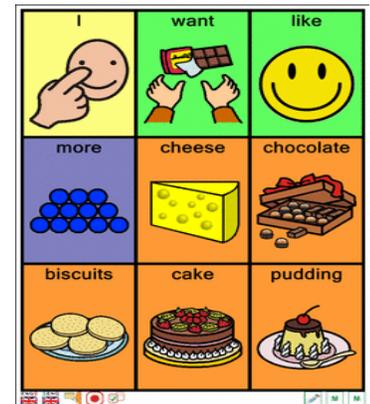
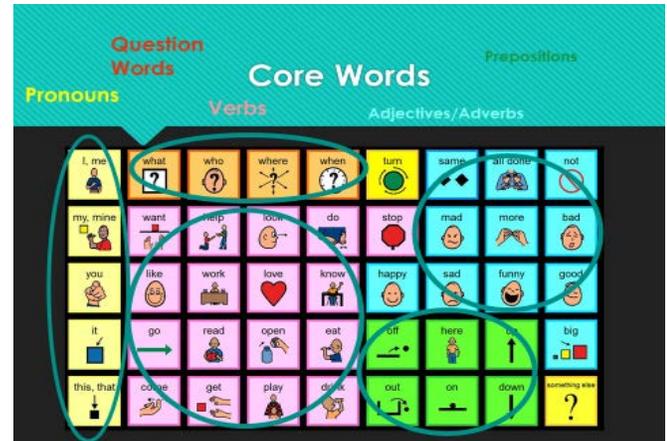


TAALC Communication Strategy #5: Use Core Words

Definition: Words represented by symbols and used frequently and flexibly across the day are more likely to be learned by a student. Core words (cite here) include verbs, adjectives/adverbs, and prepositions. Word examples include; go, stop, like, want, play, more. Nouns are used as 'fringe vocabulary' because they are unique to the user. For example: the core word "go" can be used with fringe to say "go to the gym", "go to lunch", "go to the bathroom"; similarly the core word "want" can be paired with other core words to say "want more", "want to eat", "want to play". Nouns (fringe) complete the sentence "I want to play music/ball/game". When pronouns are used with the flexible core words, single words become multiple word sentences with appropriate structure "I want more _____."



Implementation: Core words are any number of words arranged in an array. No-tech folders or dynamic display devices work well for core arrangements. The most important feature, however, is that the position of the word/symbol does not change. This feature reinforces

motor memory and speeds the efficiency with which the student can use the board. This place-holding feature also supports learners who use tactile symbols.



We used Boardmaker (Tobi-Dynavox) used in our example, but any symbol system can be used. The color codes are represent the type of word.

Black backgrounds are easier to see than white backgrounds. Fewer words may be displayed, but the size remains the same so that the position is maintained.



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Using Aided Language Modeling <insert link to ALM> , point to each symbol, emphasize the word, speak slowly, and insert pauses. See the video clip of a student using a deconstructed board.

Using a core word curriculum can create the link to literacy instruction by highlighting core words in books and other learning activities. For example, if the core word of the week is “Go”, then using books such as PD Eastman’s “Go, Dog. Go!”, songs such as “Wake me up before you Go Go...” and games that emphasize the word further reinforce it’s use.

Summary: Using core words increases the number of opportunities to communicate across the day, which in turn results in a higher level of word acquisition. It is flexible in terms of the format – low tech (core folders) to high tech (dynamic display devices). Core words can bridge communication with literacy by using books and activities that highlight the core words.

Resources:

Project Core <http://www.project-core.com/>

Tactile Connections – APH <https://www.aph.org/files/manuals/Tactile-Connections-HTML/>

PrAACtical AAC <https://practicalaac.org/tag/core-vocabulary/>

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