Research to Practice:
Face-to-Face Topic Setting

Dr. Caroline Ramsey Musselwhite
www.aacintervention.com

Nonlinguistic
- vocalization (attention)
- natural gestures (yes / no)

Linguistic
- icons representing intended words
  (mom take me see . . .)
- icons representing synonyms
  (marry = wedding)
- icons representing pholological
  clues (green = Greek)

Research Highlights

Face - to - Face
- Respondent role
- Turntaking patterns
  unequal
- Peer-to-peer interactions
  rare and brief

Why Do AAC Users Have Trouble Starting & Maintaining Topics?

Culp (1988) suggests the following factors:

- vocabulary constraints
  - rate & timing of message delivery
    - physical effort required
      - limited environmental experiences
        - partner behaviors

COMMUNICATION AGENDAS

Light (1988):
1) Expression of needs/wants
2) Information Transfer
3) Social closeness
4) Social etiquette

Information Transfer

- Story Scripts
- Directions

GONE SWIMMIN'

Hey.
You won't believe what happened at camp!
No really . . . you won't believe it!
So, I went swimming, right?
Did I mention that I was in my CHAIR??
Did I mention that it was my POWER chair??
It was crazy!

Social Closeness

- Sense of Belonging
- Aspects of Personality

Sense of Belonging:
same-age peers

Aspects of Personality:
humor!

- Joke-of-the-Day
- funny poems
  - Sliverstein
  - Prelutsky
  - Ogden Nash

Aspects of Personality:
pranks!

Co-planned
Sequenced
. . . .
But still
Very effective!

Change Perceptions

- simple 'step-listing' device
- student showed personality, humor, and understanding, thus changing perceptions of peers

Slide 1 — Change Perceptions

"Please excuse me if I look a mess. I was up half the night, programming this darn device!"

- Quick intro
- 'Don't judge THIS book by its cover!'

Slide 2

Topic-Setting!

Slide 3 — Put It Into Conversational Perspective . . .

Where Does Topic Setting Fit In???

Anatomy of a Conversation

Slide 4 — Attention Getters

"Hey you guys!"   "Waz up?"   "Dude"   "Yo"   "Hellooooo!"

Slide 5 — Conversation Starters

"Guess what I did?"   "I have a secret!"   "Wait till you hear what I heard!"

Note: these are very general
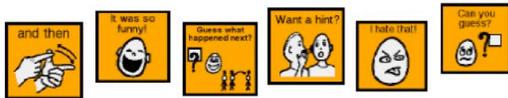
Slide 6

I'm engaged!

I went to the coolest place!

Topic-Setting!

I have a new joke!

So, what do you think of Obama?!

Maintainers, Holders,& Interjections

"I'll give you a clue."   "It was so embarrassing!"   "And then it got even worse!"

Turn Transfers

"Isn't that amazing?"   "You won't tell anyone, will you?"   "What did you see?"

Closings

"Can you find someone else for me to tell about this?"   "Hasta la vista, baby!"

Generic Topic-Setting

Agendas we all share:
• where we live
• family members
• pets
• collections
• weather
• sports / politics

Specific Topic-Setting

Topics about user's life:
• places visited
• people
• activities
• funny stories

Topic Setting & Social Agendas

	Generic	Specific
Needs/Wants		
Info Transfer		X X
Social Closeness		
•Sense of belonging	X	X
•Reflect personality	X	X
•Change perceptions	X	X
Social Etiquette		

Strategies to Support Topic-Setting

1: Increase Vocabulary Access

Picture Word Power
(ATI, AMDI, PRC, etc)

Gateway Junior 40
(DynaVox)

Unity for Pathfinder +
(PRC)

Unity for Vantage +
(PRC)

