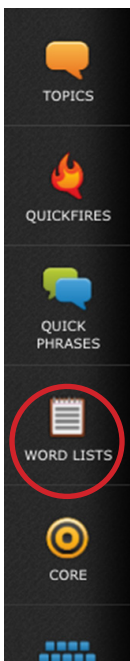


5 Ways to Use Word Lists to Teach New Vocabulary

Many students who use AAC have an external vocabulary (i.e., the words on the communication display or words that they can express) that does not truly reflect their internal vocabulary (i.e., the words in their head) (Smith, 1996). Students should be constantly exposed to new words and given the encouragement to explore and use these words during meaningful activities. Access to words and symbols can easily be provided through the use of “dictionary pages” on an AAC device. These pages can be used as a reference set for accessing more vocabulary, supporting the classroom curriculum and encouraging literacy learning.



On your DynaVox Compass, you may find that the Word Lists are a good place for young children to explore new words and a place for more seasoned communicators to find words needed to provide detail during typical conversations. Word Lists can be integrated into everyday educational and therapy activities and provide an excellent opportunity to teach new words and symbols. These pages contain single words that fit into categories such as food, drink, actions, things, transportation, etc. Use the tips and activities listed below to give your students structured, yet fun, opportunities to explore the Word Lists on their DynaVox Compass.

Tip 1: Learn about Word Lists.

Your DynaVox Compass comes with on-board videos that will teach you about the different communication tools available. Get up to speed with how Word Lists work and how to access them by watching a brief information video. Videos can also be found on myDynaVox.

Tip 2: Download lesson plans!

Go to myDynaVox, click on Resources and then click on Ideas for Therapy and Everyday Use. There you will find a collection of printable lesson plans created to help support successful use of AAC.

Tip 3: Have a scavenger hunt.

A scavenger hunt might be a fun way for your students to explore vocabulary. First, prepare a list of target words. Check to make sure that you know the location of the words prior to initiating the activity with the student. You may also need to program some of the target words if they are not already on the device. Present the words on flashcards or draw/write them on a white board. The student can then use their device to “hunt” for the presented items. You can also have the students use their words to describe each item.

Hint:

Find a magazine that might be of high interest to your student. Use stickers, Post-it flags or a marker to highlight the target items inside the magazine. As you move through the magazine, discuss each item and have the student look for them on their device.

Hint:

Include other students in the fun and organize a school-wide scavenger hunt! Pair the student who uses AAC with a typically developing peer and have them work together to find items around the school. Work on vocabulary development and social skills at the same time!

Tip 4: Create a Mad Lib.

Mad Libs are silly and sometimes ridiculous fill-in-the-blank stories created by filling in the parts of speech to complete the story. Combine Word Lists with Core to provide access to more vocabulary.

There are many on-line resources available for mad libs. Use the link below to view sample Mad Libs.

http://www.teach-nology.com/worksheets/language_arts/madlibs/

Tip 5: Play a category game.

Use the DynaVox Compass Editing Software and print game cards and materials. By printing out the individual pages of vocabulary and cutting them out – you have instant game cards that can be used to play the following games:

Memory game

Hint:

You will need to print two copies of the vocabulary so that you will have pairs of cards for this game. In the beginning, start with only two categories so that the student gets the hang of the game.

Alphabet game

(similar to Hasbro Scattergories game)

Hint:

Print the main category page. Have the student choose a category and choose a letter. Require to student to find a word in the chosen category that starts with a specific letter (e.g., Find an animal that starts with the letter “m”).

What’s in the bag?

Hint:

Place all of the vocabulary cards into a bag or basket. Have each student pull out one card and find the item on their device.

Go Fish

Hint:

You will need to print two copies of the vocabulary so that you will have pairs of cards for this game.

Comparisons

Hint:

Present 3 to 4 vocabulary items (2-3 from the same category; 1 that is not) and discuss which items go together and which item doesn’t belong, and why.

The primary purpose of any of these activities is to simply give students who use AAC more opportunities to explore the vocabulary in their system and to give time to practice skills in a fun and meaningful environment.