AAC does something which is good (this can be anything which is appropriate for their age and developmental level), reinforce this by modelling “good”.

It can be effective to teach “good” alongside “bad” to demonstrate contrasts. Find activities where you can show things which are “good” and “bad” alongside each other. Remember that some things we think are “good” others may not...

Taste can be a great way to model “good” and “bad” as it can be accompanied by obvious reactions. Play tasting games with foods (always ensure the foods are a safe texture for the PWU AAC) such as jelly beans, different fruits (some sweet some sour), snacks such as crisps (try unusual flavours), veggie sticks or different dips. As you taste them give an obvious reaction such as “yum! That’s good!” using gesture and facial expression to emphasise this. As the PWU AAC tastes things and reacts comment on what they are showing you – “mmm – does that taste **good**?”, repeating the modelling until the PWU AAC can begin to develop confidence at commenting themselves.

Think about doing the above with smells, gather a collection of different perfumes, aftershaves, smell pots or even a smell bingo game which will contain a large variety of smells. Again, smell them and comment on if they smell “good” or “bad”.

Often films, TV programmes and stories will contain characters who are both “good” and “bad”. Comment on them as they appear and encourage the PWU AAC to do the same.

Reinforce choices the PWU AAC makes by using “good”. This can be when choosing music, clothes, TV programmes, games, stories – in fact anything! Simply reinforce with a positive facial expression and model “**Good** choice!”.

Use mealtimes to comment on food which tastes “good”. After meals if the PWU AAC has cleared their plate ask them “Did that taste **good**?”. Following repeated modelling you can then ask, “How was that?” encouraging them to respond with “good”.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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Happy / Sad

Use in language

“Happy” and “sad” are usually the earliest emotions we both model to children and that they can identify. Largely being able either a positive or negative feeling can help a person with emerging language express an indication of how they are feeling.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I feel **happy/sad**
- You look **happy/sad**
- I’m **happy** to see you
- **Happy** Birthday!
- It’s a **sad** story

Teaching these words

Emotions are best taught initially in the ‘real-life’ context to ensure they can be understood and generalised. The best way to do this is to identify and label the emotions being experienced by either the PWU AAC or those around them. For example, if someone is very smiley and laughing model the word “happy”, or if someone is crying model the word “sad”.

When watching TV programmes or films, identify when characters are “happy” or “sad” and label the emotions – reality shows such as X-Factor, Strictly Come Dancing and Britain’s Got Talent are often full of people who are “happy” and “sad”!

If sharing stories together, talk about if characters are “happy” and “sad” and why that may be.

If engaging in pretend play with dolls or figurines, make them laugh or cry and then say, “they are **happy / sad**”.

Look through picture resources such as flashcards, magazines and catalogues and talk about if people look “happy” or “sad”.

Play games where you build faces such as Mr Potato Head or Mr Pop! and make him either “happy” or “sad”.

Sing songs such as “If you’re **happy** and you know it...”

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Help

Use in language

A frequently used core word for younger children “help” can be very useful in getting assistance with difficult tasks. We all need “help” at some time or another and so being able to request it confidently is essential.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **Help** me!
- Daddy **help**
- Can I **help**?
- **Help** me out!

Teaching the word

We can model “help” frequently through activities of daily living such as dressing, eating, task completion. Whenever we assist a PWU AAC we can model “help”. It is important to do this across activities as well to ensure the concept is generalised.

Sabotage the PWU AAC’s environment so that they should seek “help”. This can include simple things such as screwing lids on to jars tightly, blunting pencils, moving things out of reach and so on. When the PWU AAC appears to be struggling or indicates that something is wrong you can model “do you need **help**?” Do not do this to the extreme so it becomes overwhelmingly annoying, rather think about subtle modifications you can make across the day.

Pretend play with children can be a great opportunity to model “help”. “Help” dolly get dressed, ask for “help” in the pretend kitchen or play superheroes and “help” people! Remember the more consistently you model a word, the greater the chances a PWU AAC will begin to use the words themselves in context as they respond to your model.

Watch rescue/superhero programmes or read stories (which are developmentally appropriate) and talk about the characters “**helping** people”. Model the word frequently as people are helped.

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Hurt

Use in language

Whilst we don't like to think of others being hurt, it is important that we are able to indicate when we have hurt ourselves.

Let's look at some examples from everyday speech:

- My tummy **hurts**
- I **hurt** my arm
- You **hurt** my feelings!
- Are you **hurt**?
-

Teaching the word

Pretend play is a great opportunity to model "hurt" to children. Play doctors and pretend you have "hurt" your arm which needs bandaging, make teddy jump on the bed and fall off and "hurt" her head.

Sing nursery rhymes where someone may hurt themselves such as Humpty Dumpty, Jack and Jill or Five Little Monkeys. Use visual prompts to support the song and talk about if the characters have "hurt" themselves.

Stories which include clumsy characters such as Mr Bump can be great to talk about people getting "hurt".

Similarly, TV shows, films or stories set in hospitals (which should be developmentally appropriate) can be great to talk about someone who has "hurt" themselves.

Model the word "hurt" if the PWU AAC is unfortunate enough to accidentally hurt themselves. You can model it in the question context by asking "are you **hurt**?". Or if they have a bump or bruise you can say "oh no you have **hurt** your arm/leg" etc.

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I

Use in language

A core word which is frequently occurring across all age groups, “I” is essential in indicating ourselves within a phrase. We typically combine it with a verb to create meaningful sentences, however in the early days of language learning we can contrast it with “you” at a single word level to emphasise the meaning.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I do it
- I love you
- I want cake
- I like it

Teaching the word

As mentioned above, in the early stages of teaching this word pair, “I” with “you” and model it’s use in indicating whose turn or item it is. For example, when taking turns in a game ask, “who’s going to have a turn?” then model “I am!”.

At snack time, model by asking, “who wants the last biscuit?”... “I do!”. Or treat everyone by producing a box of chocolates and asking, “Who wants one?” – modelling “I” to indicate you want one.

Combine “I” with other learned words to create simple phrases. Phrases such as “I want” / “I like” / “I see” / “I feel” / “I play” can be easily modelled within appropriate activities.

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In

Use in language

“In” is most commonly used as a preposition word but can also be used as an adverb or adjective in adult language. In early language development, we focus on the teaching of the preposition form but it is always useful to model the multiple meanings of words to encourage generalisation.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Let’s go **in**
- **In** the box
- **In** here
- Come **in**
- It’s so **in** at the minute!
- Get **in**!

Teaching the word

During transitions around school or in the community, talk about getting “in” the car, going “in” the doctor’s office, walking “in” the store, going “in” the classroom, sitting “in” the chair and going “in” the swimming pool.

While getting dressed, you can play a silly game while learning about body parts; put your person’s hand “in” his /her shoe instead of his/her foot, then have him/her correct you and tell you to put his/her foot “in.” Do the same thing with your person’s arm “in” pants, leg “in” a shirt and even head “in” underwear!

When tidying up “in” is a very frequently used word. Have the PWU AAC direct you or peers to put toys, clothes, dishes, etc. “in” a box, “in” the drawer, “in” the bag, “in” their backpack or “in” the cupboard.

Let the PWU AAC participate at mealtimes by helping you pour juice “in” the cup or pour cereal “in” the bowl. While preparing for the day, they can help pack his/her lunch or snack by putting food items “in” his/her lunchbox.

In sensory or soft play environments, the PWU AAC can ask to get “in” a tunnel, “in” a barrel or even “in” a hammock-style swing.

Many preferred leisure and therapeutic activities can incorporate the word “in.” Have the PWU AAC request his/her favourite CD or DVD to be put “in” the player, put pieces “in” a puzzle and shapes “in” the shape sorter. Many toys are manipulated by putting a ball, car or figure “in” the toy.

Use “in” during evening routines; talk to the PWU AAC about getting “in” the bath, putting his/her toothbrush “in” his/her mouth, spitting “in” the sink and finally getting “in” bed.

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It

Use in language

A commonly used core word across all age groups, “it” is a small word with big uses! “It” can be used to refer to items which we may not know the names of yet or to refer to an item already mentioned in discussion (i.e. “Where did you get your scarf?” – “I got **it** from Topshop”). As we develop more adult language, “it” can be used in a variety of ways.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- Get **it** Mummy
- Make **it** go
- **It** stinks!
- She’s so **it** right now

Teaching the word

Pair “it” with other core words to create simple requests or instructions in meaningful contexts and activities i.e. “play **it**”, “turn **it**”, “make **it**”, “want **it**”.

You can also pair “it” with other core words to create simple comments such as “**it** big/little”, “**it** stop/go” “**it** turn”, “like **it**”, “**it** happy/sad”

Play tag and model “you’re **it**!”.

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Like

Use in language

Typically used to indicate a preference, “like” can be used across activities to comment on an activity. By combining it with “no” or “not” it can also be a useful word to indicate dislike of something (which can be very effective in reducing frustration or distress).

Like can also be used to show that something is similar to something else – an important learning process for children and young people and a useful tool to repair conversations when a word isn’t available on a device or may have been forgotten.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- I **like** that
- I do not **like** peaches
- It looks **like** a dog

Teaching the word

Choose an activity you know the PWU AAC enjoys (this can be ANYTHING!). When they show enjoyment, model “you **like** this!”. Use questions like “do you like it?” while engaging in fun novel activities.

At mealtimes ask them (or others sitting at the table) if they “like” their food. When in a restaurant or café, talk about the menu options and what you “like”.

Look through catalogues and choose something you “like” from each page.

Talk about who you “like” OR “not like” when watching TV or films and when reading stories.

Listen to music and talk about the songs you “like” – if you find a song either of you “like” play it again! If a song comes on the radio that either of you “like” then turn it up LOUD!

Model the use of “like” to identify similarities of things. For example, if you see a dog which looks similar to their own pet, model “Hey! That dog looks **like** Poppy!”, or if they see a photo of someone they think is someone they know model “yes, that looks **like** Dad”.

Play a matching pairs game and ask them to find the card which is “like” yours, when they find it model “like”

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Look

Use in language

“Look” is a simple verb with many uses! We can use it to initiate an interaction, direct or share attention, respond to the actions of others, comment and so much more.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Look** at that!
- **Look** at me!
- Can you have a **look**?
- You **look** tired

Teaching the word

Model “look” while pointing to novel things or events in your environment. Support the model with a definite finger point to the item you are referring to.

Explore visually stimulating toys such as spinning tops, fidget spinners, kaleidoscopes, glitter tubes and light projectors. Use “look” to direct attention to the stimulus. If the item is small, take turns by saying “I look”, “you look”.

The phrase “look for” is a great one to model and teach when searching for lost items, friends during hide-and-seek or during a magpie hunt. Let them hide items for you and direct you to “look for” things.

Play a hidden object game such as “What’s in the box?” encouraging them to “look” in the box each time after the rhyme is sung.

Lift the flap books are a great activity for younger children as you “look” behind each flap.

Looking through old photos and videos can be a great way to model “look” – “Oh **look!** That was when we all went to the fair”.

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Mad

Use in language

Whilst we don't like to think of other's being mad/angry it is important that we are able to indicate when we feel mad ourselves.

Let's look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I feel **mad**!
- You are making me **mad**!
- Are you **mad**?

Teaching the word

Pretend play is a great opportunity to model "mad" to children. Play teachers and have a naughty dolly in class who makes the teacher "mad", modelling the word frequently.

Stories which include characters who get angry such as Mr Grumpy or Peace at last can be great to talk about people getting "mad".

When watching TV or films, if characters become angry you can model "mad" as you talk about what is happening – "Oh no he's **mad**".

Model the word "mad" if the PWU AAC is unfortunate enough to become mad or angry themselves. You can model it in the question context by asking "are you **mad**?". Or if they are clearly angry you can model "you're **mad**".

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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Make

Use in language

The word “make” is one of the most versatile core words in our vocabulary. We can use “make” to indicate the creation or occurrence of something.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Let’s **make** cakes
- You **make** me laugh
- **Make** up your mind!
- **Make** it go

Teaching the word

Use when in the kitchen (either play or real) or during structured cooking activities. “**Make** dinner”, “**Make** a brew”, “**Make** bread”, “**Make** an omelette”.

Many children (and adults!) enjoy playing with play-doh and “making” different shapes and objects. Describe the shapes you “make” with biscuit cutters and the PWU AAC direct you to “make” familiar objects. Expand on these utterances with colour vocabulary (e.g., “make a yellow ball” or “make a blue star”).

Exploring Lego, Megabloks or similar can provide great opportunities to “make” different buildings – you can ask others “what did you **make**?”.

Craft activities are great opportunities to teach and use this word. We can “make” pictures, “make” dots, “make” stripes, “make” circles and “make” sculptures.

In music class or therapy, encourage your person to “make” noise with instruments or to “make” it loud and “make” it quiet.

When playing with toys you can “make” them go, stop, twirl around, jump – well just about anything! Model “make” along known action words to create short sentences i.e. “**make** eat”.

Play with apps which involve making foods such as cakes, ice-creams or pizzas. Model “let’s **make** a cake!” once you have made one you can “make” more.

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Me

Use in Language

A frequently occurring core word across all age groups “me” can be an incredibly effective word to ensure possession – particularly for a PWU AAC who perhaps previously struggled to indicate when something was theirs! Being able to use “me” clearly indicates your own possession of an item or event.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Give it to **me**
- Help **me**!
- Can you see **me**?
- Give **me** my hat!

Teaching this word

As a single word “me” can be great to indicate turns and possession.

Pronouns can be tricky and it can help when modelling “me” to point to yourself to emphasise the meaning of the word.

Play a sorting game with 2 players. Take a pack of matching pairs cards and create a “bingo” board for each character using one set of the matching pairs, putting the other set in a bag. Choose a card from the bag and ask, “Who has this picture?” encourage the players to say, “me” to indicate if they have the matching card which can be paired – the first to pair all their cards wins!

When taking turns in group activities model “me” in response to asking, “Who’s turn?”, encouraging the PWU AAC to use “me” following frequent prompting.

Look at personal photographs or videos and ask, “who’s that?” encouraging the PWU AAC to respond with “me” when they see themselves.

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Mine

Use in Language

A frequently occurring core word across age groups, “mine” is incredibly powerful – irrespective of age! Being able to use “mine” clearly indicates your own possession of an item or event.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Mine!**
- That’s **mine**
- That’s not **mine**

Teaching the word

Pronouns can be tricky and it can help when modelling “mine” to use a gesture to yourself to emphasise the meaning of the word.

During fun activities model “mine” by taking toys from each other and modelling “mine!” before taking it back.

Play a sorting game using two characters (these can be dolls, teddies or anything suitable). Each person has a character who is theirs. Take a pack of matching pairs cards and create a ‘bingo’ board for each character using one set of the matching pairs, putting the other set in a bag. Choose a card from the bag and ask, “Whose teddy/dolly etc has this picture?” encourage them to say, “mine” to indicate if their character has the matching card which can be paired – the first to pair all their cards wins!

Sort through the clean washing at home and encourage them to find their own clothes saying, “mine” when they find items which are theirs.

When giving out coats at break time or when going out for a walk etc ask “Whose is this?” Encouraging the response of “mine”.

Because “mine” indicates possession, they may begin using this word to comment that something belongs to them or to dissuade someone from taking their belonging.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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More

Use in language

One of the first core words often taught within AAC “more” is incredibly powerful and can be incredibly effective at getting what you want! “More” can be used to request repetitions of an activity, ask for more of a desired item or to ask for a greater quantity.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **More** juice
- I want **more** crisps
- I want **more** than that!

Teaching the word

In any given activity, the PWU AAC can use the word “more” to request a repetition of almost anything. After requesting to swing, eat crackers, watch TV, drink juice, bounce on a ball, etc., they can request to continue the activity or get more of a desired item by simply saying “more.” Choose things you know they love in the first instance to pretty much guarantee they will want more. When they indicate they want more, you model “more”.

Find activities which naturally come to a stop or run out, such as songs, spinning tops, pull-cord toys, light up toys etc. These will naturally create opportunities to model and use “more” without obviously sabotaging an activity.

After meals if there are leftovers ask if they want “more”. Similarly, if sharing a food or drink item with someone (such as a tube of crisps, bag of sweets or bottle of something tasty) you can ask “Do you want **more?**”, encouraging them to respond.

Give smaller quantities of things which will naturally encourage them to indicate they want “more” (this can really be anything – playdoh, juice, paint, cereal – the list is endless!)

The word “more” is also used to compare quantities. Model the word “more” during play, snack time or art activities when comparing amounts of toys, crackers or crayons.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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My

Use in Language

The possessive pronoun “my” is one of the earliest developing pronouns and one of the most powerful – particularly for a PWU AAC who perhaps previously struggled to indicate when something was theirs! Being able to use “my” clearly indicates your own possession of an item or event.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **My** turn
- **My** ball
- That’s **my** drink!
- Give me **my** hat!

Teaching the word

Pronouns can be tricky and it can help when modelling “my” to use a finger-point to yourself to emphasise the meaning of the word.

During fun activities model “my” by taking turns with toys – “**my** turn”.

Play a sorting game using two characters (these can be dolls, teddies or anything suitable). Each person has a character who is theirs. Take a pack of matching pairs cards and create a ‘bingo’ board for each character using one set of the matching pairs, putting the other set in a bag. Choose a card from the bag and ask, “Whose teddy/dolly etc has this picture?” encourage them to say, “**my** teddy/dolly etc” to indicate if their character has the matching card which can be paired – the first to pair all their cards wins!

Read stories such as “That’s not **my**.....” to repeatedly model “my” within a familiar phrase.

