

"Core Word of the Week" Words and Activities

Core Vocabulary

Core vocabulary refers to the small number of words that make up >70-90% of what we say on a daily basis. These words are relevant across contexts and can have many meanings. Parents and therapists tasked with selecting vocabulary for a beginning communicator often turn to core vocabulary lists, knowing that these words are more universally relevant than specific context-dependent nouns. The LAMP approach emphasizes the use of core vocabulary along with fringe vocabulary that is important to the individual. Core words can be taught and reinforced in a variety of activities and allow for quick and easy 2-word combinations. Core vocabulary is powerful because it allows communicators to express a wide variety of concepts with a very small number of words. The ability to produce core words aids in the auditory processing of those core words when listening to others.

Some examples of core vocabulary include: stop, go, get, more, turn, mine, on, off, up, down, that. Even with just these 11 words, a beginning communicator can take control of his or her environment, have his or her needs met and interact socially with friends and family. This beginning communicator can even use these few words to make phrases: "get that," "go up," "stop that," "turn that up," "turn that off," "go more," "that mine," "get that down."

This documents provides some activity suggestions for teaching core words to emergent communicators. There is no particular order suggested for presentation. It may be helpful to focus on one or two words per week or session but it's important to always follow the learner's lead when introducing vocabulary. The activity needs to be engaging and fun in order for learning to generalize. A visual screen shot illustrating the motor movement to say each targeted core word is provided next to each core word to guide modeling of the motor pattern. Printable screen shots are available after the activities.

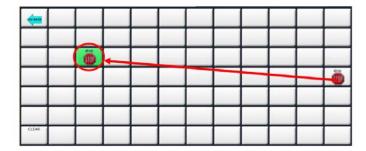
Index

Core Vocabulary

Core Word Activities

Stop	3, 60	Swing	34
Go	4, 61	Music	35
Turn	5, 62	Cars	36
Get	6, 63	Coloring	37
Up & Down	7, 64, 65	Trampoline	38
Open & Close	8, 66, 67	Snack	39
On	9, 68	Bubbles	40
In	10, 69	Blocks	41
Off	11, 70	Chasing	42
Make	12, 71	Cooking	43
Fast & Slow	13, 72, 73	Ball	44
Play	14, 74	Balloons	45
Push	15, 75	Animals	46
Do	16, 76	Marbles	47
Say	17, 77	Play-Doh	48
Put	18, 78	Dress up	49
Like	19, 79	Tops	50
That	20, 80	Sensory bins	51
Interjections	21	Videos	52
Colors	22	Riding in cars	53
Feelings	23	Board games	54
Have	24, 81	Trick-or-Treat	55
Give	25, 82	Reading	56
Look	26, 83	Videogames	57
Move	27, 84	Mealtimes	58
Big & Little	28, 85, 86	Silly Social Play	59
My/Mine	29, 87, 88		
More	30, 89		
Need	31, 90		
Read	32, 91		
Want	33, 92		

Stop



Few words in our language are as powerful as the word "stop." Above all other linguistic functions, this word clearly expresses protest. Many children with autism are without a functional, socially appropriate means of expressing protest and turn to aggression and self-injurious behaviors to object to people, occurrences and objects in their immediate environment.

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

"Stop" is a great word for children to use to request that an activity be over. Early stages of AAC intervention are often most successful while following a child's lead, so when the child appears to be ready discontinue an activity, have them request to "stop" their current activity before moving on.

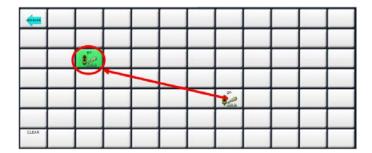
Some children with autism are very interested in transportation. When traveling in the car, or looking out a window, cars, buses, trucks and trains are great topics for children to comment on using the word "stop."

Many children love to be able to control their environment and the behavior of others. Engage your child 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 behavior of others may be a great way to involve a family pet or therapy dog.

STOP & GO: "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 therapy activities, allow the child to direct music and movement activities using "stop" and "go." Other things that can both "stop" and "go" are music, videos, fans and moving toys.

STOP THAT/STOP IT: "That" and "it" are great words for communicators at the 2-word level to pair when protesting.

Go



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 (bouncing on a ball, swinging, jumping on a trampoline, running). The word "go" also comes with a built-in socially relevant verbal prompt: "ready... set...."

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

Many children enjoy being able to control the behavior of other people. The word "go" can empower a child to direct his peers to "go" during dancing/movement games, tell an adult to do a somersault, tap dance or make silly faces. The child using the device can direct music to "go" during a game of musical chairs or to initiate a relay race.

Remember that core words are relevant for many communicative functions! Let a child protest your involvement in an activity by telling you to "go" away or allow him or her to comment on someone else's activity (if someone walks out of the room, he/she may say "go").

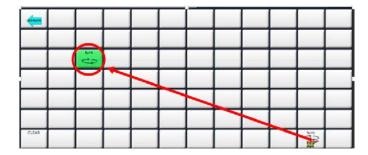
COME & GO – Sneak up or run up to the child when he/she says "come," then leave when he/she says "go."

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 preschool toys have slides, ramps and chutes for action figures, cars and balls to "go up" and "go down."

Be creative! Remember to follow the child's lead and help him/her find appropriate vocabulary to request, comment, protest and direct.

Turn



Look up "turn" in the dictionary and you may find over 100 different uses!

"Turn" is a great word to talk about any activity or object that rotates or spins. Engage your child in play with spinning toys by making them "turn" and stop.

Engage in fun dancing activities in the classroom and let the child direct students or teachers to "turn" while dancing. Many children 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. Allow your child to object to songs or shows that he or she doesn't like by saying "turn that off" asking to "turn down" the volume.

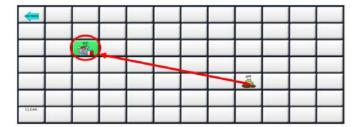
Have some fun gently sabotaging your child's routine by "turning" their clothes inside out, holding a book backwards or offering them a cup upside down. Help them problem-solve these silly situations and tell you to "turn" them. Other problem-solving activities can involve a child directing you to "turn" 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 for kids to use to control movement activities. Pull your child on 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.

Allow your child 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" in school and intervention programs is for turn-taking during game play. This is a great opportunity for your child to learn pronouns like "my," "your," "his" and "her," so be sure that your child's device allows him or her the opportunity to combine pronouns with "turn," instead of having one button say "my turn" or "your turn."

Get



The word "get" pairs nicely with nouns, pronouns and prepositions for so many different communicative functions. Children can say phrases like: "get up," "get in," "get that," "get me," "get wet," "get on" "get mom," and "get silly" in many fun activities.

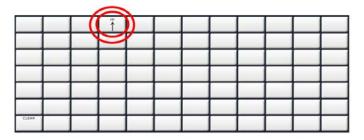
A child who loves to be chased and tickled may very quickly learn to use the 2-word combination "get me" to initiate rough and tumble play. After catching and tickling your child, continue teaching pronouns by saying "I got you" while modeling on his/her device. During recess or group play dates, encourage your child to initiate chasing games to "get" his/her peers.

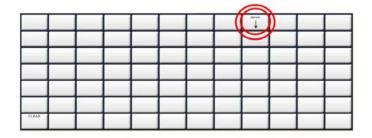
"Get" can be a powerful word for a child to use to request items that are out of sight or out of reach. Teach your child to use "get it" or "get that" and he or she can direct you retrieve preferred toys or food items. During classroom routines, model the use of "get" when directing children to prepare for activities (e.g., "get" your books, "get" your coats). We can use "get" to access people as well; a child can ask an adult to "get mom" or "get" a peer or sibling.

Pair "get" with prepositions during movement play. Try creating an obstacle course in which your child 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 your child direct you or his/her 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.

The word "get" can be used to mean "become." Have fun talking about and learning emotions and basic concepts by modeling and prompting phrases like "get happy," "get tired," "get silly" or "get wet."

Up & Down





The prepositions "up" and "down" have meanings beyond simple directions. We can "get up," "clean up," "stay up," "blow up," "fall down," "lie down," "sit down" and "slow down."

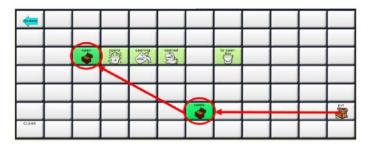
Gently sabotage music, TV and computer activities by adjusting the sound volume. Have your child direct you to turn it "up" or "down." Lights can also be turned "up" and "down." A child who can ask for undesired sounds to be turned "down" or for lights to be turned "up" is empowered to modify his/her environment to a more comfortable sensory level.

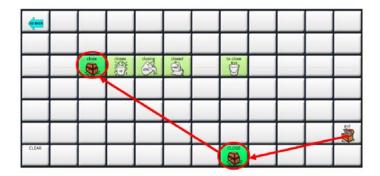
Let a child ask you to retrieve specific toys from a shelf by asking for them to be put "down," then when the child is done playing, you can put the toys "up."

"Up" and "down" are great words to use when doing gross motor activities. Talk about going "up" and "down" stairs, jumping "up" and "down" or even rolling a barrel or a ball "up" and "down" a large wedge or hill. A child can asked to be picked "up" or put "down." Many songs and word plays use the words "up" and "down." Let your child fill-in-the-blanks for Ring-Around-the-Rosy, Itsy Bitsy Spider, and the Wheels on the Bus. Help your child use prepositions to ask to be picked "up" and put "down" and describe falling "down" and getting "up."

Many of your child's favorite activities may easily use the words "up" and "down:" car race toys, videos of rollercoasters, dollhouses with stairs, building blocks/Legos, or blowing bubbles.

Open & Close





Opposites "open" and "close" are great words to target in a variety of activities. We can "open" and "close" so many things in our environment: eyes, toys, boxes, drawers, containers, laptops, windows, window shades/blinds, refrigerators, books, mailboxes, envelopes, new toys, presents, drawers, hands, water bottles, folders, purses, nail polish, gates, computer programs, etc! A ride in the car is a great opportunity to use the words "open" and "close." You and your child can talk about "opening" and "closing" the car doors, windows, glove compartments and even the AC vents.

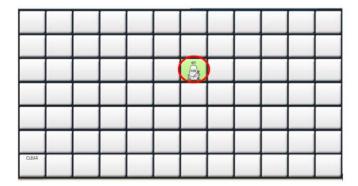
Try working on "open" during mealtimes as an alternative way to request a favorite food; hand your child his/her favorite food in a difficult-to-open container and prompt them to direct you to open it. Have your child participate in food preparation or clean-up by having them "open" and "close" the refrigerator, cupboards, pantry or dishwasher. Model the word "open" when using a can opener and "close" when sealing food items.

Use computer-based activities to teach these words by "opening" and "closing" a laptop, CD-ROM drive, game jewel cases and browser windows. Favorite games or computer accessories that are kept in a drawer or file can be accessed using the word "open."

Gently sabotage your child's routines by placing favorite toys inside of locked drawers or difficult-to-open containers (e.g., large pretzel jars or canning jars with a metal clamp) and prompt them to direct you to "open" it. Leave a normally "closed" door "open" and have your child direct you to "close" it.

Have fun making silly faces by letting your child direct you to "open" and "close" your eyes, nose and mouth.

On



The word "on" is relevant in so many contexts: traveling ("on" a bus), mealtimes (putting food "on" a plate), playing ("on" the computer) and dressing (putting "on" clothes). We use the word "on" frequently to discuss locations. Allow your child to direct you or peers to sit "on" a chair, put something "on" a table or shelf or stand "on" a stool. Your child could take a turn giving directions during a game of Twister (e.g., "foot on red").

Allow your child to direct you or make choices about art activities: color "on" the paper, put glitter "on" the page, and paint "on" the canvas.

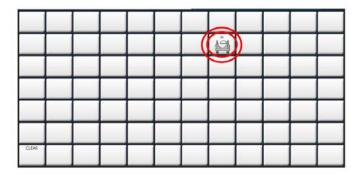
The word "on" can be used to describe traveling – we can ride "on" a bus, "on" a train, "on" an airplane, "on" a bike, "on" a horse or even "on" someone's shoulders.

Let your child help set 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" your child'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.

Many things in your child's environment have on/off switches: computers, lights, toys, flashlights, kitchen appliances, TVs, radios, cars, fans, water faucets. Use these motivating and routine activities to teach the word "on." As your child's language grows, add some more core words to say "turn it on."

ln



"In" is another frequently-used preposition that can be used in so many contexts. We can go "in" a room, put our foot "in" our shoe, pour juice "in" a cup, crawl "in" a tunnel, put a CD "in" a CD player, and get "in" bed.

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 therapy room.

While getting dressed, you can play a silly game while learning about body parts; put your child'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 child's arm "in" pants, leg "in" a shirt and even head "in" underwear!

During clean-up time, "in" is a very frequently used word. Have your child 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 closet.

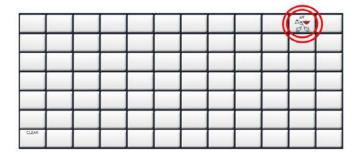
Let your child participate at mealtimes by helping you pour juice "in" the cup or pour cereal "in" the bowl. While preparing for school, your child can help pack his/her lunch or snack by putting food items "in" his/her lunchbox.

In your OT gross motor/sensory gym, your child can ask to get "in" a tunnel, "in" a barrel or even "in" a net swing. Many OT spaces and preschools have sensory bins full of sand, rice or beans that you can hide toys "in." Direct your child to put toys or letters "in" the bins, then put his/her hands "in" to find them again.

Many of your child's favorite leisure and therapeutic activities can incorporate the word "in." Have your child request his/her favorite CD or DVD to be put "in" the player, put pieces "in" a puzzle and shapes "in" the shape sorter. Many preschool toys are manipulated by putting a ball, car or figure "in" the toy.