Levels-Based Devices

Super Talker - AbleNet

Chat 40 - Saltillo

Tech 128 - AMDI

Increase Vocabulary Light Tech

Tab-Top Flip Light Tech System

Karen & Sherry's Light Tech
Communication Displays
Karen.Casey@ncmail.net

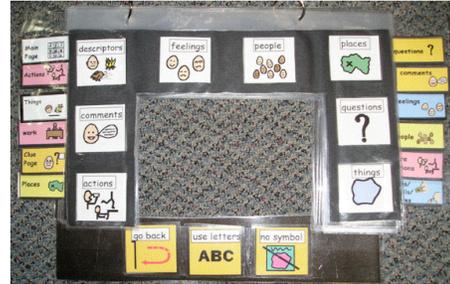## Tab Top Flip Set – Clothing & Core

Flip 'n Talk (Large)

Nancy Inman

- Up to 30 sets of 6 symbols
- Can be added to core board, (shown) or affixed to other VOCAs

www.mayerjohnson.com

8-Flip Eye Gaze Writing

Musselwhite & Hanser, Write to Talk CD, 2005

Gimme Five

Student uses voice / AAC Device to give 5:

- things you love
- things you hate
- things that scare you
- people you'd like to meet

Karen Erickson Idea

SCHOOL EXPERIENCE LOG   :

School Experience Log

Name: Kevin   Date: 4/18/02

Books: Little House on Prarie

Topics & Themes: Pioneer America

Special Events: Making soap

New Words: dyeing, pioneers, settlements

Idea from Janet Sturm, 2

HOME EXPERIENCE LOG   :

Home Experience Log

Name: Kevin   Date: 4/18/02

Special Events: went to grocery store; babysitter Sat

Movies & TV Shows: Simpson's

What's New This Week: relatives from Cuba staying in house for awhile

Books & Hobbies: Pokemon

New Stuff: Pokemon backpack

Idea from Janet Sturm, 2

Save 'Remnants'

- ticket stubs
- postcards
- napkins
- bulletins
- lock of hair
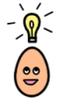
Idea: David Beukelman

Model It!

- **Research**: Light (1997) - partners model < 10% of messages . . . even when directly instructed to do so!

- **Strategies**: Use lists, logs, litter to do 'think-alouds'

- **More Ideas?**: See Musselwhite & Hanser (Write to Talk)

Provide Scaffolds

- **Initial Letter Cueing**

- **Semantic Context Setting**

- **Topic Notebooks + Questions**

- **Flip Charts**

Print on letter paper in portrait mode.   Alphabet 36

a	b	c	d		
e	f	g	h		
i	j	k	l	m	n
o	p	q	r	s	t
u	v	w	x	y	z
I'll spell	guess	help!	wait	1st letter	space

TIP!!

family PEOPLE friends	travel ALPHABET emotions	medical CARE bathroom
homework CLASSES phone		books/mags MUSIC videos/movies
clothing FOOD shopping	news POLITICS newspaper	sports COMPUTER weather

TIP!!

Nov, 2004

1. Guess where I went?
2. Guess who with?
3. Guess my favorite act.

Remnant Book

Teaching Partners

Use an 'instruction block'

Hi, I'm Matt. When I look at a picture, it means I want to talk with you. Please ask me questions that I can answer by looking at something or answering YES (by blinking my eyes) or NO (by looking away). REMEMBER — let me have a turn every time you have a turn!

Plan A: Use a Voice to Get Attention

Hey, come here. I have something to say!

+

1. Guess where I went?
2. Guess who with?
3. Guess my favorite act.

Plan B: Use a Talking Remnant Book

I went somewhere fun to eat!

Guess what I went to see!

Talking Photo Album

Plan C: Use Attention Getter, Starter, AND a Story!

Attention getter

Generic starter

Maintianer

Turn Transfer

Positive Comment

Negative Comment

Closing

Record your sequenced 'story' here!

Lingo

Sample 8-Location Script

I have something to tell you!   #1   #2   #3

I felt really _____   Wanna hear more?   Then guess what.   Gotta go. Bye.

Specific Topic Setter (Musselwhite, 2000)

Features:
- Easily changeable w/ PostIts
- Includes many conv parts

Idea: Add Remnants in a 'Pocket'

I have something to tell you!   #1   #2   #3

I felt really _____   Wanna hear more?   Then guess what.   Gotta go. Bye.

Boardmaker – Eye Gaze Chat Board   Auto Resize On

I have something to tell you. Loot at the Postit note

It felt really....

Postit note #1 goes here. (starter)

Want to hear more?

Cut out this section to look through.

Postit note #2 goes here. (next part of story or comment.)

Then guess what?

Well, that's it!

Postit note #3 goes here. (last part of story or comment.)

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TOPIC-SETTING:
⁻Research & Strategies for Face-to-Face & Written Communication
(Musselwhite, 2009   www.aacintervention.com)

The ability to initiate a topic is a crucial skill in terms of communicative competence. For augmented communicators, this discourse skill is particularly important, as topic initiation promotes **power** and **conversational control**. Topic-setting in written communication is equally important, and equally challenging for students who use AAC.

Research on Topic Setting

Research on interaction between augmented and natural speakers has shown that face-to-face topic setting is difficult for many augmented communicators.

• Augmented communicators often have a *respondent role*, with few initiations, compared to their speaking partners (Culp, 1982; Harris, 1982; Light, 1988; Light, 1997; Light, Collier, and Parnes, 1985).
• Furthermore, *turntaking patterns are unequal*, with the natural speaker taking the majority of turns (Buzolich, 1983; Farrier, Yorkston, Marriner, & Beukelman, 1985; Light, 1988; Light, et al., 1985).
• Messages, including topics of messages, are often *co-constructed* by the AAC user and the speaking partner (Bedrosian, 1997; Blau, 1986; Light, 1997)
• *Peer-to-peer interactions are rare* (Harris, 1982; Koppenhaver, 1991; Kraat, 1985; Mike, 1995).

Written topic setting is also quite challenging for students who use AAC. For example, Sturm (2003) observed that first-grade children start a new writing topic almost every other day, in addition to creating more than 100 drawings in their writing activities. Far less research is available on written topic setting by individuals who use AAC. We do know that in general, students who use AAC have differences in their reading and writing experiences, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Koppenhaver & Yoder, 1993; Light & Kelford-Smith, 1993; Mike, 1995). See Sturm & Clendon (2004) for a review of research on AAC, language, and literacy.

Why do augmented communicators have such difficulty in initiating and maintaining topics?

Culp (1988) suggests the following factors affecting face-to-face communication.

•*vocabulary constraints* (few hundred concepts vs. 10,000 for oral communicators)

•*rate & timing of message delivery* (slow rate, difficult to jump in with comments)

•*physical effort required* (may sometimes seem too difficult to make the effort)

•*limited environmental experiences* (could yield less topics of conversation)

•*partner behaviors* (failure to pause, dominating conversation, giving too much scaffolding, when no longer necessary)

Clearly, some of the same factors (vocabulary constraints, limited environmental experiences) also affect written topic setting. However, written communication may transcend some of these barriers, such as the rate and timing of message delivery, as the timing constraints are typically more flexible for written communication. While partner behaviors (failure to pause, dominating the interaction) may interfere with face-to-face communication, some potentially useful partner behaviors (helping to co-construct messages) may not be available during written communication.

Communication Agendas or Social Purposes

Light (1988) has identified four agenda that are fulfilled within communicative interactions:
1) Expression of needs/wants
2) Information transfer
3) Social closeness
4) Social etiquette

Successful face-to-face topic setting is crucial to information transfer and social closeness, particularly for users with limited symbols. For individuals who are young or not independently ambulatory, it may also be important to set clear topics to achieve wants and needs. However, vocabulary on communication displays is often weighted towards achieving wants and needs, without sufficient consideration for information transfer and social closeness (Light, 1997). Social etiquette in face-to-face communication is often expressed through simple nonlinguistic means (THANK YOU, expressed through a smile or gesture).

Written communication can address all of these agendas. In the context of school, clear topic setting is especially crucial for information transfer. Nonlinguistic means are not available in written communication, as there is often no partner to help co-construct messages. Thus, the decontextualized nature of written communication will require a more clear topic (for example, indicating WHO is being thanked, for WHAT, and by WHOM).

