ROBUST VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION FOR CHILDREN WITH AAC NEEDS

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Overview of vocabulary instruction
Theoretical aspects of and current research on semantic development by children who use AAC
Case study of vocabulary instruction in a preschool classroom
Guiding principles in facilitating semantic knowledge by children who use AAC
Challenges and recommendations
How are new words taught?

Depends on age and who is doing the instruction

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

New Word

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

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

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

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

- **Representation**
- **Inter-modal translation**
- **Production**
- **Acquisition (Interaction) Contexts**
Pictures are NOT equivalent to words

- No conventions regarding standards of form - They refer/are taught by association
- Pictures are not segmentable
- Combinations are NOT rule-governed - no inflections, different word order.
SLOW
INTERMODAL TRANSLATION

- Asymmetry between input-output (Smith, 2006)
  - Spoken input
  - Graphic encoding
  - Spoken output
Mostly single symbol utterances ("nouners")

- word order differences
- omission of grammatical markers
- restricted range of communicative functions
- abundance of compensatory strategies: semantic and phonological
ACQUISITION CONTEXTS

- Restricted access to conditions that have proven facilitative:
  - locomotion and exploration
  - participation
  - spoken input
  - proficient aided language users
- Atypical role of comm. Partner
- Delayed onset of AAC
Children who use AAC have few opportunities for social interaction and authentic conversations.

The majority of communicative exchanges described in the AAC literature focus on children’s requesting or answering yes/no or close ended questions: planned communication opportunities.
Compounding this, the vocabulary available to AAC users consists mostly of nouns and often lack combinatorial power.
WHAT DO WE KNOW FROM AAC RESEARCH?

- Users of AAC are not encouraged to use grammatical morphemes

- When afforded with time, there is an increase in multisymbol utterances (Brekke & vonTetzchner, 2003; Solomon-Rice & Soto, 2011)
- Large body of work on what vocabulary should be selected *but not on how to teach it*.  
- Lack of guidelines on how to teach core vocabulary words to beginning users of AAC.
Intervention studies have focused on teaching the use of individual lexical items or two-symbol combinations on a communication aid in highly scripted situations (e.g., Harris & Reichle, 2004), play scenarios (Binger & Light, 2007) or shared book reading (e.g. Soto & Dukhovny, 2009)
None of these studies has examined the generalization of learned vocabulary to interactive discourse contexts such as conversations with naïve (i.e., blinded) listeners or conversations about novel topics.
When children are expected to learn and drill words only for highly-specific activities, their understanding of the words is based on a narrow context, and it is unlikely that the words will be generalized to other contexts.
The first words children learn include exemplars from almost all the major parts of speech from adult language (Lahey & Bloom, 1977; Tomasello, 2003):

- general nominals: cup, shoe, dog
- specific nominals: names of family members…
- action words: jump, run, eat
- personal-social words: bye-bye, thank you
- modifiers: cold, wet
- pronouns: mine
- function words: and, of
When grammatical markers are provided, word order matches environmental language (Nakamura et al., 1998), even with nonreaders (Koul, 2003)
CASE STUDY: PRE-K CLASSROOM
THE CHALLENGE

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

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

Developed with Special Educator and Autism Specialist, Lori Wise, M.Ed., from NSU-UM CARD
Focus Core Word Teaching

- Repeated reading of books
  - 10 shared reading lessons with a predictable format and structure
- Predictable chart writing activities
  - 10 shared writing lessons with predictable structure and format
- Typical classroom routines, like circle time, snack, & outside play
  - Activities tailored to the weekly core words
- Centers & work time
  - Activities tailored to the weekly core words
Teaching Core Words

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

**Pronouns**
I, you, it

**Verbs**
have, give, see

**Descriptors**
busy, good, little

**“Function Words”**
and, not, on

**Nouns**
boy, friend, hand

**Other**
away, here, what
Sample Core Word Board
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can help stop big again</th>
<th>away</th>
<th>my/mine come tell</th>
<th>hands</th>
<th>here first</th>
<th>head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you do like play write</td>
<td>rot</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>front</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go see read good messy</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>have sing bad</td>
<td></td>
<td>what</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Choosing Books

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

**BOW WOW Words:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>DAY 1</th>
<th>DAY 2</th>
<th>DAY 3</th>
<th>DAY 4</th>
<th>DAY 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Writing</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infusion Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arrival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circle Time</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work Time</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outside</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Snack</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goodbye</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tiger Talk Words:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>DAY 6</th>
<th>DAY 7</th>
<th>DAY 8</th>
<th>DAY 9</th>
<th>DAY 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Writing</td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infusion Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arrival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circle Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Centers</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Outside</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goodbye</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Shared Reading Lessons