Use "in" during evening routines; talk to your child about getting "in" the bath, putting his/her toothbrush "in" his/her mouth, spitting "in" the sink and finally getting "in" bed.

Off



The preposition "off" can be applied in so many settings and activities. Your child can modify his/her environment by asking for bright lights or loud noises to be turned "off," ask for help getting his/her coat "off," tell you to jump "off" a step or describe taking "off" a lid.

During cleaning routines, you and your child can take items "off" the table, sweep "off" the floor and clean "off" or wipe "off" the tables.

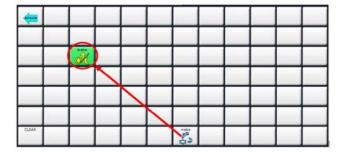
When arriving at school, model using the word "off" while directing your child to take "off" his/her coat and backpack. At the end of the day, talk about getting undressed by describing taking "off" socks, shoes, pants and shirts. After dress-up games or cold winter days, there are even more things to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

Your child can ask for help access preferred foods, drinks or toys by asking for a lid to be taken "off" or by asking for items to be taken "off" a high shelf.

Many items and activities in your child's daily life can be turned "off." Have your child direct you or peers to turn "off" the water, 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 child who is easily overwhelmed by sensory stimuli; if your child 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.

"Off" is a relevant word in many leisure and therapy activities. We can get "off" a bike, swing or horse. Because movement can be motivating to many children, we can talk about jumping "off" a step or falling "off" the bed. Wind-up toys can also fall or jump "off" surfaces.

Make



The word "make" is one of the most versatile core words in our vocabulary. We can "make" money, "make" noise, "make" friends, "make" a phone call, "make" faces, "make" a phone call and "make" people laugh. "Make" can mean to create, to cause and to control and it is used in many common idioms. "

The word "make" is commonly used in the kitchen. Involve your child when it is time to "make" meals. Your child may enjoy getting to "make" Kool-Aid, "make" cookies, "make" pizza or "make" macaroni and cheese.

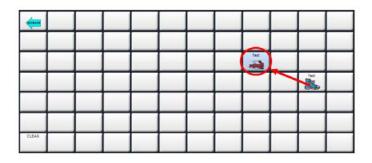
Many children enjoy playing with Play-Doh and "making" different shapes and objects. Describe the shapes you "make" with cookie cutters and let your child direct you to "make" familiar objects. Expand on these utterances with color vocabulary (e.g., "make a yellow ball" or "make a blue star").

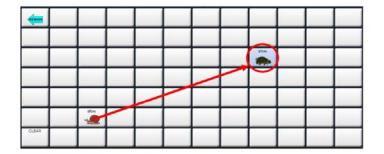
Because the word "make" can mean "create," craft activities are great opportunities to teach and use this word. We can "make" pictures, "make" dots, "make" stripes, "make" circles and "make" sculptures.

In music class or therapy, encourage your child to "make" noise with instruments or to "make" it loud and "make" it quiet.

"Make" can be used to mean "cause" or "control." Your child can direct you to control objects or activities in his/her environment; when playing with a moving toy, he/she can ask you to "make" it stop or "make" it go.

Fast & Slow





The words "fast" and "slow" can describe the speed of movement, music, visual stimuli and sensory stimuli. We can "go fast," "slow down," "swing fast," "sing slow," "jump fast" and "walk slow." Allow your child to control the speed of preferred and daily activities using these common adjectives.

"Fast" and "slow" very commonly describe movement and since many children with autism are motivated by movement, these words are very relevant. Allow your child to set the pace of sensory activities in the OT gym while swinging, jumping, rolling in a barrel, running, crossing balance beams, riding bikes and climbing. Teach the meanings of "fast" and "slow" by having your child complete an obstacle course at different speeds.

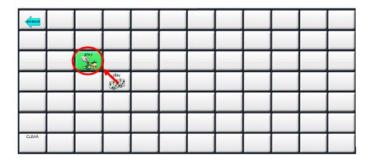
Music class or music therapy is another great environment for your child to learn about "fast" and "slow." Alternate playing instruments or singing "fast" and "slow" and allow your child to make choices about how they would like you to sing routine songs. Your child may also control the speed at which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

Some video and audio equipment allows for varying speeds. Your child 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."

Have fun learning about "fast" and "slow" while at the park. Alternate walking "slow" and running "fast" and allow your child to control their speed on the playground equipment by asking you to push them "fast" or "slow" on the swing.

Allow your child to control your actions during daily activities at home. Your child may direct you to drink "fast" at dinner, wash his/her back "slow" during bath time and even read "fast."

Play



"Play" is a very important word to children – "playing" is their occupation. Allow your child to "play" and learn at the same time by using this core word. Your child 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 children are motivated by listening to music or watching videos. These are great opportunities to teach the word "play." Your child can request to "play" music or "play" a video, then he /she may direct you to "push play" on the CD or DVD player. Children can even request specific videos by saying "play that," or "play Dora," or request a favorite track on a CD by saying "play 16." Listening to music in the car or watching videos on the internet are other great opportunities to use "play."

"Play" is a great word to use when selecting toys and games. Your child can make general requests to "play" with toys in his/her environment or can combine the word with favorite toys, like "play Elmo" or "play phone." Use "play" to talk about specific sports and gross motor games. Teach your child use "play" when describing pretend "play" activities as well: "play house," "play school," etc.

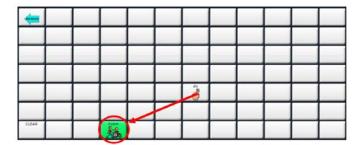
The word "play" can also help your child express where or with whom he/she would like to play. When you and your child are transitioning to another space to "play," consider using this word instead of "go" on occasions (e.g., "let's 'play' in OT" or "it's time to 'play' outside"). Because facilitating social communication is an important role in the education of children with autism, pair "play" with pronouns and names.

Teach your child to initiate with peers by saying "play with me." Your child may ask to play with specific people – "play with Miss Kellie" or "play with Elyse."

Many adults direct children to take a break from work by saying "go play." Model these words on your child's device and teach them to request a break by asking to "play."

Children 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" cool.

Push



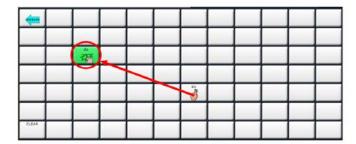
The word "push" has many applications for use in everyday life, especially in motivating movement activities. We can "push" a button, "push" someone on a swing, "push" open a door, "push" toy cars, "push" off of something and even "push" our luck!

"Push" is a very relevant word for use in movement activities. Take advantage of motivating activities in the OT sensory/motor space or on the playground by teaching your child to say "push me" on the swing or at the top of the slide. Your child may enjoy being rolled in a barrel – another great opportunity for him/her to say "push me." While playing outside, your child could ask to be "pushed" on his/her bike, scooter, wagon or ride-on cars. Your child may also enjoy "pushing" a toy wheelbarrow or lawn mower.

"Push" is also a great word for your child to use when directing an adult to manipulate computers or TV/music controls. Your child can ask you to "push" icons on the computer to access preferred games. Your child may also direct you to "push play" or "push stop" on DVD or music controls.

Many preschool toys have buttons or levers to "push." Take these opportunities to teach the word push and even incorporate some early academic vocabulary, e.g., "push green" or "push the circle." Playing with toy cars is great opportunity to teach the word "push" in two-three word combinations. Your child can direct you where to "push" a car (e.g., "push up," "push off," "push over").

Do



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 to direct other people's behavior, ask questions, describe actions and much more.

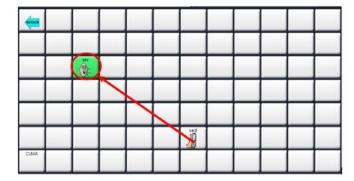
The word "do" is an easy word a child can use in place of other verbs he/she hasn't learned. Let your child direct you or his/her peers to "do" different activities. When it is another child's turn to perform a gross motor or fine motor task, let your student say "do it" or "you do it."

Many children enjoy having others imitate their behavior. 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.

Let your child use the word "do" to ask for help. When dressing, manipulating toys or opening food containers, your child can direct you to "do" it.

You can also teach "don't" at the same time. Play a modified game of Simon Says: "do jump" or "don't sing."

Say



While "say" is one of the most common words for adults to use during language intervention, it is also one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

The popularity of talking and voice-morphing apps on smart phones has let the word "say" become very motivating to many children. Let your child direct you to "say" their name or a silly word that can be repeated by characters on the app.

Acting like parents, doctors and teachers is a common theme in pretend play. Help your student direct you, peers or even toys to "say aah," "say my turn" and "say please," while acting out others' roles.

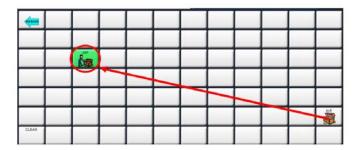
When playing with puppets, allow your child to direct the puppet in what to "say."

Many children are interested in animals and the sounds that they make. Model phrases like "sheep say baa." Remember, many devices have animal sounds preprogrammed.

Let your child play director during photo shoots and tell others to "say" cheese.

Don't forget to let your child protest by using a phrase like "don't say that," or "don't say it."

Put



"Put" is another word that is often associated with giving children directions, but is also one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

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 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 child's attention. Model phrases like "put it on my arm/leg/toe."

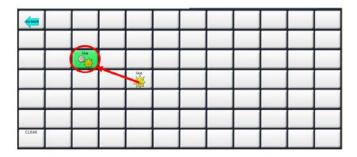
When cleaning up a bedroom, classroom or therapy space, model the word "put" when returning items to their proper location using phrases like "put it up," "put it there" or "put it in."

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.

Think of other activities to pair "put" with other core words:

- Put in
- Put on
- Put there
- Put it here
- Put more in
- Put some on
- Put that up
- Put it away

Like

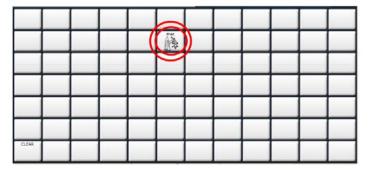


"Like" all core words, the word "like" can be used in any setting. We can "like" or not "like" objects, activities and people and can act "like" different things too! Use and model phrases like "I like that" or questions like "do you like it?" while engaging in fun novel activities

Mealtimes are a common time to discuss preferences of foods and drinks. Let your child comment on things he/she does and doesn't "like."

"Like" is also often used to describe similarities. Have your child to direct you or his/her peers to act "like" different animals.

That



The word "that" is on core word lists for toddlers, preschoolers and adults. Not only is it one of the most frequent words in our vocabulary, it can be one of the most powerful.

While many children learn specific noun labels (or make up words of their own) for their favorite objects and toys, there is not always an icon available or known to the child for everything in their environment. Help your child 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 children 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 your child'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 your child 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 child 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."

Interjections



"Uh-oh!" "Ouch!" "Yum!" "Wow!" "Yuck!" "Okay!" "Oops!" "Hi!" "Cool!" "Please!" "All gone!" "Yikes!" "Oh!" "All done!" These words and phrases are interjections that are frequently used by beginning communicators and their communication partners. Interjections are words that pop up in conversation and are easily worked into everyday activities in any context.

Here are some of the first developing interjections:

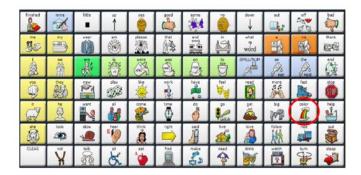
Okay Yuck Sure
Ouch Sorry All done
Please Awesome Oops
Yum Cool Hi
Oh Yikes Goodbye

All gone Hello Thanks

Fine Excuse me You're welcome

Model, use and teach these words to add natural comments during everyday activities!

Colors



"I want the blue one!" "Purple, please!" "It's brown!" "No, not yellow!" "Get the green one!" "Is it pink?" "I spy something orange!" "Left hand on red!"

Colors are some of the first developing descriptive terms and can be used to describe almost anything.

Color words can be used to describe the physical appearance of almost anything. When teaching colors, it is easy to keep it fun and not just rely on drilling ("What color?").

Let your child make choices about favorite snacks (e.g., fruit snacks, colored goldfish, M&Ms), toys (e.g., blocks, balls, cars), art supplies, Play-Doh, stickers or clothes.

Play games like Twister, Candy Land or I Spy that emphasize using colors in fun ways.

We talk and model language for our children all day. Remember to add color descriptors and model these words.

Feelings



"Be happy!" "Get mad!" "Don't be sad!" "I got sick!" "Bored!" "Are you scared?" "I'm excited!" "I feel nervous!" "You look crazy!" Emotions are some of the most powerful concepts our students can learn.

Children can learn to express their emotions or feelings in any context. The ability to understand and label an emotion is often difficult for children with autism.

It is very difficult to teach emotions out of context in a way that will generalize, so label the emotions you, your child and other people are experiencing. For example, if your child's friend or sibling is crying, model the word "sad." Emotions on children's programming is often exaggerated and may be easier to interpret than real life. Talk about and model different emotions while watching TV.

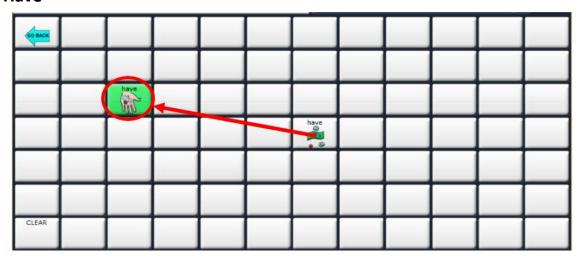
Work emotions into verbal routines you might already have like "I'm hungry; let's eat" or "You look sleepy; it's time for bed."

Acting out different emotions and feelings can be a fun way to engage your child. Let him/her tell you act "scared," or "crazy."