Types of Topic Setting

Musselwhite (1985) identifies both generic and specific approaches to topic setting.
Generic Topic Setting refers to initiating topics that speakers have in common, such as: preferences in music, T.V., or movies; general information concerning personal topics such as pets or collections; and newsworthy topics such as sports teams or politics.

Specific Topic Setting refers to initiating topics reflecting events in the user's life, permitting partners to learn details about those events.

Generic Topic Setting and Communication Agendas:
A generic topic setting approach can support the information transfer and social closeness agendas. For example, the generic topic setter, "I love rock music. How about you?" can contribute to the following social purposes identified by Light (1988). 1) Help the AAC user acquire a *feeling of belonging* (see? I like the same music you do!); 2) Reflect aspects of the individual's *personality* (these are my interests); 3) *Create/change perceptions* of others regarding the augmented communicator as a person (observe — this person is way cool!)

Specific Topic Setting and Communication Agendas:
Specific topic setting approaches are particularly well-suited to achieving the information transfer agenda, with partners learning of important events such as a haircut, a new baby brother, or a trip to McDonald's with grandparents. In the process of this information trannsfer, it is highly likely that social closeness will also be increased. Specific topic setting includes conversational narratives, which hold importance in discourse because of the connection to making and sustaining friendships and developing personal identities (Husain, 1997). Oral narratives have also been identified as having a role in supporting future literacy (Dickinson & McCabe, 2001; Roth et al, 2002; Waller et al, 2001). Therefore, the face-to-face topic setting will focus primarily on oral narratives.

Strategies to Support Topic Setting

Increase Vocabulary Access

The need for vocabulary that is quantitively greater, and qualitatively matched to the needs of the individual has been expressed throughout the literature, for face-to-face communication (Carlson, 1981; Musselwhite & St. Louis, 1988; Light, 1997: Sturm & Clendon, 2004) and for written communication (Musselwhite & Hanser, 2004; Sturm & Clendon, 2004). A second concern is the heavy weighting of language supporting wants and needs. For high-tech communication, consider use of vocabulary sets that offer a wide range of both core language (high frequency words used across all settings) and category language (sets of nouns, descriptors, etc. that will support topic-setting). Samples include:

It is most helpful if the majority of the vocabulary is available to students across all listening, speaking, reading, and writing opportunities. Hanser (2003) provides support for using AAC devices as 'electronic pencils', increasing access to vocabulary in written communication for students who use AAC.

If students do not have access to high-tech communication systems, light-tech systems must provide a wide vocabulary if AAC users are to gain independence in topic setting. While category-based systems are typically not helpful for the give and take of face-to-face communication, they can be extremely useful in setting a topic.

Support Students In Developing Topic Ideas

Lists: Typical students who are given a blank piece of paper and told to 'write' often exclaim, "But I don't know what to write!" Students who use AAC will have the same feelings for written communication, but may also have these concerns for face-to-face communication, based on the barriers described previously. For both forms of communication, it may help to develop an *Idea Bank*. General educators typically use the concept of an *idea bank,* with ideas stored in a writers notebook (Forney, 1996), in journals (Kemper et al, 2000), or on a classroom idea board (Zaragoza, 1997). Forney uses 'sponge time' or end-of-day to support students in generating ideas as a group, and also suggests having students develop 'First Line Banks,' listing first lines from favorite books as personal topic starters.

Logs: The home and school experience logs suggested by Sturm (2002) are another great example of supports for both face-to-face and written topic setting. The student who uses AAC can look through the logs to get ideas that bridge home / school boundaries (see page 9 of this handout & *Write to Talk CD*). Dowden (1997) suggests using daily and weekly calendars to support common topics.

Litter: Beukelman (1985) has used remnants for decades to help individuals start and support topics across boundaries. These remants can be used for both face-to-face and written communication.

Model Topic Setting Strategies

A number of authors have expressed the importance of modeling use of AAC devices during conversation (Buekelman & Garrett, 1988; Goossens', Crain, & Elder, 1992; Musselwhite & Hanser, 2003), Light (1997) reviews studies showing that AAC partners model in less than 10% of their messages, even when instructed to do so. While it may seem overwhelming to model ALL language, modeling strategies to set topics is a smaller goal, and may seem more achievable. The AAC partner may use the topic idea banks, notebooks, logs, etc. to suggest possible topics, modeling think-alouds. For additional ideas in modeling topic setting for written communication, see *Write to Talk* (Musselwhite & Hanser, 2003, p. 15).

Provide Scaffolds for Topic Setting

For students who are beginning conversationalists, or students who struggle with access to vocabulary, it may be necessary to provide scaffolds to allow them to experience success in topic setting and ongoing conversations. For face-to-face conversation, the use of an *introduction strategy*, as described by Light & Binger (1998) can be very effective in teaching new partners how the individual indicates yes and no, whether to guess, etc., all information that supports co-construction of messages. This introduction strategy can be oral (e.g., a cell on a communication device) or printed (e.g., an instruction block in a topic setter notebook).

Initial Letter Cueing, in which the AAC user points to the first letter of each word spoken, can greatly increase comprehensibility of dysarthric or apraxic speech, as shown by Beukelman & Yorkston decades ago (1977). Dowden (1997) summarizes research, provides case examples, and offers a summary of tips for supporting topic setting through speech supplementation for individuals with severely unintelligible speech.

Semantic context setting, providing listeners with the semantic category for a target word, is also summarized by Dowden (1997). She describes strategies and assessments to determine whether one or both of these approaches might support topic setting efforts. The eye gaze topic setter (below) extends this strategy.

Topic notebooks plus questions, is another strategy suggested by Musselwhite (1990). This approach goes beyond simple home-to-school journals, as the student is responsible for co-constructing messages with the partner, through the use of the topic notebook plus questions that guide the conversation. Using this technique, the AAC user gradually takes on more responsibility for setting the topic and maintaining the conversation.

Flip charts may be helpful supports for individuals who have a hard time organizing the parts of a conversation, such as students on the autism spectrum (see sample below).

Initial Letter Cueing
October 2000 Tip of the Month
www.aacintervention.com

Eye Gaze Topic Setter Page
November, 2004 Tip of the Month
www.aacintervention.com

Flip Chart
Can We Chat CD
www.aacintervention.com

Writing & Talking - Goals & Activities

Janice Light (1989, 1998) has described sets of skills that AAC users need to build communicative competence. A brief summary of each is provided, with suggested writing / talking goals:

Linguistic Skills include receptive and expressive skills in the native language spoken by the family and broader social community. This includes skills in the 'linguistic' code of the AAC system. Examples include exploring vocabulary, icon sequences, navigating dictionaries, using past tense or comparative 'er'.

Operational Skills refer to the technical skills required to use the AAC system(s) accurately, efficiently, and appropriately. Examples include: using a head pointer to indicate items on a communication board and using row-column scanning with a single switch.

Social Skills refer to knowledge, judgment, and skills in the social rules of interaction. Included are skills to initiate, maintain, develop, and terminate interactions; skills to develop positive relationships and interactions with others; and skills to express a full range of communicative functions. Using dialogue in writing plays and writing interviews would support this goal.

Strategic Skills refer to compensatory strategies that may be utilized by individuals who use AAC to overcome functional limitations that restrict their effectiveness as communicators. An example is providing new partners with information about how to communicate with them.