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITY</td>
<td>MATERIALS YOU NEED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting the Stage</td>
<td>Introduce new core words, Review prior words</td>
<td>Word Cards, Word Card Board, Personal SGD's, Shared SGD's, Tiger Talk Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Ready to Read</td>
<td>Introduce book</td>
<td>Book, Tiger Talk Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow Up Activity</td>
<td>Core word practice (words from current + previous book)</td>
<td>Story toys, Personal SGD's, Shared SGD's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
WHO Poster

Zangari & Wise, 2011
WHAT Poster

First,

Next,

Last,

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Story Map: Book 8
The Lunch Box Surprise

The kids have food to EAT.

Sam is SAD. He has no food to EAT.

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
# Shared Writing Lessons

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

**LESSON 1**

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

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

**BEFORE WRITING**

Show the book to set the topic

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

Locate core words on SGD & review story core words (say & repeat)

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

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

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

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Predictable Chart

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
SAMPLE Shared Writing Lesson:
TELL ME CURRICULUM       Book 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting the Stage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials You Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5 minutes         | Review story core words (say & repeat)  
Review title      | Pocket chart  
Word/symbol cards |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials You Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 minutes        | Begin sentence dictation w/ 2 adults + 2  
children  
Read back sentences using SGDss  
Find an ‘d’ | Predicable chart with title & carrier phrase [“I LIKE to ___.”]  
Markers  
Individual SGDss |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Follow Up Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5 minutes          | Letter-sound song for ‘D’  
Letter Activity: Crayon Rub | Song Board  
Low tech SGDss with /d/ |
Sample: Book 2, Day 2

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

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

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

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

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

- Students participate in a Letter Activity.

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

My monster is big, Go away.
Jackson

My monster is loud. Go away.

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

Tanya
Infusion Activities

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

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

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

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

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Circle Time

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

• Monkey See / Monkey Do
  – Animal Action with Puppets
  – Balloon Bump
  – Blow Bubbles

• Froggie Find

Froggie Find

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Quick Quack Questions

• During Snack Time
• Questions that give practice with book-related concepts and/or additional practice on core words and Tiger Talk words.
Who has fruit in their snack? “I do” with chart of fruit/no fruit

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Vocabulary Sort

- Students are provided with pictures or objects of story-related concepts (e.g., animals and people).
- They are asked to sort the pictures into their appropriate categories. Two shallow boxes, labeled with pictures representing each concept, can be provided for the sort.

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Vocabulary Bingo

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Centers: Collage Building

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

Zangari & Wise, 2011
Home Extension Activities

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

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

Read. Talk. SHARE!

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

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

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

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

BOOK 2, WEEK 1

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

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

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

- can
- do
- first
- front
- help
- I
- it
- like
- read
- see
- sing
- tell
- what
- write
- you
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things We Can Say with These Powerful Words.</th>
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<tr>
<td>I can.</td>
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<td>You can.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You do.</td>
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<td>I help.</td>
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<td>I write.</td>
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<td>I see.</td>
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<td>I read.</td>
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<td>I sing.</td>
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<td>Write it.</td>
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<td>Read it.</td>
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<td>Sing it.</td>
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<td>Can I?</td>
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<td>Can you?</td>
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<td>I do it.</td>
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<td>I like it.</td>
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<td>I write it.</td>
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<td>I read it.</td>
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<td>I tell you.</td>
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<td>Do it first.</td>
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<td>Can you help?</td>
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<td>Can you see?</td>
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<td>Can you sing?</td>
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<td>Can you read?</td>
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<td>Can you write?</td>
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<td>Do you see?</td>
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<td>Do you see it?</td>
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<td>Do you like it?</td>
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<td>I can see you.</td>
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<td>I can tell you.</td>
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<td>I can help you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you like?</td>
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<td>What do you see?</td>
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All About CARS!

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

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

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

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

- It is not about lists. It is about EXPERIENCE and PARTICIPATION with true communicative responsibility.
- The process of early word learning changes in the course of development:
  - From expressing owns intentions to understanding others’
  - From highly referential to conversational and “storied”
PRIORITIES FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Design AAC systems that allow to formulate novel utterances (even in the absence of desired lexicon)
- Develop/adopt and implement a long range plan for building language through AAC
- Build a classroom communication environment that prioritizes linguistic expression
- Train communication partners to use appropriate language elicitation strategies
AIDED PARTNER SKILLS

- Increased Responsivity
- Expectant Delay
- Recasting
- Vocabulary Models
- Open-Ended Question Asking
- Aided AAC Modeling
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION