

Producing Words Not in the System



Strategic Transitional Independent:



Goal

Uses creative strategies to produce words not in the AAC system.



Preparation

- Determine a subject or topic of high interest to the individual. For example, dinosaurs, rock music, trains, etc.
- Once selected, generate a list of specific vocabulary for that topic. For example, if trains are a motivation find the terms for specific parts of a train or types of trains. Most likely, these terms will not be prestored in the AAC system and that is okay.
- Review core words, the keyboard, and fringe vocabulary within the individual's communication system before starting the session.



Materials

- Communication book or device.
- A list of specific terms not available on the AAC system that has to do with a motivating interest. Put each item on a card or keep it in list form.
- Supports if needed.



Tips for Success

- As you explore the device touch and say what you are doing aloud in front of the individual.
- Make sure to wait longer than you expect to see if the individual initiates a response.
- No matter what they select, reinforce or act on whatever they communicate.



Activity with Steps

Creative Taboo Game

- 1 Create a set of cards or a list with words that are not in the device and are motivating to the individual.
- 2 Introduce the skill. "Sometimes there are words we want to use that are not in our device. We can still try and find other ways to communicate the word we want to say. We can spell it, give a rhyming word 'It sounds like...', or even describe the word.
- 3 "Let's work on the first few together." If the topic you were using was a train topic, you could say "The first word is for the very last car on a train. Do you know what we call that?" If the individual answers, yes, let them try to find the word in their system. When they cannot, help them think of alternate ways to communicate it (e.g., typing, descriptions, word lists, whiteboard). If they do not know the word you can tell them, "The word was caboose. Let's see how we could tell someone that word using other things on your system."
- 4 "Here are some cards with words that are not in your device. We will work together to try to come up with a different way to say the word." Help the individual find different ways to say the words on the card.
- 5 As you continue with the words that are not preprogrammed, notice what strategies the individual uses most and comment on that. For example, "I like how you went to the keyboard and typed in the letters C and A. That would help me guess the word for sure."
- 6 Open the game to peers of the individual and all play together!



Supplemental Activities

Repetition with variety is very important in teaching AAC. Create practice opportunities that are not boring by keeping the skill constant and varying the activity. Use the following scenarios during the day to work on this goal using the same steps in the activity above. Send some of these home as practice activities:

- Play other description games and guessing games to practice using other words to describe a specific word or item.
- Practice with the keyboard to give 'hints' to listeners about what word you are thinking of that may not be already programmed in the device.



Measuring Success

- Improved quality of interactions with varied listeners.
- Increased number of attempts to participate in a conversation.
- Initiation of repair strategies to improve conversation.
- Increased advocacy for self and communication preferences.



Note

The individual does not have to 'master' this goal at 80% accuracy before you can move on to the next one. Even if they don't meet the goal consistently, or without cueing, the individual may still be ready to move forward to the next goal.

Parent/Caregiver Letter

Date: _____

Dear: _____

I'm sending this letter to let you know that we are working on communicating words that are not already saved in the system. You will play an important part in the learning process.

How? You can reinforce the skills we address here, at home.

- **Model targeted responses in a variety of activities and environments.** During your daily activities, touch the device yourself along with your speech. Modeling will feel more natural to you the more you do it.
- Complete the attached suggested activities to get more familiar with the system.

I will be sending more activities and suggestions home. Provide any feedback and contact me with any questions. The more you can practice, the better! I'm looking forward to hearing more about the fun you have working on this skill.

Sincerely,

Activities for carryover

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____