Light Tech Vocabulary Sets to Support Writing

Print 'n Communicate

• Set of 21 communication boards
• category-based vocabulary
www.mayerjohnson.com

8-Location Eye Gaze Set
Caroline Musselwhite & Gretchen Hanser

• Set of categories with tabs
• Used for eye-gaze or partner-assisted auditory scanning; Write to Talk CD
carmussel@cox.net

Flip 'n Talk (Large)
Nancy Inman

• Up to 30 sets of 6 symbols
• Can be added to core board, (shown) or affixed to other VOCAs
www.mayerjohnson.com

Tab-Top Flip System
Karen Casey and Sherry Kornfeld
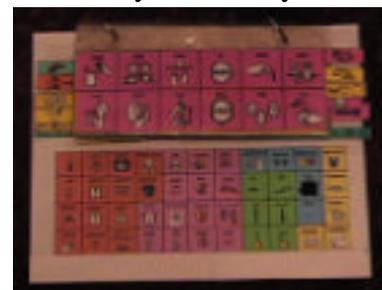
• Core vocabulary at bottom
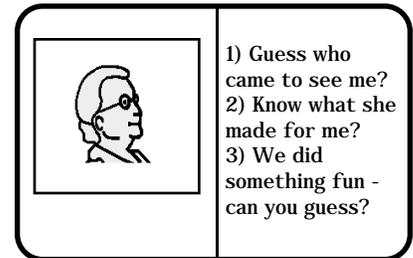• Pages of color-coded category sets
Karen.Casey@ncmail.net

SPECIFIC TOPIC SETTING

David Beukelman (1985 NCACA Conference) suggested developing *topic setter books* that can be used to help augmented communicators communicate across boundaries. We have used this concept with many individuals having differing communication needs and with a wide range of cognitive levels. Topic Setters should meet these criteria:
- High interest to user (favorite pet, collection)
- Opportunity for at least two turns per partner before interaction is completed (e.g., use of follow-up questions or guessing)
- Promote conversation by partner on topic specified by user.

Sample Topic Setter Materials:
- Momentos from outings (napkin from Wendy's, "dead" circus balloon)
- Tidbits suggesting events (swatch of hair from haircut, new shoes tag)
- Instant photographs
- Simple pictures (Mazola pic from magazine, Pokemon characters from catalog)
- Line drawings (hand on computer, specific pair of funny glasses)
- Conventional symbols (DynaSyms, PCS)

Kia's Chat Book

1) Guess who came to see me?
2) Know what she made for me?
3) We did something fun - can you guess?

Instructions for Communication Partners

It helps to have questions written on PostIts, with answers on the back. An "instruction block" also helps partners know how to communicate, and be more comfortable in their interactions. The user's communication displays should also have references to the Topic Setter (TAKE A PICTURE OF THIS FOR MY TOPIC BOOK; LOOK IN MY TOPIC BOOK)

```
Hi, I'm Matt.  When I look at a picture, it means I want to talk with
you.  Please ask me questions that I can answer by looking at something
or answering YES (by blinking my eyes) or NO (by looking away.   REMEMBER
- let me have a turn every time you have a turn!
```

```
Hi, I'm Katie.  I have some neat things to show you.  Ask me the questions on the PostIt
notes, or other questins I can answer by signing, answering yes/no questions, or an-
swering "wh-" questions.
```

| **PostIt Questions and Prompts**	**Answers (on back)**
1) Guess who took me to the circus? (*choices: Mommy, Aunt Carolyn, Nana & Boppy)*	1) Nana & Boppy
2) Guess who spilled their drink on the man in front of us?	2) Boppy - boy was the man mad!
3) Guess my favorite act. (*choices: clowns, lions, tightrope walker*)	3) Tightrope walker

Training In Use of Specific Topic Setters

Observation indicates that topic setter notwbooks are used more frequently and more interactively if a sequenced partner training is used:
1)   The individual who places the topic setter does so in cooperation with the user ("How about this question - 'Who spilled their drink?' ")
2)   The topic placer should next role play topic initiation and question answering. With young children, a puppet or third party may be necessary. ("When Sandy comes over, point to LOOK IN MY TOPIC BOOK. Now pretend I'm Sandy: 'Who spilled the drink? You?. . . . Boppy?. . . .)
3)   The topic placer now brings in the third person and facilitates the interaction only as needed
4)   That third person is now asked to facilitate an interaction with another poeson ("Sandy, when the bus driver comes in, I think Katie wants to show this to her.")
Through this sequenced approach, the user becomes familiar with the topic setting process across a variety of partners, with the aid of facilitators. Equally important, partners learn how to better interact with the user, in a carefully structured situation.