Нарру	Scared	Crazy	Proud
Sad	Hurt	Disappointed	Grouchy
Excited	Sick	Shy	Embarrassed
Bored	Frustrated	Angry	Lonely
Mad	Nervous	Worried	Tired
Hungry	Thirsty	Sleepy	Silly

Emotions pair easily with core vocabulary that your child may already know. Model 2-word phrases for your child using emotions and core words like pronouns, "feel," "be," "look," or "get."

Have



"What do you have?" "I have a cold!" "Let's have lunch!" "I'm having fun!" "We have a dog!" "Have him come here!" The word "have" has so many different meanings and is one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

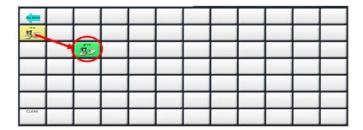
The word "have" is commonly used to express possession. Children often report on things that they have found. Set up games and situations in which your child can acquire objects (e.g., pulling items out of a bag, or going on a scavenger hunt) and report what they "have." Let children have fun keeping his/her object a secret and letting your student ask "What do you have?"

We often use the word "have" to describe our physical features. Look in the mirror with your child and compare your features. Model phrases like "I have blue eyes," or "You have short hair."

The word "have" can easily be used at mealtimes. Tell your child when it's time to "have" snack or lunch. Talk about the different foods you are "having" and let your child request specific items by saying "Have cookies?" or "Can I have an apple?" (depending on his/her current language level).

We often use the word "have" to express internal feelings. Model and encourage the use of phrases like "Have fun" or "I have a cold."

Give



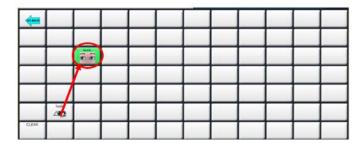
"Give me that!" "Give it back!" "Give me a hug!" "Don't give up!" The word "give" can be used in many different ways and is one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

"Give" most frequently is used as a request or demand for an exchange. When you are holding something that your child desires, let him or her use the word "give" in addition to or instead of using the object name. This word can be very powerful for a student who does not have a large vocabulary as they can say "give me" or "give it" when they haven't learned labels for all of their preferred objects.

"Give" is also frequently used to request or demand an exchange of affection or physical contact. We often say "give me a hug," "give me a kiss," or "give me a backrub." Model and encourage phrases like this when interacting with your child.

Many common idioms use the word "give." Model and use phrases like "don't give up," "give me a break," "give me a hand" or "give in" when appropriate.

Look



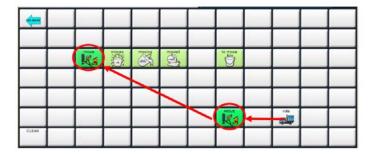
"Look at that!" "Look at me!" "That looks fun!" "You look silly!" "Will you look for it?" The word "look" can be used to draw attention or comment on appearances in many different contexts and is one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

"Look" is a great word for adults and children to use when directing attention to an object, person or event. Model this word while pointing to novel things or events in your environment. This is a great word to use when attempting to elicit joint attention with your child.

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 scavenger hunt. Let your child hide items for you and direct you to "look for" things.

We often use the word "look" to comment on appearances. Model and teach this word during fun dress-up activities (e.g., "You look pretty," "I look scary," etc.). Let your child direct you to "look" and act like different feelings or emotions (e.g., "Look sad," "Look sleepy," etc.).

Move



"Don't move that!" "Move over!" "It's your move!" The word "move" can be used in many different contexts and is one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

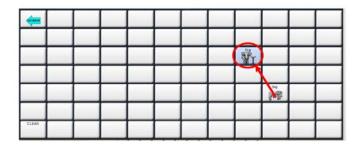
The word "move" is frequently used by children and adults to direct someone to reposition themselves. Model and use phrases like "move over," "move there," "move closer" and "move away." Engage in fun movement activities by allowing your child to direct you or his/her peers around the room by telling to "move" different places.

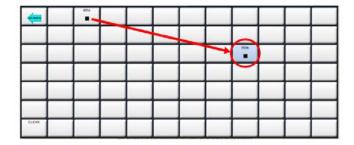
Movement is often associated with dancing. Some popular dance songs like "I like to move it, move it!" have been adapted to be kid-friendly. Let your kids "Bust a move" by describing which body parts to move (e.g., "move your legs," "move your arms").

Kids often use the word "move" during game play to direct someone to take their turn. Model phrases like "move your piece," or "it's your move."

The word "move" is also commonly used to describe moving objects. Gently sabotage your child's environment by placing large items in the way of desired objects or activities. Let your child ask you to "move" the impeding object.

Big/Little





"So big!" "I want the little one!" "Little bubbles!" "Big dog!" The descriptive words "big" and "little" are some of the first to develop in a child's speech and are some of the most frequently used.

The words "big" and "little" can be used to describe the size of almost anything in a child's environment. Many children play a "so big!" game with their parents. This is a great time to model this vocabulary word on a communication device.

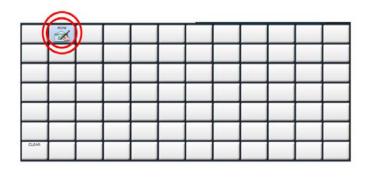
Balls, bubbles, balloons, cars, dolls, books and other toys all come in many different sizes. Your child may have a preference of a larger or a smaller size. While playing with your child, let him or her make choices between the "big" ones and the "little" ones.

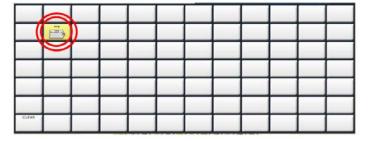
Many playgrounds have varying sizes of equipment. Model the words "big" and "little" while sending your child through an obstacle course (e.g., "go down the big slide, then under the little bridge).

Snack time is another great opportunity to teach the words "big" and "little." Give your child the option of big and little cups, fruits or even chairs. Try breaking a cookie 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."

Mine/My



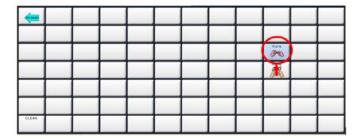


Along with "no," these are two of the most frequently used words by toddlers. Because "mine" indicates possession, most children begin using these words to comment that something belongs to them or to dissuade someone from taking their belonging. While sometimes the use of "my..." or "mine" sounds selfish, developing a sense of ownership is a precursor to learning to share. Also, being able to communicate that sense of ownership may reduce the tendency to express it in a negative manner such as grabbing or crying.

Teach "mine" my modeling the word while picking up and playing with a preferred toy or eating a food. Encourage the learner to say "mine" on their device and hand them the item. You can repeat this several times unless the learner becomes very agitated in losing the item they just claimed. Or take a second item and encourage them to say "mine" again to obtain it.

"My" works well in a two-word phrase. Take turns in a fun activity and encourage the learner to say "My" turn. Encourage your child to protest when a peer takes his/her belongings. Try teaching phrases like, "it's my toy," "my food," or "my toy." Be silly and let the child tell you where to put a sticker, "my nose" or "my hand."

More

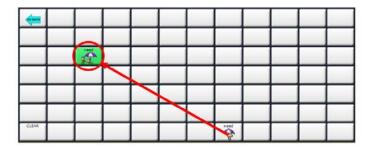


"More crackers!" "I want more!" "Get more!" "Let's do some more!" The instruction of the word "more" is often debated in early education, however when instructed correctly, it can be a very powerful and useful word. This word also tops high frequency vocabulary lists for toddlers and for preschoolers.

In a given activity, the word "more" can be used to request "more" of almost anything. After requesting to swing, eat crackers, watch TV, drink juice, bounce on a ball, etc., your child can request to continue the activity or get more of a desired item by simply saying "more." He can say "more" to direct you to do more of an activity; to sing "more," to dance "more," to pour out "more" milk, etc.

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.

Need



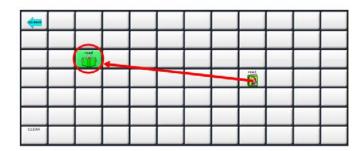
"I need to go!" "I need more!" "What do you need?" "I need that!" The word "need" can be used in any setting and is one of the most frequently used words by preschoolers.

The word "need" is often used to request something with an increased sense of urgency. Many children (and adults) tend to exaggerate the urgency of a desire by using this word (e.g., "I need candy" or "I need pizza").

We can teach the meaning of the word "need" without depriving our students of their basic needs. Try gently sabotaging the environment by giving your child soup with no spoon to elicit "I need a spoon" or putting them in the bathtub with no water to elicit "I need water."

The word "need" can be used to comment on items that are missing or lacking. Try teaching this concept when playing with toys like Mr. Potato Head or dolls. Model phrases like "he needs a nose" or "she needs a dress."

Read



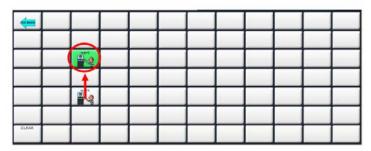
"Read to me!" "Let's read!" "Did you read it?" Text is everywhere in our environment, so the word "read" can be used in any context.

Many children are very motivated to read and be read to. In addition to reading books, talk to your child about reading on computers, e-books and magazines.

While your child 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."

Let your child request books or magazines by using the word "read." If he/she is at the phrase level, encourage combining the word "read" with objects (e.g., book, magazine, sign) and pronouns (e.g., I, you).

Want



"I want that!" "Want it?" "I want to go!" "Want more!" The word "want" is one of the most common words used to express desire. This word also tops high frequency vocabulary lists for toddlers and for preschoolers.

The word "want" can be one of the most powerful words for a beginning communicator. While a child's vocabulary is developing, teach him/her to use a point gesture so that he/she can pair the word "want" with a point to request objects in the environment for which he/she has 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 child 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 your child 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 child 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.

Core Word Activities

Swing

Many children are very motivated by movement – especially on the swing whether your child enjoys swinging at the playground or in the occupational therapy sensory/motor space.

1-word level:

Go – use this word to encourage your child to request being pushed on the swing. Remember that it has a great built in verbal prompt: "Ready, set..."

Stop – model this word when you stop the swing, and allow your child to tell you that he/she is done with the swing by saying "stop."

Turn – many children enjoy spinning on the swing. Allow him/her to request the swing to "turn." Fast/Slow – encourage the use of these words when allowing your child to request the speed at which he/she is being swung.

2-word level:

Get on — before initiating movement, you may model this phrase to teach the preposition "on." Get off — gently sabotage your child's routine by getting on the swing and prompting them to tell you to "get off!"

Push me – this phrase is probably the most commonly used by children on the playground Turn me – Let your child ask to be spun using this phrase Go fast/slow

Phrases:

"I want to go"

"I want to stop"

"It's my turn to swing"

"Push me faster"

"Push me higher"

"Make me go fast"

Music

Playing music can be a fun, motivating and interactive activity for many children. Take advantage of these opportunities to model and teach core vocabulary!

1-word

Open – Your child can use this word to direct you to "open" a CD case or "open" the drive to insert a CD.

Play – Use this word when pressing "play" on a CD player or MP3 player Stop – Model this word when pressing "stop" or the pause button Up/Down – Allow your child to direct you to modify the volume of the music On/Off – Model this while turning "on" and "off" the CD player or MP3 player

2-word
Push play/stop
Play that
Open it
Turn up/down/on/off

Phrases
Turn it up/down/on/off
Play number [#]
Play that again
What song now?

Cars

Playing with toy cars is a favorite activity for many children. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go – Model and teach this word while making the cars move or to initiate a race.

Stop – Allow your child to direct you to make the cars "stop."

Up – Have your child use this word while pushing a car "up" a ramp or move up in a toy garage.

Down – Use this word while allowing cars to race "down" ramps or racetracks.

Come – Teach this word to encourage your child to ask you to "come" and follow him/her when pushing toy cars.

2-words:

Go up/down

Go in/under/next to, etc – Teach prepositions when making cars go in/under/next to tunnels, furniture or toys.

Push it – Model this word when initiating movement with the cars.

Go fast/slow – Allow your child to direct the speed of movement of the cars by using these simple adverbs

Phrases:

Push the blue car Make it go fast You push that Go under that

Go down fast

Coloring

Art and coloring projects are a part of many children's routines. Use these motivating, fun activities to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Open/Close – Use these words when accessing art supplies from cabinets or drawers, getting crayons or markers out of their boxes and taking off or putting on marker tops.

Stop/Go – Model these words when drawing on the page; make it a game and allow your child to direct you draw and stop drawing on a page.

Up/Down – Teach these concepts while drawing in different directions. Placing the paper on a vertical surface may enhance this teaching opportunity as well as promote your child's engagement in the novel activity and promote a better grasp on the writing instrument.

2-word:

Open blue/red/yellow/etc. – when taking off a marker top, or opening paint colors Color that

On paper/wall/body parts – Teach the preposition "on" while allowing your child to direct where to color, paint or stamp. For a messy, silly game, let your child ask to have his/her (or your) body parts drawn on!

Color more

Phrases:

Color that red
Open the blue one
That's mine
Color on my arm
Get more (colors, paper, markers)

Trampoline

Bouncing on a trampoline is a motivating activity for many children. Whether you are in the backyard, the gym or in the occupational therapy sensory/motor space, utilize this opportunity to teach core vocabulary.

1 – word:

Go/ Stop - Model and teach these words while initiating and terminating movement on the trampoline

Up/Down – Teach these words while jumping up and down

Fast/Slow – Allow your child to control the speed with which you and he/she jump Jump -

Fall – This is a great word for kids who love to crash. Incorporate music into the activity and play Ring Around the Rosy and allow your child to fill in the blank at the end of the song with "fall."

2 – word:

Get on/off/up

Go fast/slow

You jump

I jump

No more

Fall down

Phrases:

I like it

Let's jump fast

You jump now

You go under

No more jumping

You sit down

Snack

Snack time is often a very motivating part of a child's routine. We can utilize these opportunities to model, use and teach core vocabulary.