Sort through the clean washing at home and encourage them to find their own clothes saying, “my socks etc” when they find it.

When giving out coats at break time or when going out for a walk etc ask “Whose is this?” Encouraging the response of “**my** coat”.

Because “my” indicates possession, they may begin using this word to comment that something belongs to them or to dissuade someone from taking their belonging.

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Off

Use in language

“Off” is an incredibly flexible word which can have multiple meanings. In the early stages of language learning we tend to focus on the preposition form however, into adulthood it will serve many purposes.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Get **off**!
- Turn it **off**
- Take your coat **off**
- The milk has gone **off**!

Teaching the word

Explore items which can be turned “off” such as lights, fans and bubble tubes. Model “off” before turning them off. Do this repeatedly and encourage the PWU AAC to tell you when to turn something off. Employ your dramatic talents here to make it fun (i.e. get in front of the fan and pretend you are going to be blown away whilst modelling “I’m blowing away! Turn it off!”).

After tea or during cleaning routines, you can take items “off” the table, sweep “off” the floor and clean marks “off” or wipe marks “off” the tables.

When arriving anywhere, model using the word “off” while directing them to take “off” his/her coat and backpack. At the end of the day, talk about getting undressed by describing taking “off” socks, shoes, pants and shirts. After dress-up games or cold winter days, there are even more things to take “off:” coats, gloves, headbands, hats, wigs and even nail polish!

Screw lids on tight so that help needs to be sought to get the lid “off”.

Many items in the PWU AAC’s daily life can be turned “off.” Have them direct you or peers to turn “off” the water when running a bath or brushing teeth, turn “off” the lights, turn “off” the car, turn “off” the music and turn “off” the TV.

The word “off” can be empowering for a person who is easily overwhelmed by sensory stimuli; if your person can ask for bright lights to be turned “off” or for loud music to be turned “off,” he/she can take control of regulating his/her environment.

You can model “off” frequently during pretend play by getting characters to jump or climb on or “off” things.

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On

Use in language

“On” is an incredibly flexible word which can have multiple meanings. In the early stages of language learning we tend to focus on the preposition form however, into adulthood it will serve many purposes.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- Sit **on** Mummy’s knee
- Turn the light **on**
- Put your coat **on**
- You’re **on** good form!!

Teaching the word

Explore items which can be turned “on” such as lights, fans and bubble tubes. Model “on” before turning them on. Do this repeatedly and encourage the PWU AAC to tell you when to turn something on. Employ your dramatic talents here to make it fun (i.e. turn the lamp off in a dimmed room and say “I can’t see a thing in here! Turn it **on**!”)

We use the word “on” frequently to refer to locations. Allow the PWU AAC to direct you or peers to sit “on” a chair, put something “on” a table or shelf or stand “on” a stool. They could take a turn giving directions during a game of Twister (e.g., “foot **on** red”).

Encourage the PWU AAC to direct you or make choices about art activities: colour “on” the paper, put glitter “on” the page, and paint “on” the canvas.

The word “on” can be used to describe traveling – we can ride “on” a bus, “on” a train, “on” an airplane, “on” a bike, “on” a horse or even “on” someone’s shoulders.

Encourage them to help the table at mealtimes by putting plates and utensils “on” the table, food “on” the plates and salt “on” the food.

Have fun being silly while learning about body parts by putting play-doh or stickers “on” the PWU AAC’s nose, knee or elbow. Continue with silly dress-up games and put “on” shoes, dresses, wigs, hats and even make-up or face paint.

When getting dressed, model “shoes **on**” etc as part of the dressing routine.

You can model “on” frequently during pretend play by getting characters to jump or climb “on” or off things.

When watching tv or films, reading stories or when out and about talk about interesting or unusual things you can see i.e. “Look he’s **on** the roof!”

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Open / Close

Use in language

Opposites “open” and “close” are great words to target in a variety of activities and are incredibly useful words when wanting help with something. They can be used simply to request the start or end of something, to describe something or much more.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Open** it
- **Close** it Daddy
- The door is **open**!
- **Close** the curtains!

Teaching these words

“open” and “close” things in your environment: eyes, toys, boxes, drawers, containers, laptops, windows, refrigerators etc, modelling the language whilst you do it and then encourage them to direct you.

A ride in the car or bus is a great opportunity to use the words “open” and “close.” You and the PWU AAC can talk about “opening” and “closing” the car doors, windows, glove compartments and even the air vents (which can result in blasting air into your face which is often a fun game!).

Try working on “open” during mealtimes as an alternative way to request help; give them a shut sandwich box which requires opening, a sealed bag of crisps or box of cereal – then encourage them to ask for help to “open” it.

Have them participate in food preparation or clean-up by having them “open” and “close” the refrigerator, cupboards or dishwasher. Model the word “open” when using a can opener and “close” when sealing food items.

Gently sabotage the PWU AAC’s routines by placing favourite toys or items inside locked drawers or difficult-to-open containers and prompt them to direct you to “open” it. Leave a normally “closed” door “open” and have your person direct you to “close” it.

Have fun making silly faces by letting your person direct you to “open” and “close” your eyes, nose and mouth.

Even more things that open and close: books, letterboxes, envelopes, new toys, presents, drawers, hands, water bottles, folders, purses, flip top lids, window shades/blinds and gates.

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Out

Use in language

“Out” is an incredibly flexible word which can have multiple meanings. In the early stages of language learning we tend to focus on the preposition form however into adulthood it will serve many purposes.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Let’s go **out**
- Take it **out**
- **Out** here
- She’s in, you’re **out**!
- Get **out**!

Teaching the word

“Out” pairs well with “in” when teaching the word as it provides a clear contrast. Put things “in” containers and then take them “out”. Model the language as you do so, encouraging the PWU AAC to direct you as they become more confident.

During transitions around school or in the community, talk about going “out” for a walk, getting “out” of the car, going “out” to the shops, going “out” of the classroom, or going “out” to play.

When dressing choose to have your shirt “in” or “out” and model the language. While getting undressed or changed, you can model “out” whilst helping the PWU AAC. Model “arm **out**”, whilst taking a jumper off etc.

When unpacking the shopping you can model “out” as you take things “out” of the bag to put them away.

The PWU AAC may use “out” to indicate they wish to get out of their wheelchair, bed or armchair. Model “out” whilst assisting them to do this, gradually encouraging them to request to get “out”.

The Hokey Cokey is a great song to model “out” countless times!

Play games such a musical statues/chairs or similar when players get “out”. Encourage the PWU AAC to be the judge and tell people when they are “out”.

Have a tournament (this can be for any game or activity) and talk about who is “out” after each round.

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Play

Use in Language

“Play” is a very important word to children – “playing” is their occupation, even adults enjoy playing games, music and sport as a way to relax. Of course, we naturally think of the word “play” as meaning games or activities – but in adult language we also use play in other forms.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- Daddy **play**!
- I want to **play**!
- Let’s **play** cards
- **Play** some music
- The car is **playing** up again

Teaching the word

Allow the PWU AAC to “play” and learn at the same time by using this core word. They can “play” music, “play” a video, “play” a game, “play” with a toy, act in a “play,” “play” a joke on someone or “play” sports.

Many of us are motivated by listening to music or watching videos. These are great opportunities to teach the word “play.” The PWU AAC can request to “play” music or “play” a DVD, then he /she may direct you to “push **play**” on the CD or DVD player. Specific videos can be requested by saying “**play** that”, or “**play** Dora”, or request a favourite track on a CD by saying “**play** 16”. Music and video streaming sites such as Spotify, Deezer and YouTube are great for this. On demand TV is also another great way to encourage the use of “play”.

“Play” is a great word to use when selecting toys and games. Children can make general requests to “play” with toys in his/her environment or can combine the word with favourite toys, like “**play** Elmo” or “**play** phone”. Adults can do the same with activities they enjoy using either “play” (with or without a finger point to what they want) or in short phrases such as “**play** that”, “**play** cards”, “**play** beetle”. Remember – it isn’t just children who enjoy board games – games can often be a great nostalgic activity for adults too – we all enjoy a bit of silly fun no matter what our age!

Use “play” to talk about specific sports and physical activities.

Teach children and young adults to use “play” when describing pretend “play” activities as well: “**play** house”, “**play** school” etc.

The word “play” can also help express where or with whom someone would like to play. When you and the PWU AAC are transitioning to another space to “play”, consider using this word instead of “go” on occasions (e.g., “let’s **play** (cards) in the garden” or “it’s time to **play** outside”). To facilitate social communication, pair “play” with pronouns and names.

Teach the PWU AAC to initiate with peers by saying “play with me”. They may ask to play with specific people – “play with Miss Kellie” or “play with Elyse”.

Many adult’s direct children to take a break from work by saying “go play”. Model these words on the PWU AAC’s device and teach them to request a break by asking to “play”.

Users with more communication experience may expand their use of the word “play” to discuss “playing” roles in the school “play”, “playing” jokes, making “plays”, “playing” around and “playing” football.

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Put

Use in Language

“Put” is a word that is often associated with giving directions, but is also one of the most frequently used words by toddlers.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Put** it down
- **Put** it there
- **Put** your coat on

Teaching the word

Dress up and pretend play can be a silly and motivating way to teach the word “put”. Model the words “**put** it on”, while putting on funny wigs, glasses or clothing.

Some children and young adults may enjoy “putting” stickers, stamps or play-doh on different body parts or toys. This is a great opportunity to teach body parts while being silly and keeping your PWU AAC’s attention. Model phrases like “**put** it on my arm/leg/toe”.

When cleaning up a room, model the word “put” when returning items to their proper location using phrases like “**put** it up”, “**put** it there” or “**put** it in”.

Art activities are great opportunities to use and teach the word “put”. You can “put” stickers and stamps on paper, “put” a brush in paint or water and “put” pictures on the wall.

Before going out model “put” when putting on shoes, coats, hats and gloves etc.

Jigsaw puzzles can be a great way to decide where to “put” pieces.

Any activity regarding organising or sorting (shape sorters, matching socks, changing round a room, putting shopping away) can be a great opportunity to model “put” or “**put** there” etc.

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Read

Use in language

When we think about the word “read” our first thoughts go to books and stories. However, text is everywhere in our environment, whether that be in books, magazines, texts or emails, so the word “read” really can be used in many contexts. “Read” can also have multiple meanings beyond reading text.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **Read** a story
- I need to **read** your text
- I’m going to **read** my emails
- Can you **read** the meter?
- **Read** my lips!
- **Read** it out loud

Teaching the word

Children love sharing stories and can request to “read” with you. Once a story has finished they can ask to either “read” again or “read” more stories.

Many young people and adults are also very motivated to “read” and/or be read to. In addition to reading books, talk to them about reading on computers, e-books and magazines.

While the PWU AAC is becoming more aware of letters and written words in his or her environment, model the word “read” in phrases like “**read** it”, or “**read** to me”.

You can request books or magazines by using the word “read”. If the PWU AAC is at the phrase level, encourage combining the word “read” with objects (e.g., book, magazine, sign) and pronouns (e.g., I, you).

During pretend play encourage characters to “read” stories and act this out.

Use apps such as ‘Pogg’ to control characters and make them “read”.

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Ready

Use in language

Frequently used by younger children and adults, “ready” is a descriptive word which can be used in multiple ways.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I’m **ready**
- Shall we get **ready**?
- **Ready**, steady, go!

Teaching the word

Taught on its own, “ready” can be used to indicate that something is about to happen – for example when throwing a ball to each other you can model “ready” before throwing the ball.

The word “ready” comes with a built-in socially relevant verbal phrase: “**ready**... steady... go!”, which can be modelled in pretty much any activity where something must be initiated.

When done with dramatic flair the act of being “ready” can be exciting and full of anticipation making it a fun game! Encourage the PWU AAC to use “ready” to draw out the anticipation of their turn - whether that be throwing a ball, blowing bubbles, starting a race or anything enjoyable!

When preparing to leave the house, model “ready” as you get ready to leave encouraging the PWU AAC to both question if others are “ready?” or to indicate that they themselves are “ready”.

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Sick

Use in language

Whilst we don't like to think of other's being sick, it is important that we are able to indicate when we feel sick ourselves or perhaps have noticed others may be unwell. We can use sick to refer to the action of being sick or feeling generally unwell. In adult language "sick" can take on multiple meanings.

Let's look at some examples from everyday speech:

- I feel **sick**
- You're **sick**!
- Are you **sick**?
- I'm **sick** of this!

Teaching the word

Pretend play is a great opportunity to model "sick" to children. Play doctors and pretend you feel "sick" and need some medicine. Eat lots of food in the play kitchen so you get full and feel "sick".

Sing nursery rhymes where someone may be "sick" such as Miss Polly had a Dolly.

Stories which include characters who may feel poorly such as Mr Sneeze can be great to talk about people getting "sick".

Similarly, TV shows, films or stories set in hospitals (which should be developmentally appropriate) can be great to talk about someone who is "sick".

Model the word "sick" if the PWU AAC is unfortunate enough to be sick or unwell themselves. You can model it in the question context by asking "are you **sick**?". Or if they are actually sick you can say "oh no you've been **sick**".

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Stop

Use in language

Few words in our language are as powerful as the word “stop”. Above all other linguistic functions, this word clearly expresses protest. Many people who have impaired communication are without a functional, socially appropriate means of expressing protest and as a result turn to aggression and self-injurious behaviours to object to people, occurrences and objects in their immediate environment. By providing an appropriate way to protest it is hoped that other behaviours can be reduced. Of course, like many core words, “stop” can be used in multiple ways for multiple purposes.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Stop** it!
- I want to **stop**!
- **Stop** the music
- Wait at the bus **stop**
- I’m putting a **stop** to this

Teaching the word

Explore items which can be stopped – these may be electrical items such as fans, music players, vibrating pillows and light spinners or items which have some form of movement such as wind-up toys, spinners, pull-cord items or timed items. Intentionally “stop” the item and model the word – or encourage the PWU AAC to tell you to “stop” the item. If the item is timed and “stops” by itself encourage them to use “stop” to indicate to you that it has stopped and may need activating again.

“Stop” pairs easily with “go” for many movement-related activities. Try using “stop” while swinging, bouncing, jumping and other sensory/motor activities. In classroom and group activities, allow the PWU AAC to direct music and movement activities using “stop” and “go”.

Wheelchair users may enjoy racing around outside and can control if they “stop”.

Set up situations in which the PWU AAC can use the word “stop” to tell an adult or peer to discontinue an activity. Try pressing piano keys while your person is attempting to play, stand in front of the television, block the computer monitor or attempt to steal the person’s toy. Prompt him or her to say “stop”, then immediately discontinue the “annoying” behaviour. These exercises should of course be done with extreme caution and limited frequency; don’t overwhelm or frustrate them.

“Stop” is a great word for a person to use to request that an activity be over. Early stages of AAC intervention are often most successful while following a person’s lead, so when the person appears

to be ready to discontinue an activity, model that you think they are ready to “stop” and as they develop their skills, have them request to “stop” their current activity before moving on.

Being out and about in cars or other forms of transport can be a great opportunity to model “stop”. Similarly, when travelling in the car or when at home and looking out of the window you can comment on passing traffic which may “stop”.

Many children especially love to be able to control their environment and the behaviour of others. Engage them with silly dancing, running, jumping and movement and then prompt them to tell you to “stop”. Exaggeratedly “stop” moving by freezing your whole body or even by falling down. Using “stop” to direct the behaviour of others may be a great way to involve a family pet or therapy dog.

Remember, we are all multi-modal communicators! Pair your spoken language and device activation of “stop” with a gesture – arm stretched out with palm facing outwards and encourage the PWU AAC to do the same.

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Take

Use in language

A frequently occurring core word in adults, “take” can be used for multiple meanings in adult language.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- **Take** turns
- **Take** me home
- **Take** your medicine
- Let’s **take** a break

Teaching the word

Model “take” during group activities where choices have to be made. For example, in a music group when presented with a box of musical instruments model “take” by saying “I’ll **take** the tambourine”.

When in a café where food items are on display you can model “I’ll **take** a muffin” / “I’ll **take** a croissant”.

If the PWU AAC needs assistance to carry something you can model “Can I **take** that for you?” Similarly, you can ask them to “take” things for you if you’re hands are full.

If the PWU AAC requires assistance for personal care or to move around locations, model “take” by saying “I **take** you”, “James **take** you” etc. After frequent modelling encourage the PWU AAC to indicate who they want to “take” them.

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That

Use in language

Not only is “that” one of the most frequently used words in our vocabulary, it can be one of the most powerful! “That” can refer to anything we want – this can be made even clearer if we can also combine it with a finger-point towards the item that we are talking about. In adult language “that” can be used incredibly flexibly.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **That** one!
- I want **that**!
- Is **that** it?
- Who told you **that**?

Teaching the word

“That” is a great alternative word to the names of items (particularly if a PWU AAC is at an early stage of acquiring vocabulary). Model “that” when asking people for items, encourage them to get “that” for you. As their skills increase and they indicate they want something ask them, “What do you want?” encourage them to say “that”.

As vocabulary develops the PWU AAC will gradually develop a bank of names of their favourite items, common items they may see and experience and regularly occurring items. However even when you have a large noun (name word) vocabulary, there is not always an icon available or known to the person for everything in their environment. Help your person use the word “that” in these situations. Let him/her request an object by using the word “that”. This is also a great opportunity to teach a point gesture so he/she can clearly indicate what he/she desires. For a PWU AAC at the two-word level, pair “that” with other core words to say, “get **that**”, “give **that**”, “want **that**” or “not **that**”.

We often use the word “that” in addition to pointing when directing people’s attention to things that we like or things that we want. Model making choices off menus by pointing to the desired food item and saying “that”.

When picking out movies, songs or videos, point to various items and use the word “that” as a question like “want **that**?” or “**that** one?” When watching videos, looking out windows or while taking walks, direct the PWU AAC’s attention to things you see and hear by saying “look at **that**”, or “hear **that**?”

The word “that” can also be used to discuss an action. Let the PWU AAC protest what you are doing by saying “stop **that**” or “not **that**”. Let him or her direct you to perform actions by saying “do **that**” or “like **that**”.

Use the word “that” to help your person learn to talk about his/her likes and dislikes during sensory activities or mealtimes. Talk about feelings, textures or tastes that you like or don’t like by saying “I like **that**” or “I don’t like **that**”.

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Turn

Use in language

Look up “turn” in the dictionary and you may find many uses! Whilst initially you may focus on only one or two meanings of “turn”, in adult language “turn” serves multiple purposes.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- My **turn**!
- Mummy **turn**!
- **Turn** it up/on/down/off
- He’s had a funny **turn**
- **Turn** the corner

Teaching the word

“Turn” is a great word to talk about any activity or object that rotates or spins, such as windmills, spinning tops, fidget spinners and so much more. Engage the PWU AAC in play with spinning toys by making them “turn” and stop.

Engage in fun dancing activities and instruct others to “turn” while dancing. Songs such as the Hokey Cokey have a very visual “turn” in them which is repeated frequently. Encourage the PWU AAC to sing the instruction “turn” around.

Many children and young adults like to be spun on the swing; allow them to direct you by saying “**turn** me”, “**turn** it” or “**turn** swing”.

“Turn” is a very relevant word to use with any activity or object with an on/off switch or volume control. Model using phrases like “**turn** it on”, or “**turn** that up” when playing with toys, listening to music or watching videos. Encourage the PWU AAC to object to songs or to show that he or she doesn’t like it by saying “**turn** that off” or asking to “**turn** down” the volume.

Have some fun gently sabotaging people’s routines by “turning” their clothes inside out, holding a book backwards or offering them a cup upside down. Help them problem-solve these silly situations and tell you to “turn” them. Other problem-solving activities can involve a person directing you to “turn” a key to access a locked room or “turn” a screwdriver to replace dead batteries.

Because one meaning of the word “turn” is to change directions, it is a great word to use to control movement activities. Pull the PWU AAC in a wagon or push them on a scooter, then change directions when they direct you to “turn”. Model the use of the word when riding in the car or watching traffic from the window to describe the movement of cars, trucks and buses.

Read stories with the PWU AAC and encourage them to control the pace while reading books or looking at photo albums by telling you to “turn” the page.

One of the most popular applications of the word “turn” is for turn-taking during game play or other shared activities. This is a great opportunity for your person to learn pronouns like “my”, “your”, “his” and “her”. Be sure that the PWU AAC’s device allows him or her the opportunity to combine pronouns with “turn” instead of having one button say, “my **turn**” or “your **turn**”.

Explore wind-up toys and “turn” them to make them move. Ask the PWU AAC if they want you to “turn” the cog some more before letting it go.

When watching TV model “turn” to change the channel. Encourage the PWU AAC to let you know when they want to change the channel by saying “turn”.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

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Want

Use in language

A common word to teach in the early stages of AAC skill development, the word “want” is one of the most common words used to express desire. This word also tops high frequency vocabulary lists for young children.

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- I **want** that
- **Want** more
- I don’t **want** to go
- What do you **want**?
- Do you **want** to play?

Teaching the word

The word “want” can be one of the most powerful words for a beginning communicator. While a PWU AAC’s vocabulary is developing, teach them to use a point gesture so that they can pair the word “want” with a point to request objects in the environment for which they have not yet learned a vocabulary word. This word also pairs nicely with the determiner “that” for phrases like “**want that**”.

Be sure to model the word “want” to your person when asking them questions (e.g., “Do you **want** more?”) and when directing them (e.g., “I **want** you to clean your room”).

While “want” is a very powerful word, not all requests should begin with “I want.” Be sure to help the PWU AAC use a variety of word combinations to make requests. In fact, in typically developing language the “I” is absent in the first 2-word combinations. Also remember that requests with the word “want” do not need to always be about objects. Help your person to learn to request actions (e.g., go, run, jump), adverbs (e.g., fast, slow) and to request that other people perform these actions too.

Whenever choices are available model the use of “want” and encourage the PWU AAC to use the word. If they make a choice without using the word on their device model it again – i.e. “Oh you **want** toast”. Our days are inundated with choices from what we wear, to what we eat, drink and enjoy doing so there are countless opportunities to both model it and encourage a PWU AAC to use it themselves.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

Remember that when teaching new vocabulary there needs to be a combination of modelling and allowing the person you support to use the vocabulary. Swap roles – let the person you support both be directed and be the director!

What

Use in language

A frequently occurring core word across all age groups “what” allows us to question and enquire.

Let’s look at some examples from everyday speech:

- **What’s** that?
- **What** do you want
- She said **what**?

Teaching the word

Combine the model of “what” with an inquisitive facial expression or gesture to indicate that you are asking a question.

During feely bag games, model “what” as you take items out of the bag and ask “**what** is it?”.

Look through magazines, picture books or photo albums and model “what” whilst asking “**what** can you see?”.

When out and about when you see and hear unusual or interesting things, model “what” whilst asking “**what’s** that?”.

Hide items in sand pits and dig them out on an expedition, model “what” as you ask, “**what** have you found?”.

At lunch time or when out in cafes/restaurants, model “what” by asking “**what** are you eating?”.

When meeting new people, model “what” by asking “**what** is your name?”.

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You

Use in language

A frequently occurring core word across all age groups, “you” can be an incredibly effective word to refer to people whose names may not have been programmed onto a device – or indeed people whose names we may not know!

Let’s look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Hey **you**!
- I see **you**
- **You** go
- **You** look good

Teaching the word

As a single word “you” can be great to indicate turns and possession. It can be paired well with “me” to demonstrate contrast.

Pronouns can be tricky and it can help when modelling “you” to point to yourself to the other person to emphasise meaning of the word.

Play a sorting game with the PWU AAC. Take a pack of matching pairs cards and create a ‘bingo’ board for each of you using one set of the matching pairs, putting the other set in a bag. Choose a card from the bag and ask, “Who has this picture?”. Encourage the PWU AAC to say, “you” to indicate if you have the matching card which can be paired – the first to pair all their cards wins!

When taking turns in group activities model “you” in response to asking, “Who’s turn?”, encouraging the PWU AAC to use “you” to indicate whose turn it is. In fun activities let the PWU AAC choose who gets to have a turn by saying “you” and gesturing to the person in question.

Look at personal photographs or videos and ask, “who’s that?” encouraging the PWU AAC to respond with “you” when they see you.

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Remember that when teaching new vocabulary there needs to be a combination of modelling and allowing the person you support to use the vocabulary. Swap roles – let the person you support both be directed and be the director!

Interjections

Use in language

Interjections are words that pop up in conversation and add colour and excitement to the sentences we create. These words and phrases are interjections that are frequently used by beginning communicators and their communication partners.

Let's look at some examples in everyday speech:

- Yuck
- Ouch
- Awesome
- Oops
- Yum
- Cool

Teaching these words

The most natural way to do this is to model these types of words as they would naturally occur in interactions.

When watching TV comment on things that are “cool” or “awesome”.

If someone hurts themselves model “ouch!”.

When eating, model “yum” and “yuck” to emphasise your enjoyment or dislike of what you are eating.

If something tips over, breaks or you fall over during an activity, model “oops!” to indicate the accident.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

Remember that when teaching new vocabulary there needs to be a combination of modelling and allowing the person you support to use the vocabulary. Swap roles – let the person you support both be directed and be the director!

Colours

Use in language

Colour words can be used to describe the physical appearance of almost anything. We all make choices of items using colours (quality streets for example!). If someone can use colour words it dramatically extends the choices they can make without having to add excessive vocabulary.

Let's look at some examples in everyday speech:

- I want the **blue** car
- Can I have a **red** ice lolly?
- I want to wear my **green** dress
- I like the **purple** quality streets

Teaching these words

Model colours when offering choices about favourite snacks (e.g., ice lollies, M&Ms, wrapped biscuits), toys (e.g., blocks, balls, cars), art supplies, play-doh, stickers or clothes. Begin by modelling the colour the PWU AAC has chosen "You want the **red** one", but as they develop their skills encourage them to indicate choice through choosing a colour.

Play games like Twister which emphasise using colours in fun ways. Work with the PWU AAC to be the spinner and name the colours as the spinner chooses them.

Model colours when the PWU AAC is choosing what to wear for the day.

Painting nails or doing make up is a great way to model and explore colours.

Use colours to refer to characters in popular children's shows such as Teletubbies, Paw Patrol, Thomas the Tank Engine and Power rangers.

Model colours throughout the day as you experience them, wherever choices exist consider using colours to do so. Label the choices people make by modelling "colours" to demonstrate how this can be done.

Modelling and aided input is an important part of intervention. When asking questions, modelling the desired response or giving your own response try use the AAC device in addition to your own speech.

Remember that when teaching new vocabulary there needs to be a combination of modelling and allowing the person you support to use the vocabulary. Swap roles – let the person you support both be directed and be the director!

Common Activities to Model Core Vocabulary Words– Handouts

- Music
- Cars
- Snack Time
- Colouring
- Playdoh
- Bubbles
- Marbles
- Balloons
- Blocks / Lego
- Cooking
- Ball
- Dress up
- Videos
- Meal times
- Board games
- Wind-up toys
- Reading
- Tasting
- Makeover
- Photography

Music

Equipment

- Music player (CD player / tablet etc)

Vocabulary

Core – play, stop, go, want, I, you, dance, sing, next, more, like, not, turn, up, down, awesome, it, make

Fringe – CD, song,

What to do

Music is incredibly motivating for so many of us and can be personalised to our own individual tastes and moods. With a simple music player, we can elicit language in many ways.

Choose some music you know the PWU AAC enjoys. Load up the music player and listen to some songs. If it feels appropriate you can sing along or even have a dance!

Explore the music available by scrolling through the song choices and getting the PWU AAC to indicate when they have heard a song they like and want to play. Mix it up by popping some songs in there you know they don't like so they can tell you no!

Pause the songs and ask if they want more of the song or want to change songs.

Turn the music down low so that you can barely hear it and encourage the PWU AAC to ask for the volume up.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – play, stop, go, more, like, want, awesome, dance, sing

2WL – play more, want more, I like, I/you dance/sing, play CD, not like, make play, turn up

3 WL – I like it, I want more, I want dance, turn it up, make it play,

Language Functions

Requesting – want, I want, I want more

Directing – play, play song, you play song

Commenting – like, I like, I like it

Rejecting – stop, not like, I not want

Questioning – you like? you want dance?

Interjecting – awesome!

Generalisation

Use these strategies whenever you are listening to music such as when out in the car.

You can apply the same strategies when watching music videos on YouTube or similar sites.

Cars

Equipment

- Cars of numerous colours and sizes

Optional

- Road mat
- Play garage

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, it, go, stop, want, make, big, small, fast, slow, jump, up, down, in, out, that, wow! don't

Fringe – car, (colours),

What to do

Most toy boxes have a small collection of toy cars in them and they are a great resource for teaching language. You need nothing other than a couple of toy cars (even one will do!) and with a bit of imagination you can model most of the above language.

Make the car move around the table. Make it go fast and slow. Make it stop and have to be told to go again! Make it jump off tables or over people. Make the car drive up or down someone's arm. Make the car go in or out of things.

Have a race! Line up your cars (choosing which to put where in the line if you like), place your bets and make them race! Cheer them on as they race!

Sentence Ideas

1WL – go, stop, jump, up, down, in, out, (colours), fast, slow

2WL – make go, it jump, go fast, red car, go up, want go

3WL – make it stop, it go in, make go fast, red car stop, want car go,

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want it, I want it

Directing – go, make go, make it go

Commenting – jump, it jump, it big jump

Rejecting - don't, don't want, I don't want

Interjecting – wow!

Generalisation

Extend the activity to include other vehicles you may want to play with

Talk about what cars are doing when out and about – comment if you can see big or small cars

Watch films such a 'Cars' and talk about what the cars are doing

Snack Time!

Equipment

- Snack and drink choices

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, eat, drink, more, that, like, don't, big, little, all done, yum!

Fringe – (colours),

What to do

Having a quick bite to eat or a drink can provide some great opportunity to model language!

Encourage choice making of snack items by saying 'that' with a finger point to the item. Offer more food or drink encouraging the PWU AAC to indicate if they would like 'more'.

Offer choices of coloured plates, bowls or cups when setting up for snack.

Offer food or drink items of differing size and comment on what the PWU AAC has chosen.

After snack has finished encourage the PWU AAC to tidy up theirs and their peer's plates and bowls. They can ask if people are 'All done' or want 'more?'.

Sentence Ideas

1WL- more, that, want, like, all done, big, little, eat, drink, yum!

2WL- want more, want that, like that, want, big, want wat, more drink, you all done?

3WL- I want more, I don't like, I like that, you want more? I want big, I want (colour)

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want more, I want more

Commenting – like, like that, I like that

Rejecting – don't like, I don't like

Questioning – more? want more? you want more?

Interjecting – Yum! that yum!

Generalisation

Younger children can recreate snack during pretend play opportunities

Model target sentences at mealtimes

Colouring

Equipment

- Colouring pens or crayons
- Colouring books / plain paper

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, that, help, more, again, don't, stop, go, like, make, it, look, wow!

Fringe – (colours)

What to do

Choose a picture from the colouring book you want to colour in. Either do a picture together or choose one each.

Sabotage the pencils crayons by blunting some nibs. Choose pens with tight fitting tops that the PWU AAC will need help opening.

Make silly shapes with your crayons. Do pencil races and 'race' around the paper making the pencil 'stop' and 'go'.

Talk about where different colours are going to go in the picture.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – want, that, help, go, stop, like, (colours)

2WL – want that, want help, like that, make go, like it, look that, want (colours),

3WL – I like it, I want that, I want help, make it go, want it again, I want (colours)

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want (colour), I want (colour)

Directing – go, make go, make it go

Commenting – like, like (colour), I like (colour)

Questioning – like? like (colour)? you like colour?)

Interjecting - wow!

-

Generalisation

Extend the colours vocabulary into other areas when there are choices or different colours you can see.

Use similar target sentences during art and craft activities.

Play with pavement chalks outside and draw patterns on the path.

Playdoh

Equipment

- Playdoh (various colours optional)
- Optional*
- Rolling pins
- Cutters

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, that, more, make, good, play, put, same, different, like, don't, look, mine, in, out, feel, it, my, go, stop, awesome!

Fringe – playdoh, (colours), (animals), (transport)

What to do

Explore the playdoh, roll it, squeeze it and even sniff! Talk about how it 'feels' and if you like it or not.

'open' different tubs of playdoh and take some 'out'. Take a little at a time and ask for 'more' if wanted. Choose different colour tubs to open and put the playdoh in the tubs and take it out.

'make' different things with the playdoh and comment if what you have made looks good. Decide if to make big or little items (i.e. a big snake...)

Take turns to play with the playdoh.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – make, want, more, go, like, put, in, out, good, look, feel

2WL – want more, look that, like feel, want play, like (colour), make (animals/transport)

3WL – want more playdoh, you feel it, you make same, I make different, I don't like,

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want that, I want that

Directing – make, make (animal/transport) you make (animal/transport)

Rejecting – stop, want stop, I want stop

Interjecting – awesome!

Generalisation

Think about using target sentences in other construction activities

Make biscuits and use the same language as you manipulate the biscuit dough

Bubbles

Equipment

- Bubbles
- Optional*
- Bubble machine

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, more, help, open, big, little, go, get, it, again, my, turn, pop! blow

Fringe – Bubbles,

What to do

Blow bubbles encouraging the PWU AAC to get the bubbles and pop them.

Take turns of who gets to blow the bubbles and who pops them.

Blow big or little bubbles, comment on what you have blown and request different size bubbles.

Use 'Ready, Steady.... go!' as a cue to blow bubbles.

Sentence Ideas

- 1WL – go, more, want, pop! again!
 2WL – want more, get it! I pop! My turn, you get, blow big, little bubble
 3WL – I want more, want big bubble, my turn blow, you pop bubble, my turn again

Language Functions

- Requesting* – want, I want, I want more
Directing – again! blow again! you blow again!
Commenting – big, big bubble, it big bubble
Questioning – go? Bubble go? big bubble go?
Interjecting – pop!

Generalisation

Blow bubbles in your drinks when using a straw

Blow bubbles in the bath using either the bath foam or blowing in to the water

Marbles

Equipment

- Marbles
- Marble tracks

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, make, go, stop, like, that, it, fast, slow, get, more, down, up, look, wow! help, put, on, play

Fringe – (colours), marble

What to do

Set up the marble track together. Decide where to put each piece and turn parts around to create the track. Talk about how the marbles will move around the track and where they will go up, down, in or out of parts of the track. If it's tricky to put together ask for help with the track. Model language at all times whilst doing this.

Choose which marbles to put on the track, choose them by colour or size. Choose whether you have one or get more to run lots of marbles at once.

Talk about where the marbles go around the track. Do they go up? Down? In a tunnel?

