NO TECH? NO PROBLEM!

Low Tech Communication Strategies

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Cotting School
What does Low Tech mean?

- Easy to make
- Easy to use
- Cheap
- (Mostly) Unplugged
General Considerations

Level of individual’s physical functioning

Progressive nature of disability over time

Access method (direct selection, scanning, eye gaze)

Portability

Durability

Integration/consistency with other communication systems... Is it a secondary to a high tech device?
General Considerations

Expressive, receptive, social language skills

Cognitive skills

Ability to recognize symbols *

Literacy skills

Level of support needed to use a communication system
“Not all students need symbol supports. Just because you are an AAC user does not mean symbol supports are necessary when beginning to read.

The current research in AAC suggests we don’t have to follow object + photo + symbol heirarchy.”

-Pati King DeBaun, 2006
“Things do not need to be taught in a hierarchy. You can pair things together. Just as children are able to say words, oftentimes they will say words before they necessarily use them for meaning. You can pair those items together, but you do not have to teach the symbol before the child can use it to communicate. They will learn to use it to communicate as they are being taught.”

-Pati King DeBaun
Using Symbols

Symbols should be available and accessible for children.

In the natural environment as much as possible

If not, they will not be used.
Using Symbols

Fading symbols and using text as early as possible encourages literacy skills.

“Symbols are for communication. Text is for reading.”

-Karen Erikson

(2015)
At school, we sometimes line up. We line up to go to the gym, to go to the library, and to go out to recess. Sometimes my friends and I get excited when we line up, because we’re going someplace fun.

Like out to recess. It is okay to get excited, but it is important to try to walk to the line. Running can cause accidents, and my friends or I could get hurt. I will try to walk to the line.
More considerations...

Efficient
Is it easy to access? How will the student access it?

Consistent
Is it consistently available? Does the student have a consistent method to use it? Do others respond to it in a consistent manner? Is is facilitated in the same way every time?

Reliable
Can it be relied on? Is the student’s ability to use it reliable?
No matter the system...

There must be RESPECT and VALUE

for the form of communication in order

for it to be successful.
“Getting Started”

Look at the daily routine and for various opportunities to communicate. Keep a log for 1 full week.

“There’s More to Life Than Cookies”

Produce an age appropriate vocabulary list:

Brainstorm Core & Fringe vocabulary

(Light & Drager, 2007)
Core vs. Fringe Vocabulary

85% of spoken language in English is comprised of 250-350 words. This is GREAT news for our AAC users!

Core Vocabulary:
- applies across setting
- primarily pronouns, verbs, descriptors
- very few nouns
- consistent location of vocabulary

Fringe Vocabulary:
- specific to a task or activity
- and everything else!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>like</th>
<th>not</th>
<th>want</th>
<th>help</th>
<th>it</th>
<th>more</th>
<th>different</th>
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<td>who</td>
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<td>over</td>
<td>open</td>
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<tr>
<td>What form will it take?</td>
<td>How will they access it?</td>
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<td>Yes/No Systems</td>
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<td>Communication books</td>
<td>Direct Selection</td>
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<td>Picture Exchange</td>
<td>Partner-Assisted</td>
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<td>Conversation books</td>
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<td>Topic Boards</td>
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<td>Core &amp; Fringe Language Boards</td>
<td>Morse Code or Braille</td>
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<td>Choice Boards</td>
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<td>Letter/Spelling Board</td>
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Where does it have to go? (hint: Everywhere)

- Bathtub/Bathroom
- Pool
- Sandbox
- Bedtime
- Horseback riding
- Mealtimes
- Around Unfamiliar partners
Yes/No
Writing/Spelling

Paper/pen
Dry erase board
Magna Doodle
Boogie Board
Letter boards
Direct Selection
Direct Selection
Direct Selection

http://vivienfieldnz.blog.co.nz

Teacherspayteachers.com
Direct Selection

http://ucphuntsville.org
Direct Selection

https://tnt.asu.edu

http://aacgirls.blogspot.com
Direct Selection
Eye Gaze

Speakbook.org
Eye Gaze

http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Eye gaze

specialmommyx2.com
Eye gaze
Eye gaze

http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Eye gaze
Partner Assisted Scanning

Established clear, reliable Yes/No Response

1\textsuperscript{st} Yes indicates the row,
2\textsuperscript{nd} Yes indicates the letter or item in that row.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLb6-Oi3uR0
Partner Assisted Scanning

Directions
When you can't figure out what I need, you can ask me questions in order so I can tell you how to help me. Please read the choices in order. When I say yes, turn to the page and read me those choices in order.

Start with the BLUE page on the other side.

1. something hurts/positioning
2. You don't understand
3. communication device
4. please check my equipment
5. something with the laptop
6. I don't understand
7. Food and Drink
8. Something Else
9. DISNEY

Melissa Mulvey, M.S, CCC-SLP, APT
Voice Output

Big Mac
By AbleNet

Go Talk Button
By Attainment

Chipper
By Adaptivation

Enabling Devices

Multi-Message QuickTalker5
by Ablenet
Voice Output

Go Talk

Logan
Proxtalker

...and the list goes on and on...
Picture Symbols Sources

Boardmaker and Boardmaker Online from Mayer-Johnson

Matrix Maker from Inclusive Technologies

Search “free picture communication symbols” = wealth of resources
A word on Aided Language Stimulation

Teaching approach that models use of the AAC system by using the system in the same way as the desired outcome.

AKA: What makes this all work!

Really hard to learn French if you’ve never been around anyone speaking French.

Create a script that you are comfortable with

Model the language with the visuals

High tech, Low Tech, or No Tech…they all require A.L.S
This is just a start...

Be where the communication is.

Be creative.

Try it out!

Have fun!