Specific Topic Setting Using a Communication Device
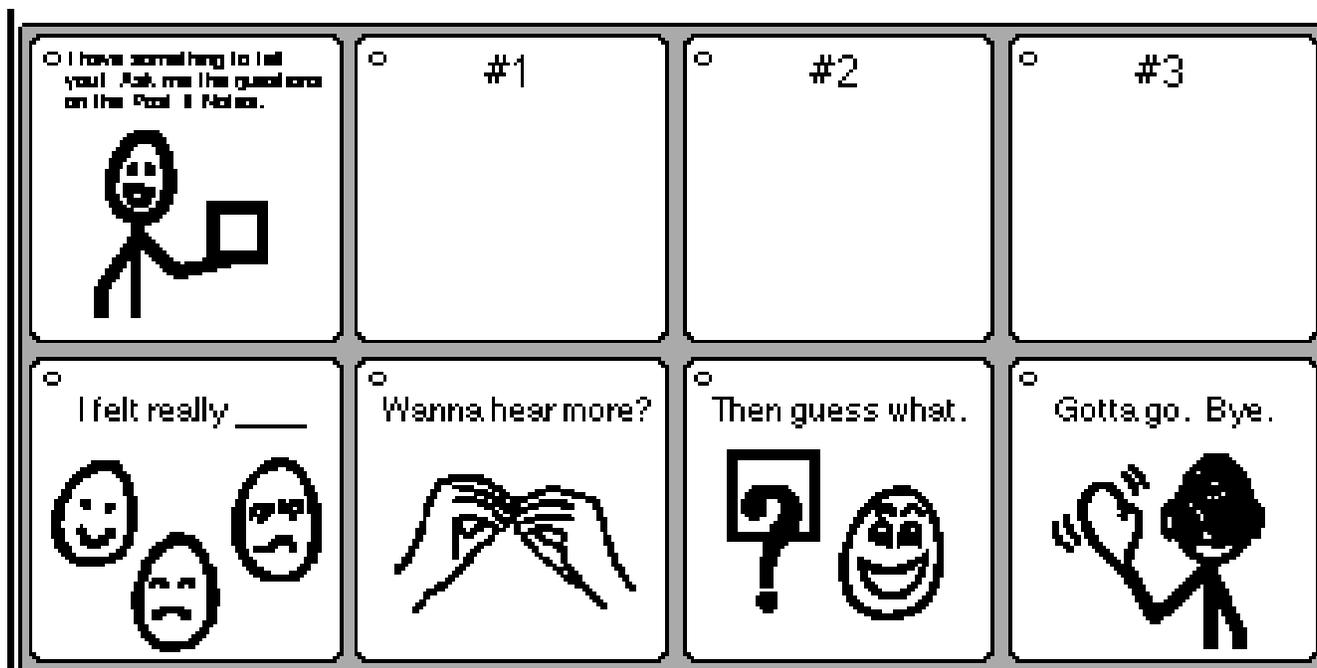
Specific Topic Setter (Musselwhite, 2000)

Use a communication device to set up a simple conversation. Here are the parts:

Attention-Getter / Starter: I have something to tell you . . .

Event Statements: #1, # 2, # 3 (ex: I played a really cool game today . . . it was on the computer . . . it's called Switch Wars, and I won!

Maintainers: Wanna hear more? Then guess what. Also personal comments: I felt really (partner would provide a new page of emotions, or would call out emotions)

Closing: Gotta go. Bye.

Specific Topic Setting Using Eye Gaze

This sample has the same conversation parts, but can be used with a student who uses eye gaze for communication.

Materials: Use a 'trade-card holder'. This is the plastic card holder used to store baseball cards, Pokemon cards, etc.

Strategy: Cut out the center square so you can read the student's gaze more easily. Double-side symbols, so you'll know what the student is looking at. Change Post-Its when the story changes.