See if you can make the marbles go fast or slow around the track.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – go, stop, help, more, look, up, down, (colours), wow! on, in

2WL – make go, want more, put on, go fast, like it, look that, make stop, help put, play more

3WL – make it go, want go fast, want more marble, put more on, marble go down,

Language Functions

Requesting – help, want help, I want help

Directing – go! Make go, you make go

Commenting – fast! Go fast! It go fast!

Rejecting – stop, stop play, want stop play

Interjecting – wow!

Labelling – marble, (colours), fast, slow

Generalisation

Extend the words that refer to movement into other activities, move fast and slow, up and down, in and out when engaging in other activities such as physical activity, playing with sand, water or similar.

Look at videos of rollercoasters and talk about where the roller coaster is going and how it is moving.

Balloons

Equipment

- Mixed balloons
- Optional*
- Balloon pump

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, go, more, again, stop, make, blow, big, little, like, look, play, down, up, get, awesome!

Fringe – balloon, (colours)

What to do

Have some fun blowing up balloons and letting them go in a variety of funny ways including: -

- Letting the air out slowly to make a whistling noise
- Letting the air escape fast so the balloon flies around the room
- Making the balloon fly up to the ceiling or down to the ground by pointing it in that direction then letting the air come out
- Blowing big balloons which will fly around for longer
- Blowing small balloons which will stay close
- Seeing where the balloons land and getting them
- Decide if the balloon needs more air to make it big.

Inflate balloons and choose to tap them to keep them up in the air or let them float down to the ground.

Choose colours of balloon to blow up.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – blow, more, go, stop, big, little, again, play, want

2WL – want more, you blow, make big, make go, go up, go down, play again, get balloon

3WL – blow up more, make it go, blow big balloon, want (colour) balloon

Language Functions

Requesting – more, more balloon, want more balloon

Directing – blow, you blow, you blow it

Commenting – big, it big, look it big

Rejecting – stop, stop play, want stop play

Interjecting - awesome!

Generalisation

Use the escaping air from the balloons to move toy cars, spin windmills or blow glitter across paper. Talk about how you will do this using the balloons.

Make balloon animals and choose colours and sizes of balloons.

Blocks / Lego

Equipment

- Blocks, Lego or similar

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, more, big, little, put, on, off, make, go, stop, play, that, get, it, my, build, fall, like, wow!

Fringe – block/Lego, (colours)

What to do

Use your blocks/Lego to create different buildings, towers and vehicles. Put blocks on your building and ask for more blocks, choosing the colours if you want. Build big and little buildings, make the vehicles go and stop once you have built them.

Who can build the biggest tower? Put more blocks on your tower – be careful it doesn't fall!

Remember to keep modelling your own language as you play with the blocks. This provides a great example of correct word use in the right context.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – more, put, block/Lego, on, fall, build, big, little, (colours), make

2WL – want more, put on, make that, make big, want that, like that, want build

3WL – want more blocks/Lego, I build it, you make it, build it big,

Language Functions

Requesting – more, want more, want more Lego

Directing – build, build it, you build it

Commenting – like, like that, I like that

Rejecting – stop, stop build, want stop build

Interjecting – wow!

Generalisation

Use the same target phrases when playing with other constructions activities such as soft play blocks, Jenga or Minecraft.

Cooking / Baking

Equipment

- Ingredients
- Recipe
- Cooking utensils

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, do, again, eat, drink, fast, slow, get, help, in, it, make, more, my, open, close, put, read, stop, take, want, stir, pour, wash, hot, cold, turn, don't, good, look

Fringe – (foods), (utensils),

What to do

Follow the recipe as it is written, sharing the tasks with the PWU AAC. Model target language and encourage the PWU AAC to tell you what they are doing. Negotiate who will do what in the recipe.

Encourage help with actions such as stirring, pouring, washing and reading the recipe.

Talk about what you are going to make and how you will do it.

If the PWU AAC has some literacy skills (either written words or symbols) encourage them to read the recipe and tell you what to do.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – stir, pour, want, help, like, eat, drink, open, close, more, (food items)

2WL – want stir, pour in, put in, turn on, my turn, wash it, make that, stir fast,

3WL – I want stir, you pour it, put that in, turn it on, I make that, stir it fast, it look good

Language Functions

Requesting – help, want help, I want help

Directing – stir, stir it, you stir it

Commenting – like, like stir, I like stir

Rejecting – don't want, don't want that

Interjecting – yum!

Labelling – (food items), (utensils)

Generalisation

Younger children can extend the cooking experience into pretend play situations.

Apps where you can pretend to bake cakes, make pizzas or create ice cream sundaes can be great for practicing the language you have modelled.

Watch cookery shows such as Bake Off, MasterChef and Great British Menu and talk about them.

Ball

Equipment

- Ball (one or several of any size is fine)

Vocabulary

Core – I, want, all done, come, fast, slow, get, go, you, like, look, again, out, in, play, catch, throw, big, little

Fringe – ball,

What to do

Roll the ball to each other and use Ready Steady... Go! as a cue before you roll it.

In a group throw to ball to different people and encourage the PWU AAC to choose who they will throw to by pointing and saying 'you'.

If the ball rolls away ask for 'help' to find it and look for the ball by looking 'in' and 'on' things. Shout for the ball to 'come' back. Ask someone to 'get it' for you.

Do big and little throws or rolls to each other, big or little bounces or choose the big or little ball.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – want, ball, come, get, big, little, catch, throw, play, all done, go

2WL – want ball, you throw, I catch, big throw, get it, get big

3WL – get big ball, you get it, I throw ball, I want play, you catch it,

Language Functions

Requesting – ball, want ball, I want ball

Directing – throw, throw it, you throw it

Commenting – big, big ball, it big ball

Rejecting – all done, play all done,

Questioning – catch? You catch? You catch it?

Generalisation

These sentences can be extended into any sporting activity which uses balls.

Comment on sports games such as rugby, shouting at the players to throw or catch.

Getting dressed / dressing up

Equipment

- Choice of clothing and accessories

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, bad, good, big, little, don't, get, good, help, on, off, look, like, my, open, close, put, take, turn, what, wear, me, feel

Fringe- (clothing/accessories), (colours)

What to do

You can work on some great vocabulary whether getting dressed in the morning, trying on outfits or playing dressing up.

Use colours or 'that' with a finger point to choose clothing items. Put them on and take them off. Open and close the wardrobe, dressing up box or changing room curtain.

Talk about the outfit combinations you create. Do they look good or bad? Do you like them?

If the you or the PWU AAC have trouble with an item of clothing ask for 'help'. Or if you want another size to try on as a sales assistant to help.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – wear, want, on, off, help, that, good, bad, big, little, like,

2WL – wear it, want that, put on, take off, open it, close that, help me, look good, feel good

3WL – you wear it, I want that, I put on, take it off, you help me, it look good

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want wear, want wear that

Directing – on, put on, put it on

Commenting – good, look good, you look good

Rejecting – don't, don't want, don't want it

Questioning – like? Like it? You like it?

Generalisation

Play dress up with dolls or action men.

Look at apps where you can dress characters for different events.

Talk about clothes you like in catalogs and magazines.

Use similar target sentences when putting coats/shoes on / taking them off throughout the day.

Videos

Equipment

- TV/Device with a DVD player or access to a video streaming service

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, that, all done, again, good, help, like, look, me, off, on, up, down, open, close, play, stop, take, in, out, put, turn, it, watch, ha ha ha! Wow! Awesome!

Fringe – (DVD/programme titles),

What to do

If using DVDs encourage choice making by pointing to the desired DVD and saying 'that'. Open or close the DVD player and put discs in and take them out. Turn the DVD player on or off.

If using video streaming look for possible options and encourage choice making by either using fringe vocabulary to name a show/item or looking at screen shots and pointing to desired choices.

Play videos and stop them mid-way through to check the person wants more. If they enjoy a video they may want to watch it 'again'.

Turn the volume up and down and encourage the PWU AAC to indicate if they are unhappy with choices you make.

Encourage the PWU AAC to 'look' and comment on what you can see in the video.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – play, stop, more, again, like, that, want, up, down,

2WL – play it, want that, want more, play again, turn up, turn off, put on, look that

3WL – you play it, I want that, I want more, play it again, turn it up, turn it off, put it on

Language Functions

Requesting – again, play again, want play again

Directing – play, play it, you play it

Commenting - like, like it, I like it

Questioning – like? You like? You like it?

Interjecting – ha ha ha! Wow! Awesome!

Generalisation

Model similar language when relaxing at the end of the day and watching television.

Similar language can be modelled when playing CD's or listening to music.

Mealtimes

Equipment

- Just a normal meal time!

Vocabulary

Core – all done, big, little, do, don't, eat, drink, get, good, help, I, in, it, like, me, mine, off, on, open, close, put, that, want, yum! Yuck! give
Fringe – (food items), (drinks), (utensils), food

What to do

Mealtimes are the perfect opportunity to model some great language (before we even get on to talking about our days!).

Set the table for tea, 'put' mats and utensils 'on' the table and decide where to 'put' what.

Model language as you 'eat' and 'drink'. Ask if people want 'more' or if they are 'all done'. Ask people to 'give' you things across the table. Encourage the PWU AAC to ask for 'help' if they need food cutting or items passing to them.

If having a picnic, 'open' the boxes or bags of foods.

Comment on the food you are eating. Is it good or bad?

Sentence Ideas

1WL – eat, drink, more, all done, help, open, like, yum! Yuck! (food items),

2WL – Want more, more drink, help me, give me, get it, open that, like it

3WL – I want more, want more drink, give me that, put it on, I like that, I don't like,

Language Functions

Requesting – eat, want eat, I want eat

Directing – help, you help, you help me

Commenting – like, like it, I like it

Rejecting – all done, don't want, don't want it

Questioning – more? want more? You want more?

Generalisation

Any time you are having a bite to eat or drink is a great time to model language!

If appropriate you can model the above language in pretend play activities.

Board Games

Equipment

- Board games (any will do!)

Vocabulary

Core – turn, go, roll, again, like, my, you, I, want, that, play, roll, have, give, me, it, out, next, don't
Fringe – dice, (colours),

What to do

Board games are a great opportunity for some fun in a social setting. There are so many different games out there that you should be able to find something to interest everybody!

Model language as you 'take' a 'turn' to 'roll' the 'dice', tell people when it's their turn to 'go' or get someone 'out' by landing on their square.

You can play games which use colours (such as twister) and encourage the PWU AAC to be the person responsible for the spinner, telling people what they should do. Encourage the PWU AAC to choose which coloured piece they want to be. Play Monopoly and instead of naming the properties label them by colour.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – roll, again, turn, you, me, (colours)
2WL – my roll, you go, roll again, my turn, want that, have go, me next
3WL – you get it, it my turn, you go next, give me dice

Language Functions

Requesting – want, want that, I want it
Directing – roll, you roll, you roll it
Rejecting – stop, stop play, want stop play
Questioning – my turn? It my turn?

Generalisation

Any game where you take turns, roll a dice (or spinner) or choose an item are great to model the above language.

Wind-up Toys

Equipment

- A selection of wind-up toys (anything will be great!)

Vocabulary

Core – I, want, turn, it, make, go, you, big, little, fast, slow, help, look, stop, get, come, that, again, me, ha ha ha! wow!

Fringe – names of toys (i.e. animals/transport)

What to do

Wind-up toys are a great activity and some fantastic language can be modelled during this simple game.

As you wind up the toys check with the PWU AAC if you should wind it 'more' or let the toy 'go'.

Line up the toys and have a race! Choose who you think will win and cheer them on as the race starts.

Make the toys go 'in' tunnels or 'on' different surfaces as they are let go.

Do the toys move 'fast' or 'slow' when you let them go?

Sentence Ideas

1WL – turn, go, fast, slow, help, look, want, again, stop

2WL – turn it, make go, go fast, want turn, look fast! Want that, get it,

3WL – you turn it, make it go, it go fast! It go in, I want it, help me turn,

Language Functions

Requesting – go, want go, want it go

Directing – go, make go, make it go

Commenting – fast! Go fast! It go fast!

Rejecting – stop, want stop, want it stop

Interjecting – ha ha ha! wow!

Generalisation

Switch access toys are also a great resource to model similar language as they can be set to run for a certain amount of time before needing to be reactivated.

Reading

Equipment

- Books (either a selection or one book)

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, want, read, turn, that, like, look, help, me, open, close, it, listen, what, again, more, stop

Fringe – story, book

What to do

Sharing a story is a great opportunity to model language, talk about events and build vocabulary. Even PWU AAC who can read may need assistance when reading to turn pages, open books (whether paperbacks or e-books) or close them down when finished.

The act of reading a book can encourage language too. We ‘open’ and ‘close’ books, ‘turn’ the pages and ‘look’ at the pictures inside. We ask ‘what’ we can see and talk about ‘what’ is happening.

If sharing a story, pause before turning the page, to encourage the PWU AAC to indicate that you need to continue with the story. Don’t immediately open a selected book, rather wait to see if the PWU AAC will direct you to do so.

It is highly likely that when exploring a story, you will likely model some fringe vocabulary relative to the topic of the story. Try to model fringe words which can be used across contexts (i.e. animals vs character names etc).

Sentence Ideas

1WL – read, want, more, again, turn, open, close, story, look,

2WL – read it, want more, turn it, open book, read again, more story, look that, what that?

3WL – You read it, I want more, you turn it, read story again, want read again

Language Functions

Requesting – again, read again, want read again

Directing – turn, turn it, you turn it

Rejecting – stop, stop story, want stop story

Questioning – *what? What that?*

Labelling – (fringe vocabulary),

Generalisation

Magazines can just as easily be shared as books can be.

Explore photo albums in a similar manner and talk about the images.

Tasting

Equipment

- Small amounts of food/drink to taste

Vocabulary

Core – I, you, eat, drink, want, that, it, like, don't, yum! Yuck! more, what, help, me, taste,
Fringe – (food/drink items),

What to do

For people who no longer enjoy an oral diet, having small tastes of foods can be important to maintain quality of life. Similarly, for those who still enjoy eating and drinking, tasting new and unusual flavours can still be an exciting sensory experience.

You can either gather a small selection of tastes (for example components of a meal) or a food item which naturally includes mixed flavours (i.e. a bag of skittles / jelly babies / chocolates etc.).

Taste around the world! Gather some different foods from different parts of the world and taste them.

Comment on the tastes as you try them. Model language as ask for 'more' of the things that you 'like' and clearly reject the tastes you 'don't like', encouraging the PWU AAC to do the same.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – more, like, don't, want, that, eat, drink
2WL - want more, like that, don't like, eat it, eat more, don't want,
3WL – I want more, I eat that, I like it, don't like that, want eat more, want that drink

Language Functions

Requesting – eat, want eat, I want eat
Directing – eat, you eat, you eat it
Commenting – like, like it, I like it
Rejecting – don't like, don't like it
Interjecting – yum! Yuck!

Generalisation

Any time you have something to eat and drink you can comment on the flavours.
Try the same activity with smells (there are some great smell bingo games out there!)

Make Over

Equipment

- Make up items
- Nail varnish
- Hair products

Vocabulary

Core – I, want, you, that, put, take, on, off, like, look, me, more, help, brush, paint, up, down, on, off, don't, my, wow!

Fringe – (colours), nail varnish, (make up items), (body parts)

What to do

We all love a make-over and a bit of pampering (boys or girls!). We can try new looks, be creative and check ourselves out in the mirror.

Try different hair styles and 'brush' your hair into different styles. Try hair 'up' or 'down'. Put make up 'on' or take it 'off'. 'Paint' nails and choose different colours. Try different perfumes/aftershaves and choose one to 'put' 'on'.

Model language frequently throughout the activity and encourage the PWU AAC to direct you and choose what they have done.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – like, that, want, (colours), (body parts), more, off, on,

2WL – put on, want that, eye blue, lip red, take off, don't like, more on

3WL – put that on, blue on eyes, red on lips, take it off, don't like it, put hair up, brush my hair

Language Functions

Requesting – more, want more, want more on

Directing – paint, paint nails, paint nails pink

Commenting – like, like it, I like it

Rejecting – don't like, don't like it

Questioning – blue? Blue lips? Want blue lips?

Interjecting – wow!

Generalisation

If appropriate give pretend make overs to dolls / girl's worlds etc.

Many 'make-up' apps are available to practice doing make up or nail art.

Encourage PWU AAC to comment on their friend's style and looks.

Talk about images in magazines.

Photography

Equipment

- Camera
- Photo album (either paper or electronic)

Vocabulary

Core – I, me, you, take, it, again, look, good, bad, like, move, there, smile, what, down, up, say, at, see

Fringe – photo, camera, cheese! (people), (places)

What to do

Taking photographs and then looking at the pictures together can be a great opportunity to model language.

Encourage the PWU AAC to be the photographer. If they are unable to manipulate a camera they can set up the shot and we can facilitate the taking of the photograph. They can tell people to move 'up' or 'down', 'look at me', 'smile' or 'say cheese'. If a shot isn't great they can 'take it again'.

Looking through photographs is often hugely rewarding and enjoyable. You can model language as you 'look' at the images and encourage the PWU AAC to comment as well.

Sentence Ideas

1WL – up, down, take, help, again, like, look, smile

2WL – say cheese! Take again, look me, go up, go down, move up, like it

3WL – Take it again, look at me, look at you, I see you, I like that,

Language Functions

Requesting – smile, you smile, want you smile

Directing – look, look me, look at me

Commenting – good, look good, it look good

Questioning – What that?

Interjecting – cheese!

Labelling – (people), (places)

Generalisation

Try also taking videos which you can watch back and talk about what is happening.

Look at older photo albums to recall and talk about past events.

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