1 – word:

Open – Have your child direct you to open cupboards in the kitchen or his/her lunchbox to access a snack and to open bags or containers holding the food.

Eat – Model and teach this word while taking bites of a snack.

Drink – Model and teach this word while taking a drink.

Big/little/colors – Allow your child to make choices about his/her snack by asking for different color goldfish crackers or fruit snacks or differently sized pretzels.

2 – word:

Get that – Allow your child to request access to different foods from the cupboard Eat/drink more
Open that
You eat/drink
My drink

Phrases:

It's time to eat

I am hungry

I like/don't like it – Model comments like this while eating.

I need (that, more, spoon, plate) - gently sabotage your child's routine by "forgetting" to give him/her a necessary utensil or item for his/her snack routine.

Bubbles

Blowing bubbles is fun and motivating for many children. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Open – Have your child direct you to open the jar of bubbles.

Go – Have your child say "go" to ask you to blow bubbles; don't forget the easy prompt: "ready, set...."

Up /Down – Model and teach these directions by blowing bubbles up or down.

Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about the size of bubbles he/she wants you to blow.

2-words:

Get it – Use this phrase when prompting a child to pop the bubbles.

Go up/down – Have your child direct you to blow the bubbles in different directions.

Go fast/slow – Allow your child to direct the speed of the bubble-blowing by using these simple adverbs

Phrases:

Blow big ones.

Pop that one.

My turn to blow.

Get the little one.

It is big.

Blocks

Many children enjoy playing with blocks. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Up – Model and use this word while stacking blocks

Down – Have your child use this word to ask to knock down a stack of blocks.

Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about the size of blocks to use.

On/off – Your child can use these words to direct you to add blocks to or take blocks off of the structure

2-words:

Fall down – Use this phrase when knocking down a stack of blocks Blue/Red/Yellow on – Your child can direct you which block to add to the block structure Get more

Phrases:

Make a castle/fort/dinosaur, etc.

Put it on

Push it down

Make it fall

Put more on

Make it big

Chase

Many children love to run, be chased and get tickled. Use these fun, engaging opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go – Have your child initiate racing and chasing games using this word. Help prompt by saying "ready... set..."

Stop – Use this word to take a break from running.

Fast/Slow – Have your child direct the speed of the activity by using these words.

2-words:

Get me – Teach this 2-word combination to allow your child to initiate a chase or tickle game.

Go slow

You stop

Let's go

Phrases:

Now you're "it"

Get my feet/belly/arms – use this phrase to teach body parts while your child asks for you to tickle him/her in different places

Let's go fast

I am fast

You are slow

Cooking

Some children enjoy participating in food preparation and cooking routines. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Open/Close – Use these words when accessing food and utensils from the fridge, cabinets, drawers, etc. and while opening/closing jars, bottles, boxes and other containers.

Up/Down – Model and use these words while adjusting the oven, getting items down from a cabinet or putting items up

More – Have your child direct you to add more of a favorite ingredient

On/off – Your child can use these words to direct you to turn on/off the water faucet, the oven, microwave or small appliance.

Fast/Slow – Model and teach these words when stirring foods or using different appliance settings

2-words: Get more Open/Close it Eat it Go fast/slow

Phrases:
Turn it on/off
Turn it up/down
Put it in/on
Take it out
Put more in

I like it

Ball

Many children enjoy playing with balls. Whether you are playing with large exercise balls, playground balls or in a ball pit, use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go/Stop – Use these words while bouncing your child on larger exercise balls Up – Model and use this word while throwing a ball up in the air Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about the size of ball to play with In/out – Teach these prepositions when getting in/out of a ball pit.

2-words:

Go fast/slow – Use this phrase when bouncing on large exercise balls
My turn
Get on/off – Use these phrases when your child gets on and off of large exercise ball
Get in/out – Target these phrases when getting in or out of a ball pit
Go under – Use this phrase when submerging yourselves in a ball pit

Phrases:

Give it to me Get the little one Let's get in Let's play ball

Balloons

Blowing and playing with balloons is fun and motivating for some children. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go – Have your child say "go" to ask you to blow up a balloon Stop – Have your child direct you to "stop" when the balloon is big enough Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about how big he/she wants you to blow the balloon

2-words:

Let go – Have your child direct you to let the balloon fly around the room

Get it – Use this phrase when prompting a child to retrieve a balloon after its flight

Go up/down – Have your child direct you to let the balloon go in different directions.

Go fast/slow – Allow your child to direct the speed of the balloon-blowing by using these simple adverbs

Pop it – If you child likes the noise, let him or her direct you to pop the balloon

Phrases:

Make it big.

Pop that one.

Make a yellow one.

Give it to me.

It is little.

It is loud.

Where is it?

Animals

Some children enjoy interacting with pets and animals at home, at petting zoos or during hippotherapy. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Come – Have your child call a pet over using this word.

Stop/Go – Let your child initiate and terminate activities like petting, running or walking with an animal

Fast/Slow — Allow your child to make choices about the speed of an activity with an animal Sit /Stay — Some animals may be trained to respond to your child's AAC system voice

2-words:

Come here

Sit down

Go fast/slow – Allow your child to direct the speed of movement on a horse or while walking a dog

Get on/off – Teach this phrase when getting on/off a horse Get it – Use this phrase while playing fetch

Phrases:

Let's go fast

Sit and stay

Help me up – Let your child use this phrase to request help getting on a horse I want off – Your child can use this phrase when he/she wants to terminate a horse-riding activity

Marbles

Marble racing games are fun and motivating for many children to build and play with. Use these fun opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go – Have your child use this word when initiating a race down the track
Up – Model and use this word while building "up" the race tower
Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about the size of the construction piece to use
In/out – Teach these prepositions when manipulating the marbles in the chutes

2-words:

My turn

Get blue/green/yellow – Let your child use colors to request different pieces of the track to add Get more

Go fast

Phrases:

Put it in

Put it on

Make it big

Play with me

Watch it go

Play-Doh

Many children enjoy playing with Play-Doh. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Open – Teach this word when opening cans of Play-Doh.

Big/Little – Allow your child to make choices about the size of Play-Doh structures to make. On/off – Your child can use these words to direct you to put Play-Doh on/take Play Doh off of other toys, the table, or even body part

2-words:

Open blue/red/yellow on – Your child can direct you which can of dough to open Get more
Help me

Phrases:

Make a house/ball/train, etc.
Put it on
Push it down

Put it on my elbow/nose/knee
Put more on
Make it big/little

Dress up

Many children enjoy playing dress-up with fun clothes and accessories. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

On/off – Let your child direct you to put on/take off hats, gloves, etc.

Open– Use this word while opening boxes, drawers or closets with clothes inside

Close – Teach this word when closing zippers or buttons on clothes

Turn – Model and teach this word while turning around to show off silly outfits

Look – Teach your child to use this word to draw attention to him/herself

2-words:

Open it

You turn

Get more

Phrases:

Put it on

Take it off

Look at me

Tops

Many children enjoy playing dress-up with fun clothes and accessories. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Go - Have your child use this word to direct you to let the top go

Stop - Model this word when the top stops spinning

Turn - Model and teach this word to comment on how the top turns

Fall - Teach this word when a top falls off the table

Fast/slow - Teach these words to describe the speed in which the top is moving

2-words:

Turn more

Go fast

It fall

Push it

Get blue/red/yellow etc. - Let your child make choices with differently colored tops

Turn it

Stop it

My turn

Phrases:

Make it fall

Make it go

It goes fast

Turn it on

Sensory bins

Many children enjoy playing with rice, beans, sand or water inside a sensory bin. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

In – Teach this word while putting rice, beans, water or sand from the bin into different containers (or while reminding them to keep the materials IN the bin)

Out – Model and use this word while pouring sensory materials out of containers into the bin More – Use this word when adding materials to cups, bowls or bins

Eat/Drink – Use this word when pretending to consume the contents of the bins

Stop/Go – Use these words when initiating and terminating movement and games like pouring, digging or picking up and dropping materials

2-words:

Get more

Get it – use this phrase when searching for items hidden in the bin

Feel it

Stop that

Phrases:

Pour it out

Put them/some/it in

Take it out

You do it

Put some on my hand/knee/finger/arm

I like it

I don't like it

Videos

Many children enjoy watching videos on the TV or computer. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

On/Off – Teach these words when turning a video on and off

Up/Down – Use and tech these words when adjusting volume

Big/Little – Many video programs on the computer can be minimized/maximized; allow your child to request that the screen be made big or little

Open/Close – Use these words when opening a DVD tray or when opening/closing windows on a computer

Play - Use this word when pressing the "play" button

Stop - Model this word when stopping or pausing the video

2-words:

Turn on/off

Turn up/down

Open/close it

Watch it

Which one?

Push play

Push stop

Phrases:

Turn it on/off

Turn it up/down

Make it big/little

Watch that one

Watch it again

Play it again

Riding in cars

Many children enjoy riding in the car. Use these opportunities (when someone else is driving) to sit in the backseat your child and to teach core vocabulary. Check out the video on http://www.aacandautism.com/real-communication-stories/max for a real life example!

1-word:

Stop – Use this word when the car comes to a stop

Go – Model directing the driver to "go" when leaving a parking space or when a traffic light is green

Fast/Slow – Comment on the speed that the car is traveling using these words

Turn – Teach your child to use this word when the driver makes turn

Look – Let your child use this word to comment on what he/she sees outside the car

2-words:

Turn right/left

Go home/go shopping

Go back – Model this phrase when the driver goes in reverse

Phrases:

Go to school

Look at that

l see

Go for a ride

Turn it on/off/up/down – Let your child use these phrases to control the radio

Board games

Some children enjoy playing board games. Use these great social opportunities to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Turn – Use this word while taking turns Roll – Model this word when rolling dice

Go – Use this word when advancing pieces on the game board

2-words:

Your turn

My turn

Let's play

Roll it

Get it

Try again

Phrases:

You do it

It is my turn

I got ____

Give it to me

Trick-or-Treat

For individuals who celebrate Halloween, "trick-or-treat" and "thank you" are probably the most common phrases of the night. Consider using this opportunity to teach core vocabulary as well!

1-word:

Go – When advancing from house to house allow your child to ask to go.

Come – Model this phrase when walking down the sidewalk with your child

That – Let your child pick his/her preferred piece of candy using this word

More – Your child may use this word to ask to go to more houses or get more candy

2-words:

My turn – Let your child ask for his/her turn to knock on a door

Push it – Model this phrase when ringing a doorbell

That one – Model and teach this phrase when your child is given a choice between pieces of candy

Go right/left – Let your child direct which way to go while trick-or-treating

Get more

Phrases:

I want that one
I am a ghost/witch/cowboy
What are you?
I have more.
Put it in.
I don't like that.

Reading

Many children enjoy reading and looking at books and magazines. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Read – Your child can use this word to request to read a book, or direct you to read a line of text

Open – Use this word when opening a book or a magazine

Close – Model and teach this word when closing the book

Turn – Let your child direct you to turn pages in a book or magazine using this word

Look – Use this word when pointing and directing your child's attention to pictures in the book or magazine.

2-words:

Open it

Close it

Read it

Read more

Turn it

Look here

Phrases:

Turn the page

Read it again

Read to me

Look at that

What is that?

Videogames

Many children enjoy playing handheld, console and computer-based video games. Use these opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

On/off – Use and teach these words when turning on/off the video games

Open/close— Teach this word when opening/closing game cases, disc drives or even windows on the computer

Up/down – Use these words when modifying volume levels on a game

Play – Let your child use this word to ask to play a game

Watch – Teach this word when watching a friend or sibling take his/her turn on the game

2-words:

Open it

Your/My turn

Watch me

You play

We play

Phrases:

Turn it on/off
Turn it up/down

My turn to play Can I play?

Your turn to watch

Mealtimes

Whether it's a Thanksgiving feast, dinner at a restaurant or a routine supper at home, mealtimes are great opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Eat – Model and teach this word while taking bites of food. Remember, your child doesn't need to ask for each bite. Let your child direct you to "eat" also!

Drink – Let your child use this word to request a drink, to direct you to drink or comment on someone else drinking.

Open – Let your child ask for access to foods in containers or boxes by directing you to open them.

More – Let your child request second helpings using this word

2-words:

More please

Thank you

Open that

My drink

You eat

Give/pass that

No more

Phrases:

Give/pass me that Open that, please I am hungry I like/don't like it

Silly Social Play

Many children are motivated by silly social play and directing other people's behavior. Use these great opportunities to interact with your child and to teach core vocabulary.

1-word:

Sleep – Pretend to fall asleep when your child uses this word

Turn – Let your child tell you to turn around in a circle

Sick, sad, angry, happy, scared – Let your child direct you to act out these emotions/feelings.

The more exaggerated you are, the more fun your child might have.

Fall – Let your child direct you to fall down

Silly – Make wacky facial expressions and noises if your child directs you using this word.

Stop – Your child can use this word to make you stop turning, sleeping or acting in different ways

Come/Go – Your child can use these words to direct you to come to them or go away

2-words:

Get up – Let your child use this phrase to get you up after you have "fallen asleep" or "fallen down"

Be sick/Get scared

Fall down

Turn around

Be silly

Stop it

Come here

Go away

Phrases:

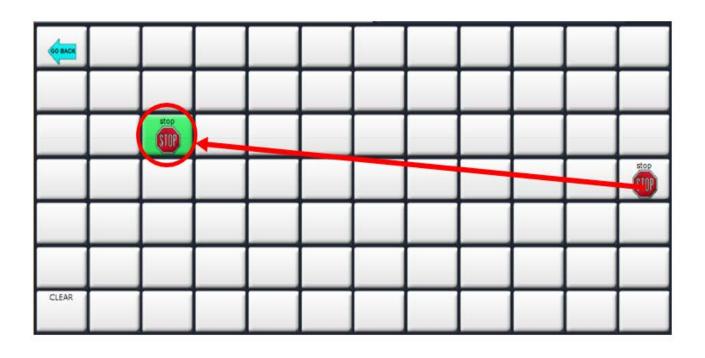
Go to sleep

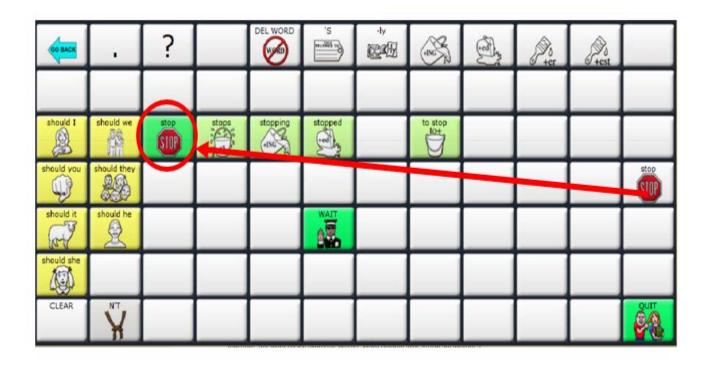
You be sick

You get scared

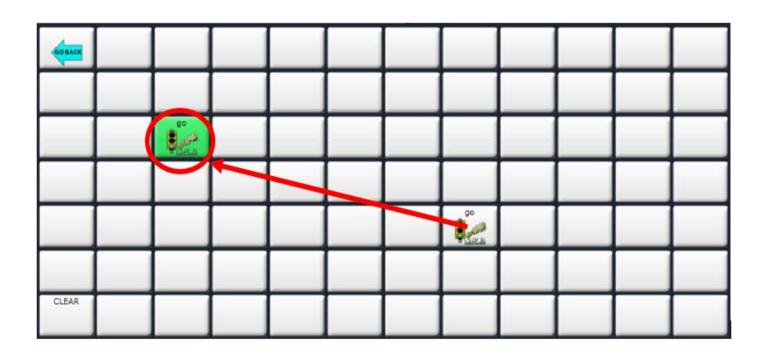
Make a silly face

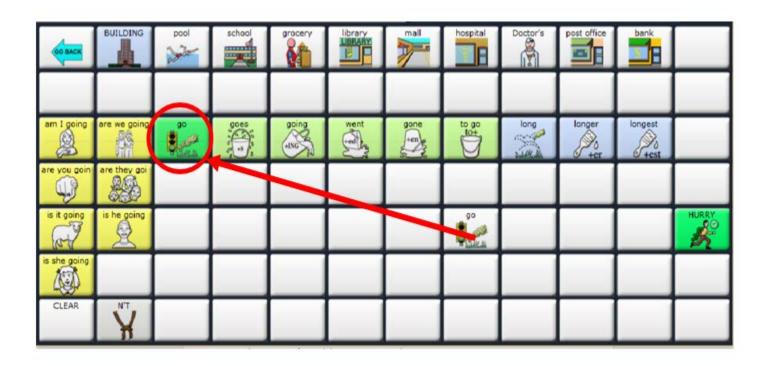
STOP



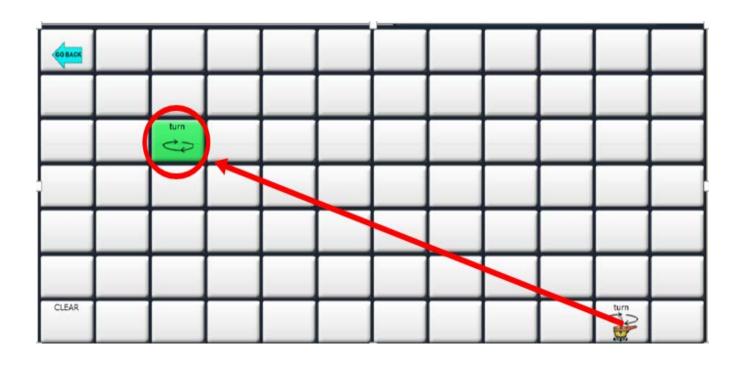


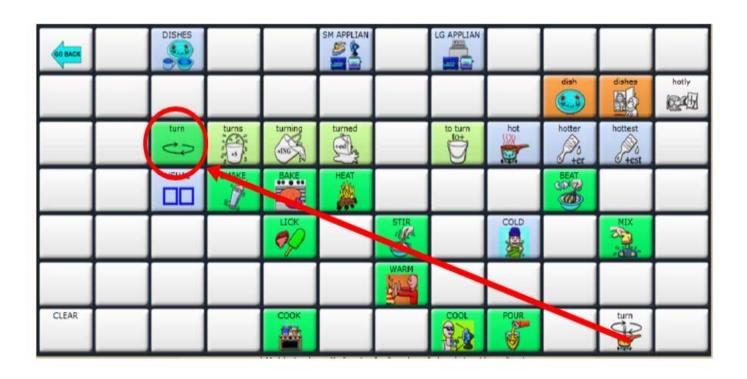
Go



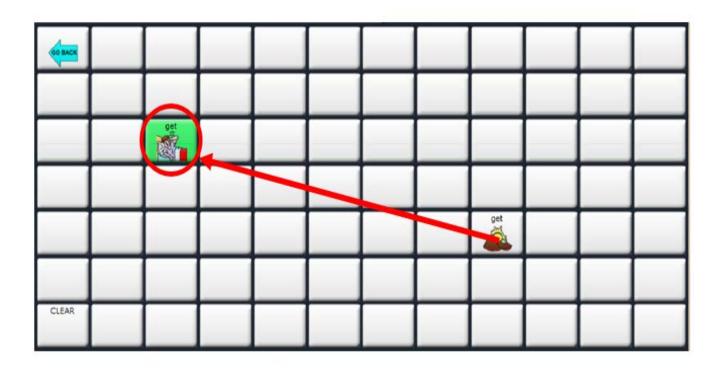


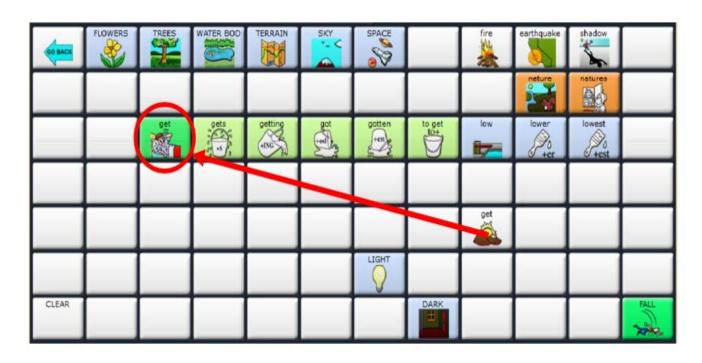
Turn



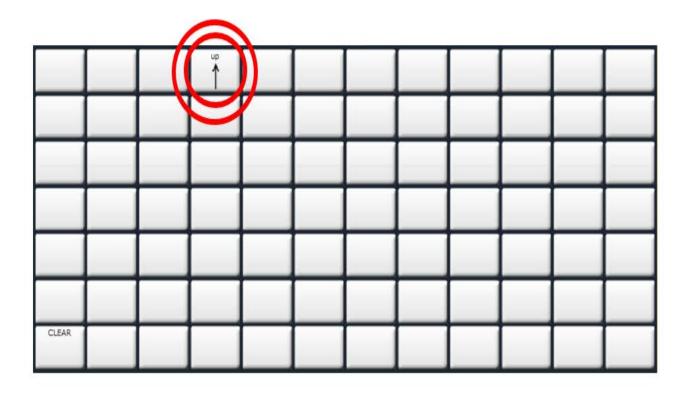


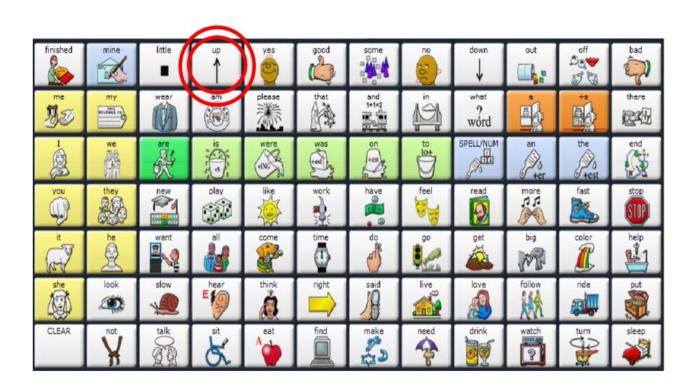
Get



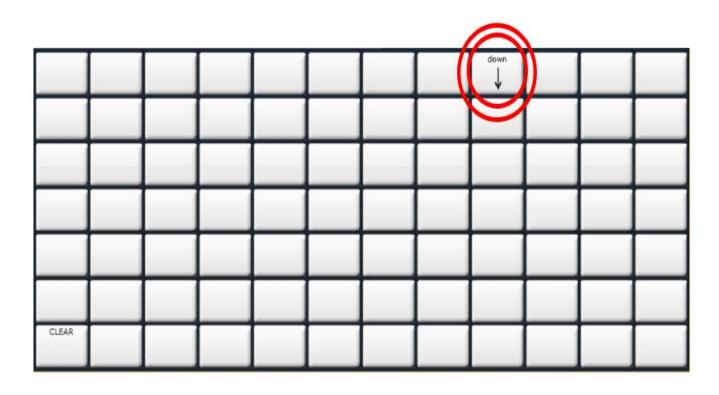


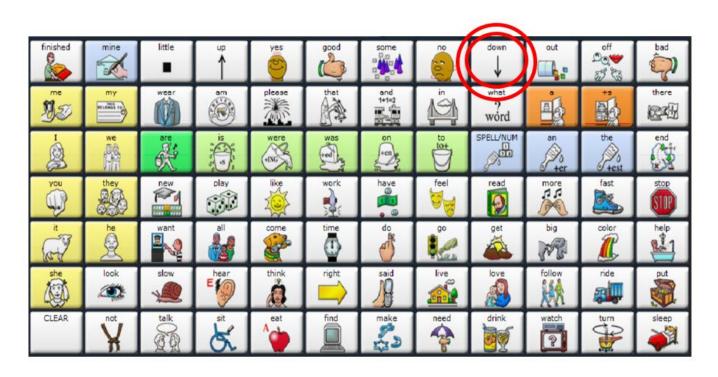
Up



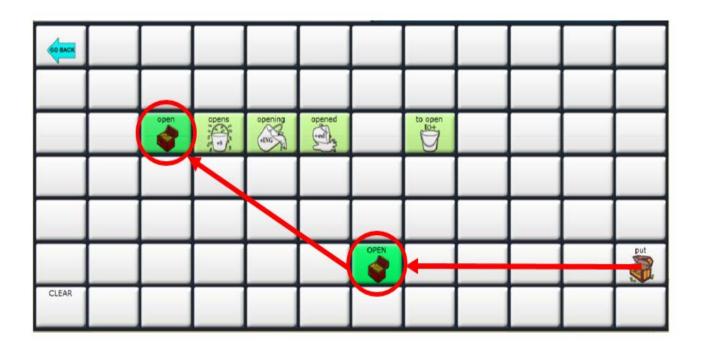


Down

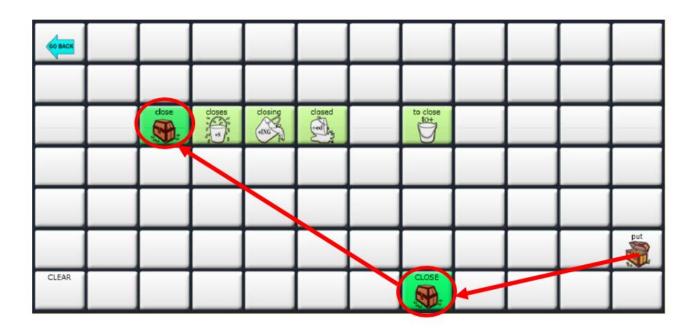




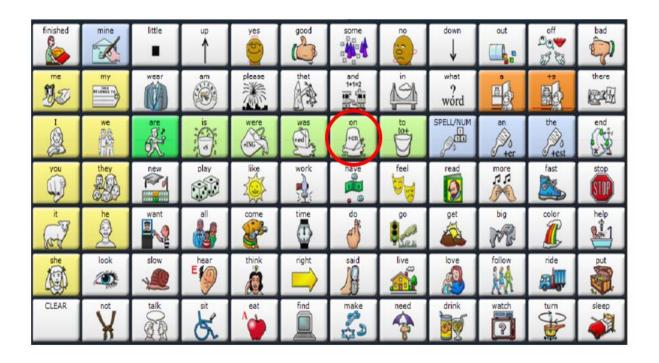
Open

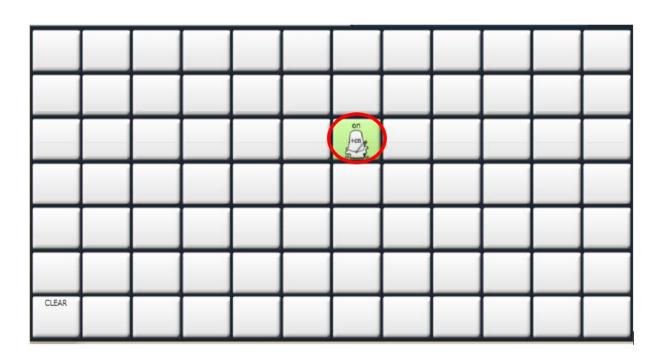


Close

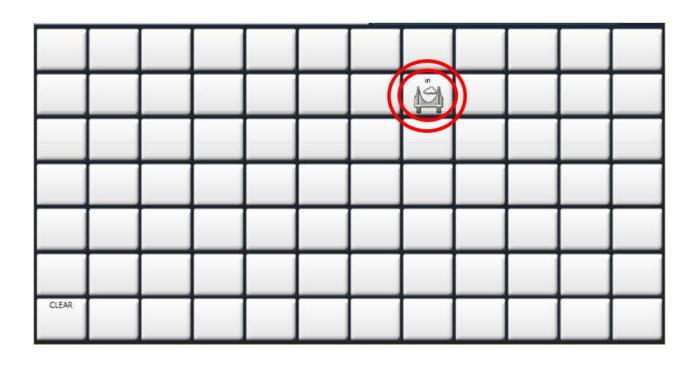


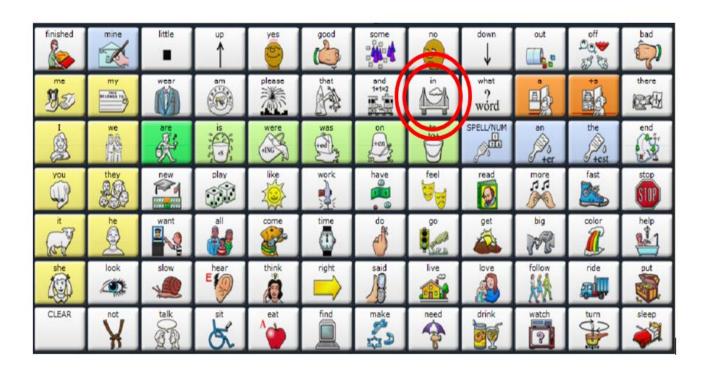
On



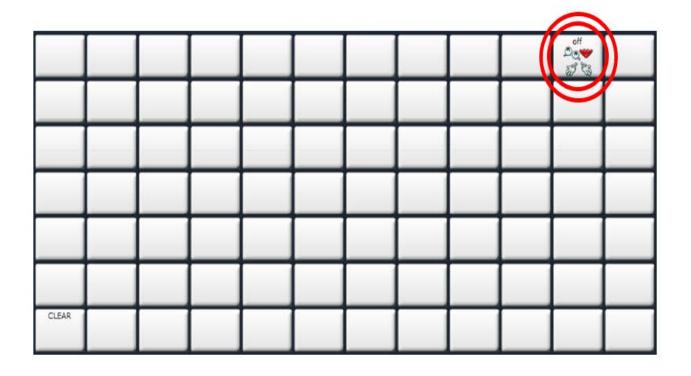


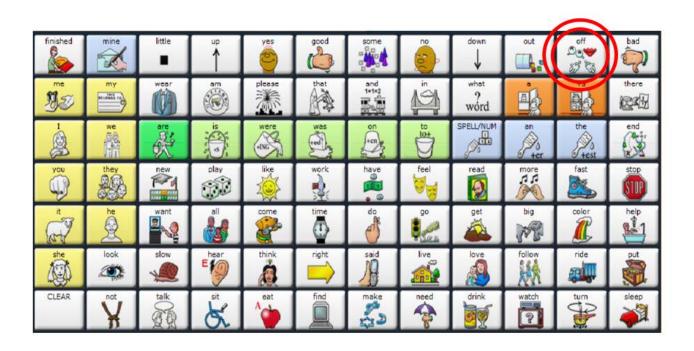
In



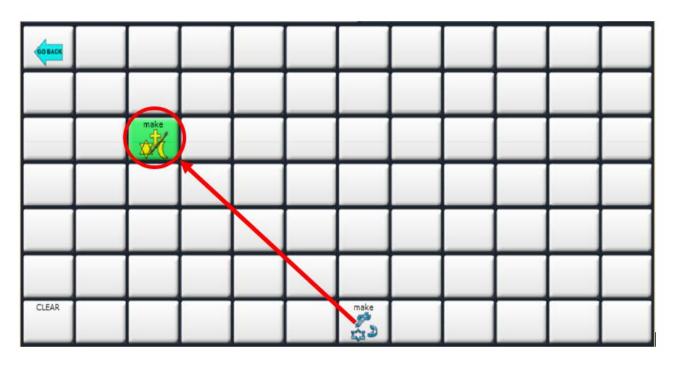


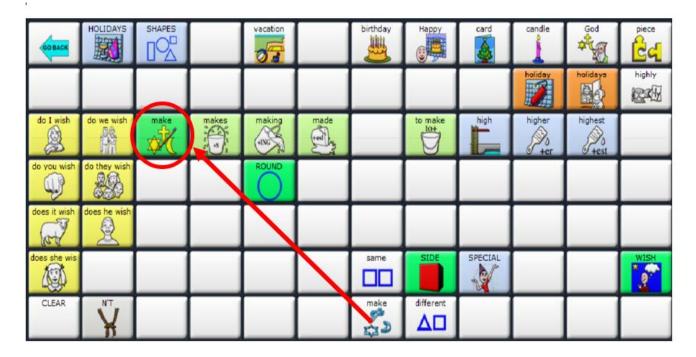
Off



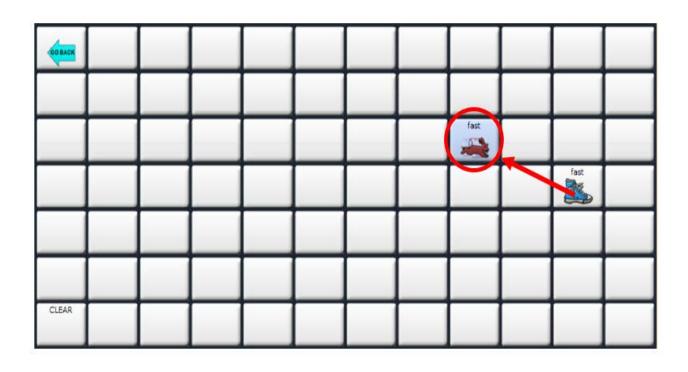


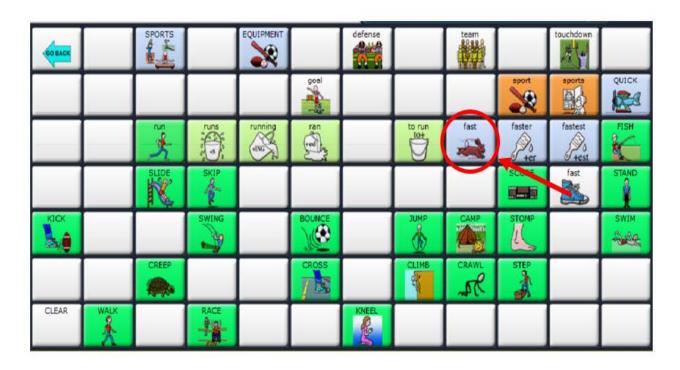
Make



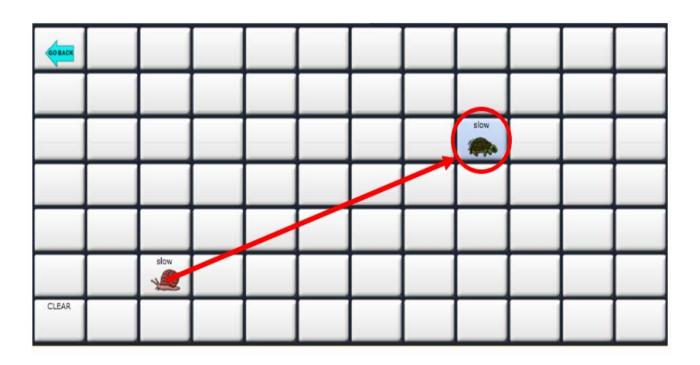


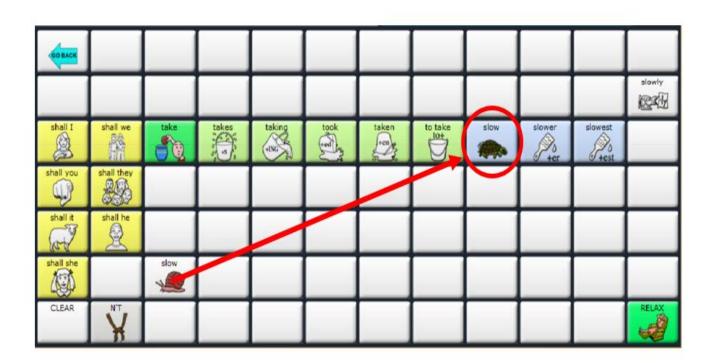
Fast



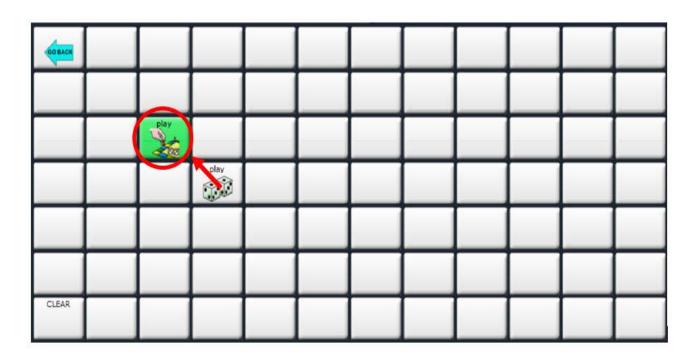


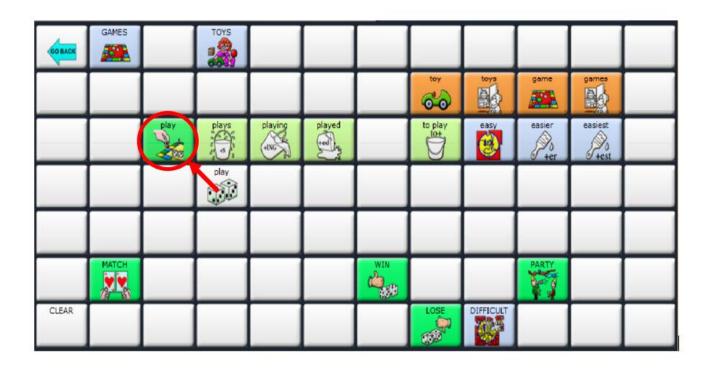
Slow



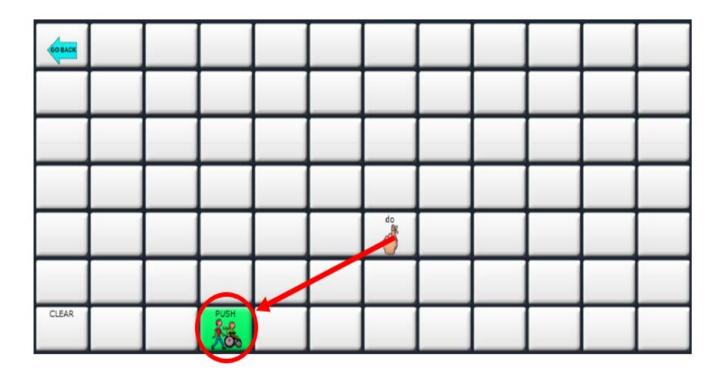


Play





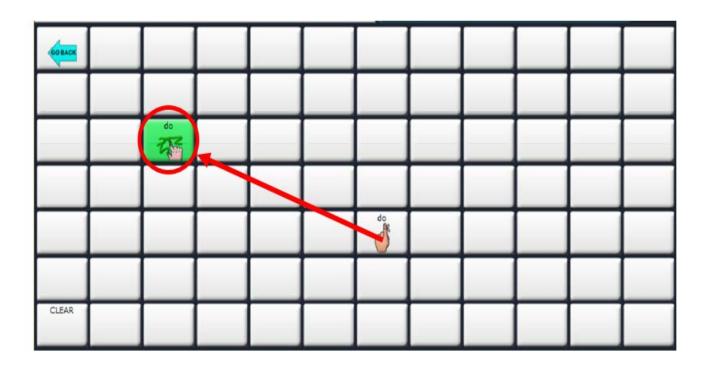
Push

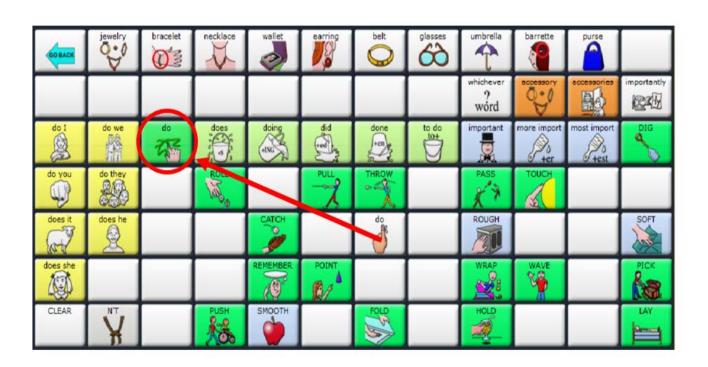




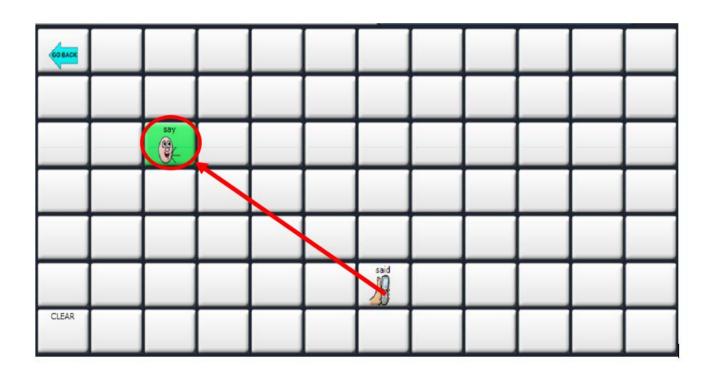
75

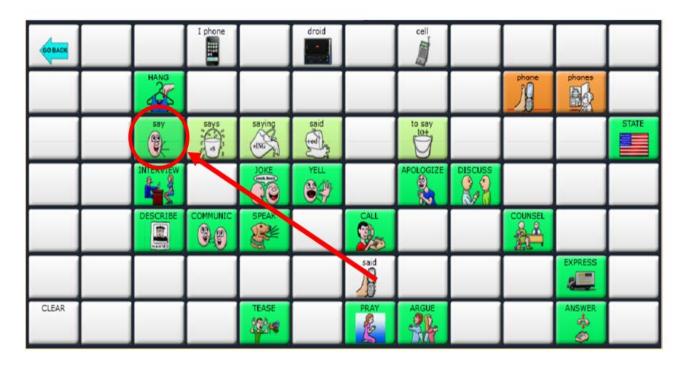
Do



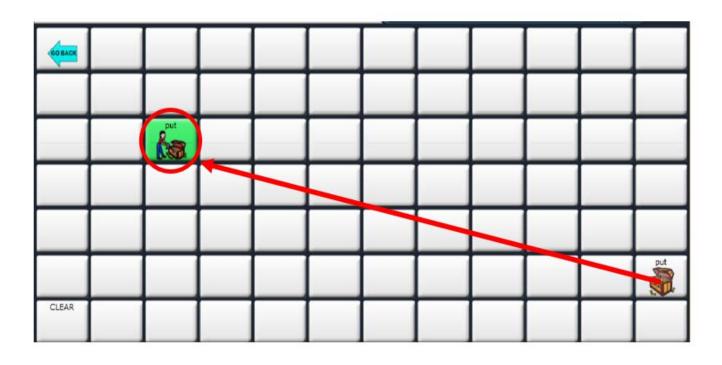


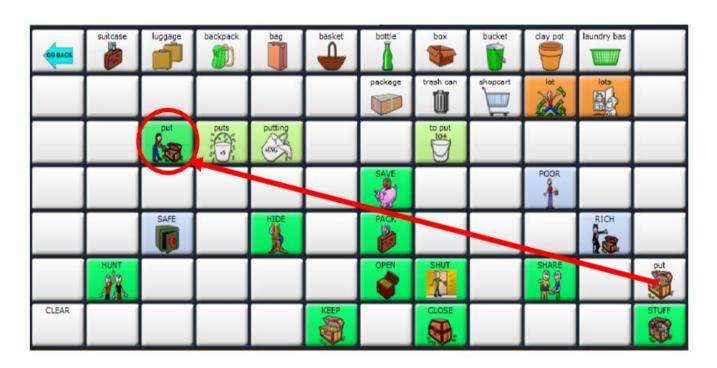
Say



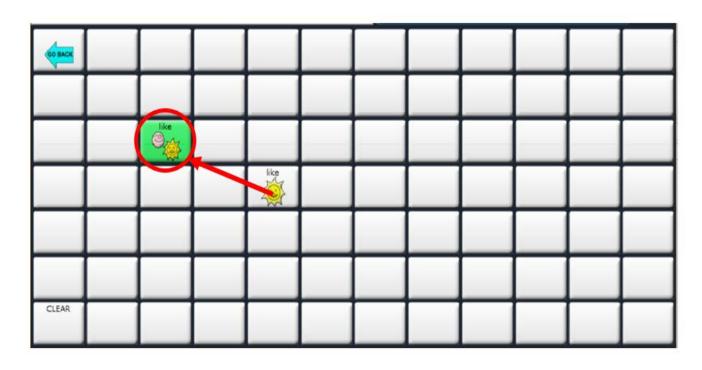


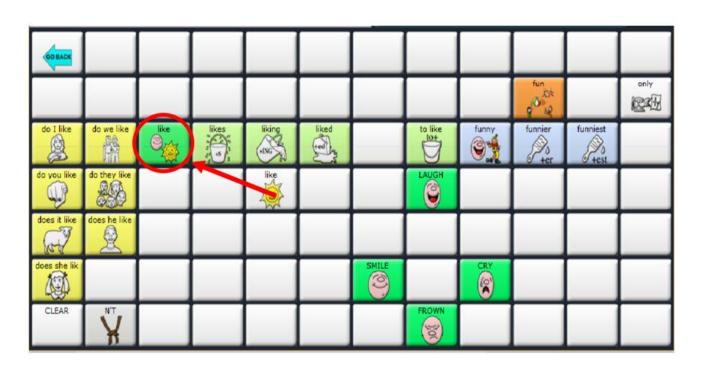
Put



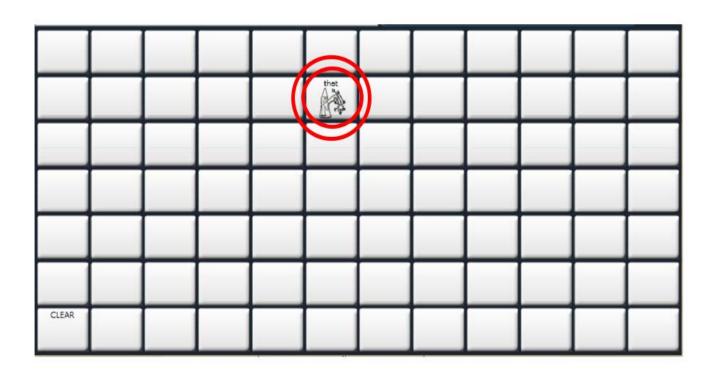


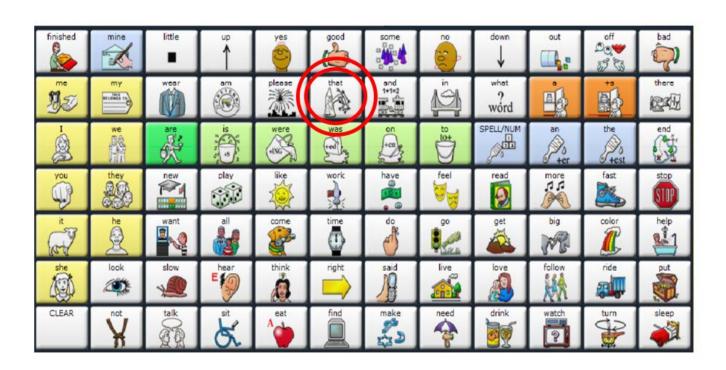
Like



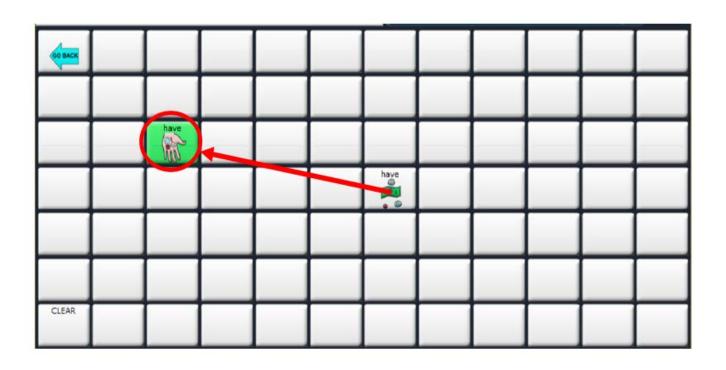


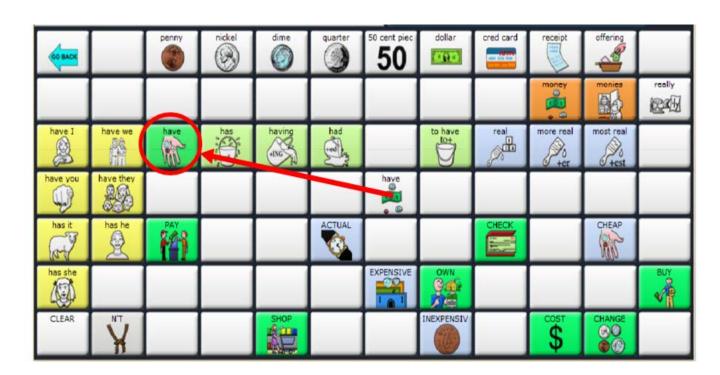
That



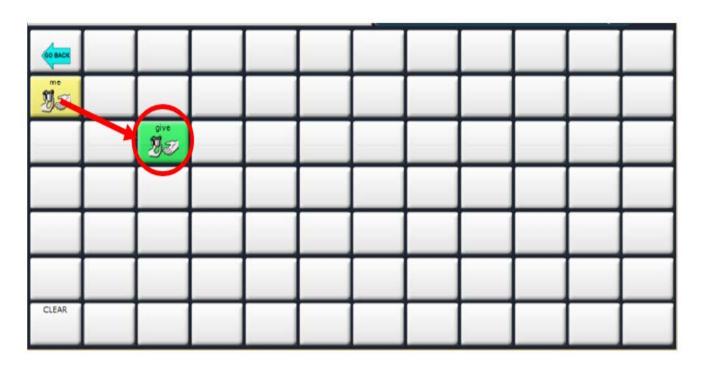


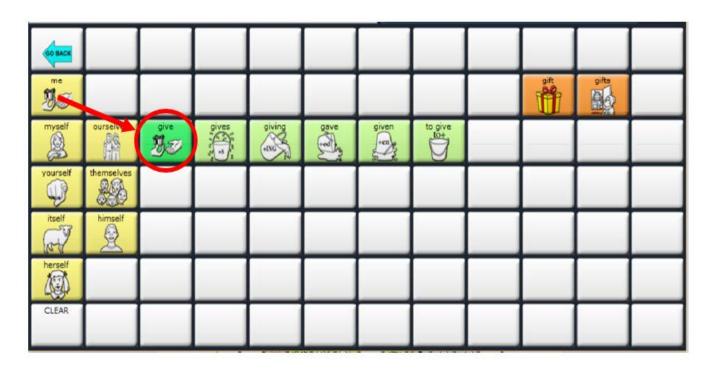
Have



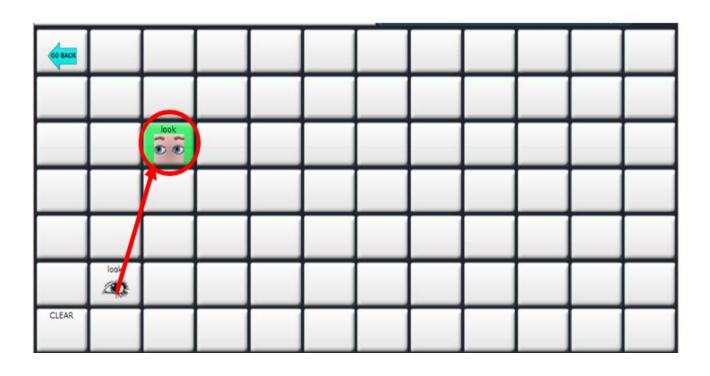


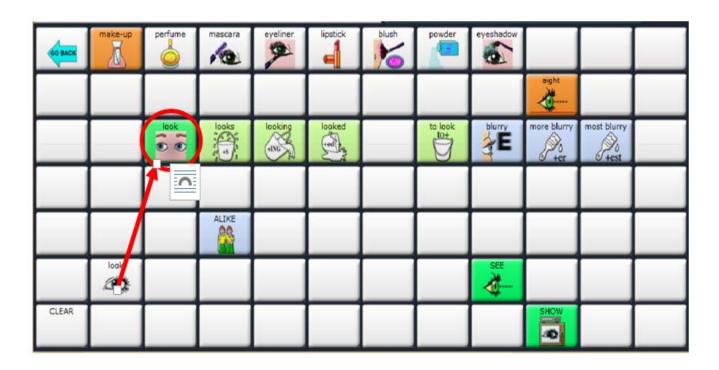
Give



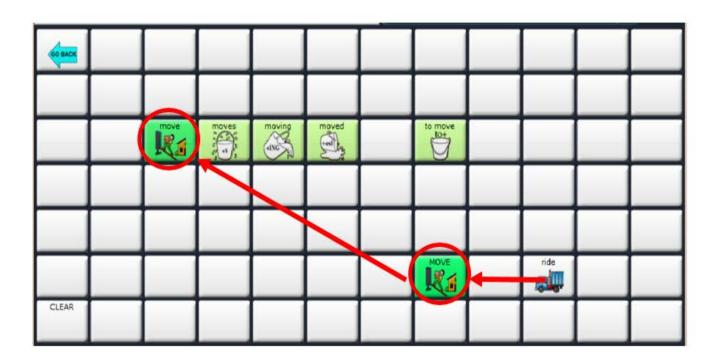


Look

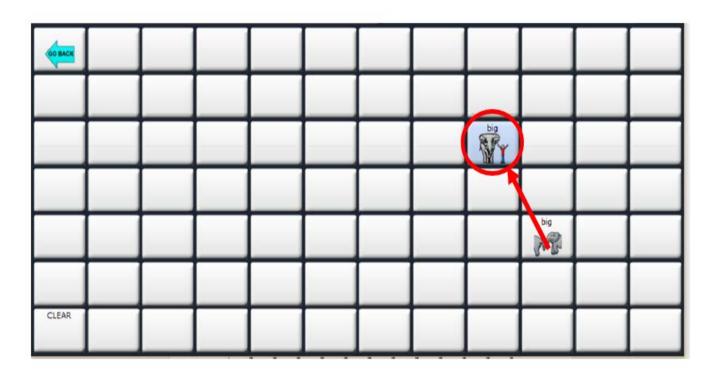


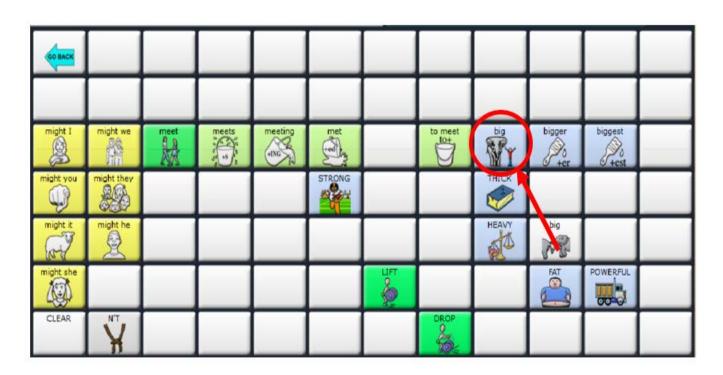


Move

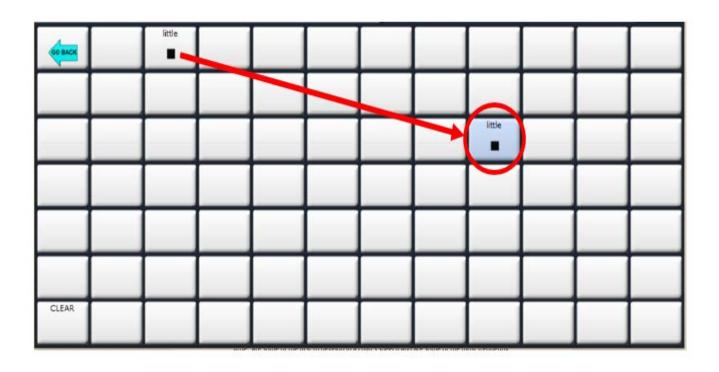


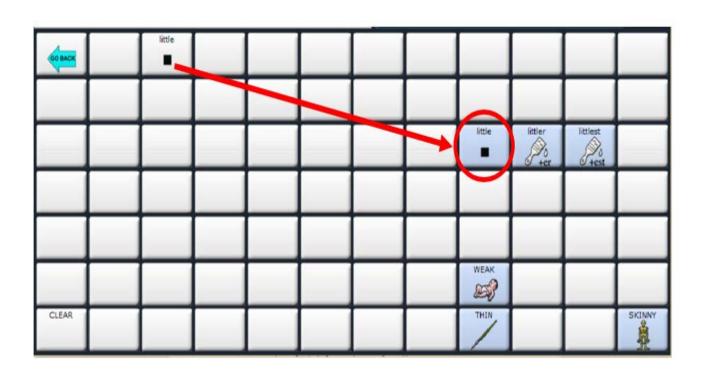
Big



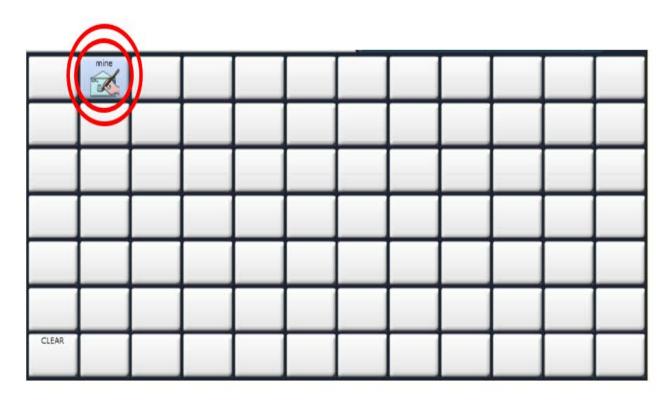


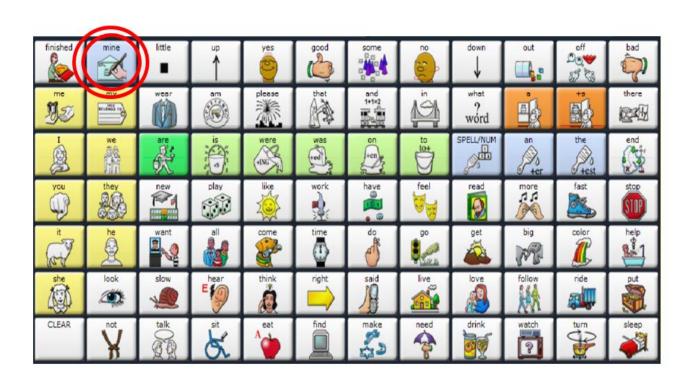
Little



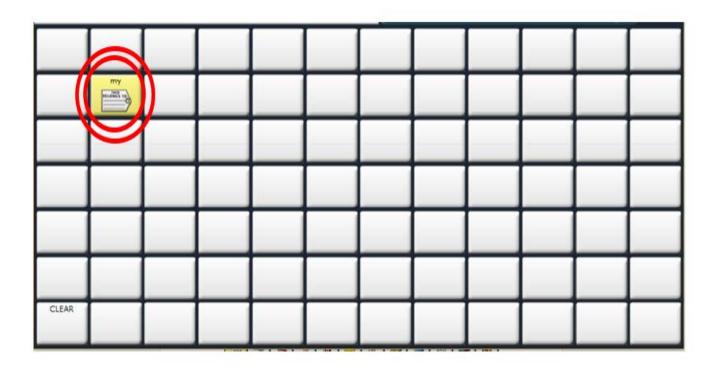


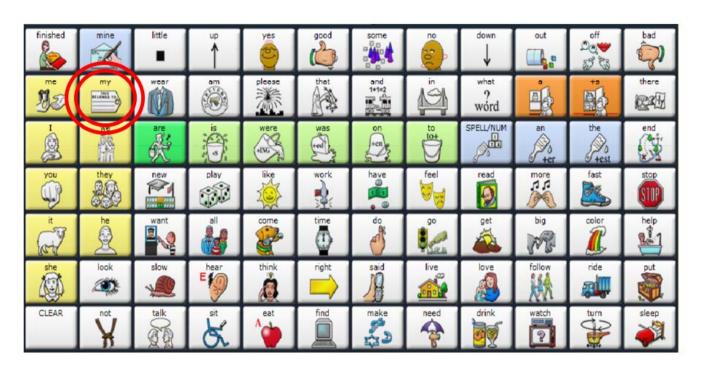
Mine



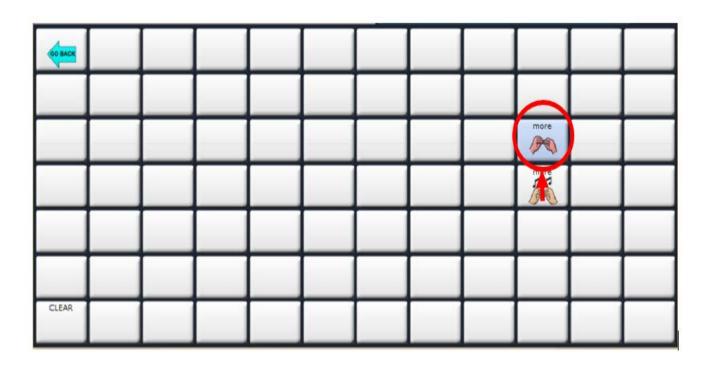


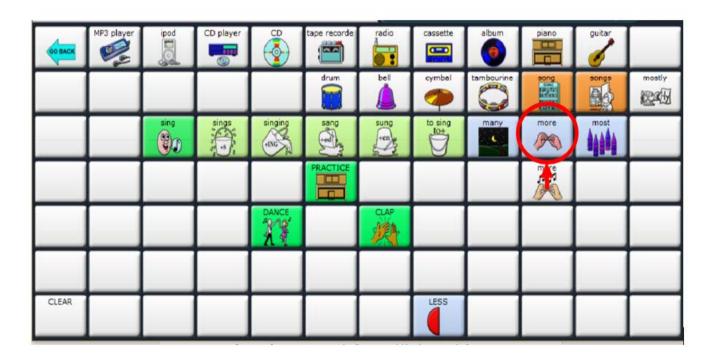
My



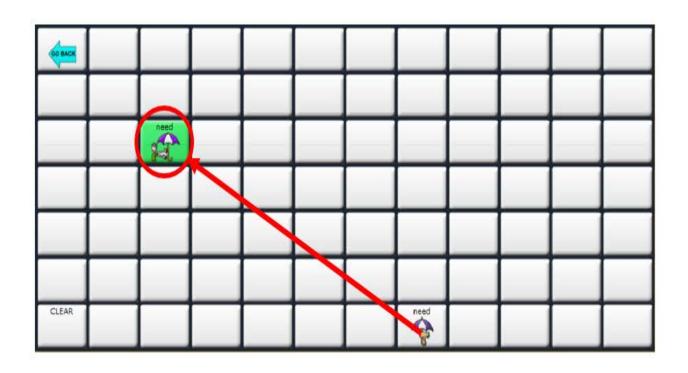


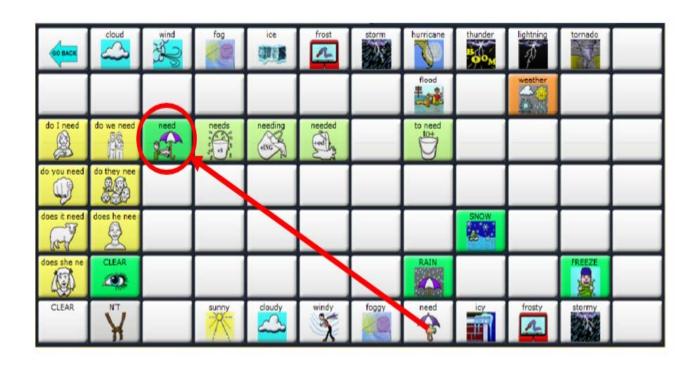
More



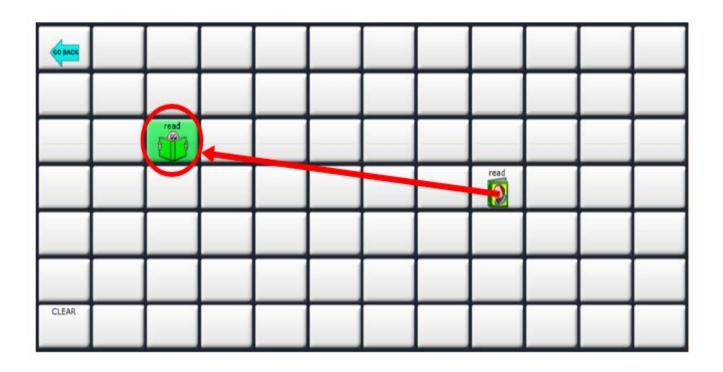


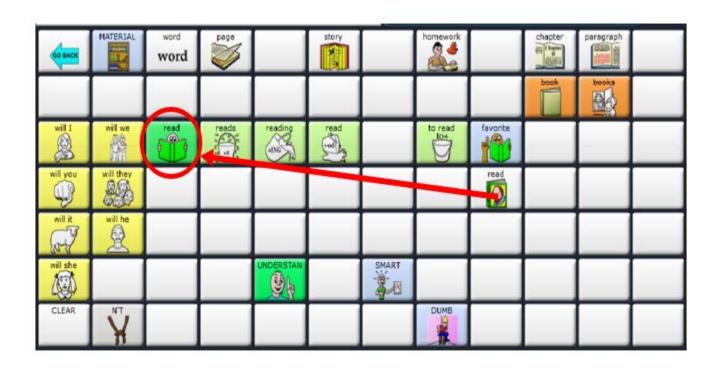
Need



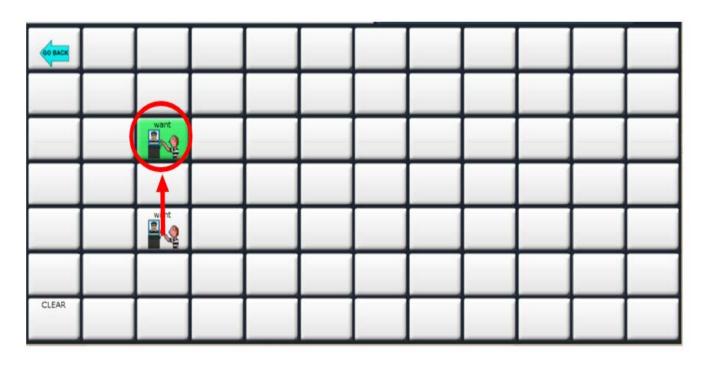


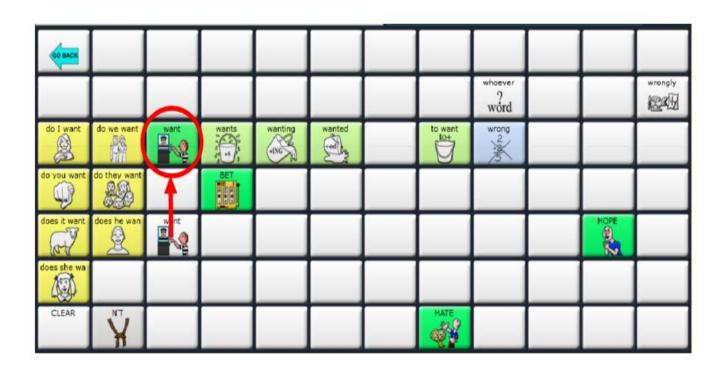
Read





Want





References

Baker, B., Hill, K., Devylder, R. (2000). Core Vocabulary is the Same Across Environments, California State University at Northridge (CSUN) Conference, Los Angeles, California.

Balandin, S., Iacono, T. (1999). Adult Vocabulary Usage, English, Sydney, Australia, AAC, Vol. 14.

Banajee, M., Dicarlo, C., & Stricklin, S. B. (2003). Core Vocabulary Determination for toddlers. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), 19, 67-73.

Marvin, C., Beukelman, D., Bilyeu, D. (1994). "Vocabulary-Use Patterns in Preschool Children: Effects of Context and Time Sampling." AAC, Vol. 10, No. 4.

Stuart, S. and Beukelman, D. (1997). Most Frequently Occurring Words of Older Adults. AAC, Vol. 13