Tip: Be consistent about how you hold the eye gaze board. Ex: "If you're sitting, center it over Mustafa's nose."
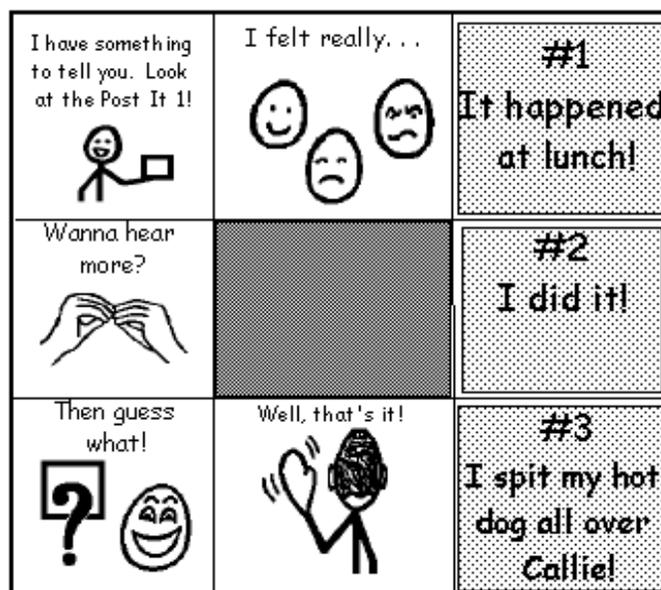
TOPIC SETTING
For Young or Cognitively Young AAC Users
(Musselwhite, 2000 www.aacintervention.com)

Topic setting with persons who are cognitively young but chronologically above the age of seven can be both challenging and fun. Individuals can set topics such as: *likes and dislikes* (e.g., "My favorite T.V. show is _____. What's yours?"); *information about home* (e.g., "I have thre cats, a goldfish, and a hamster named Mr. Belvedere. Do you have any pets?"); and *general interest topics* (e.g., "How 'bout those Tar Heels?" or "Hot enough for you?"). These topics will hopefully demonstrate that the person has something to say, and will elicit follow-up confersation from the partner. Indeed, a primary goal for these topic setters is to begin a conversation that will last for multiple turns.

For young or cognitively young individuals, tradtional "conversation" may be an unrealistic early goal. Therefore, different purposes may be identified for topic setting:

1) **Initiate interaction on topics of interest to the student:** interests that may be observed include music, bookreading, having the back or neck massaged, or having lotion applied. A "topic setter questionnaire" may help identify topic starters for an individual student. For this purpose concrete topics with hands-on follow-up work best.

2) **Ensure that the student begins the interaction:** this can be accomplished by making topic setters easily accessible and training partners in the strategy of *expectant time delay*.

3) **Provide for obligatory follow-up turns:** early topic-setters should be chosen to encourage multiple turntaking (e.g., decide where to apply lotion, what book to read, what song to sing).

SAMPLE EARLY TOPIC STARTERS

This listing suggests early topic starters, with potential follow-ups to promote multiple turns.

MUSIC: Lead-in symbol message: *Hey! Let's sing. I can pick the song.* Follow-up symbols: *Nobody Loves Me, Gopher Girls, Austrian Yodeling Song,* and other crazy songs.

TICKLING or LOTION: Lead-in symbol message: *I'd likesome lotion, please. Guess where?* Follow-up symbols: *arm, leg, neck, hand, face, etc.*

BOOKREADING: Lead-in symbol message: *Can we read a book? I havesome in my backpack.* Follow-up symbols: *Not necessary — hold up books for choosing.*

HAND CLAPS: Lead-in symbol message: *Let's play hand claps. I wanna pick the best one.* Follow-up symbols: *Pease Porridge Hot, Way Down Yonder, Cinderella,* etc.

GOING TO THE MOON: Lead-in symbol message: *I'm going to the moon! Guess what I'm gonna take?* Follow-up symbols: noun symbols, such as: *toys, animals, people*.

WHEELIE: Lead-in symbol message: *I love wheelies! Let me pick how many.* Follow-up symbols: hold up *fingers* (2 fingers on right hand, 4 on left) or *number cards*.

EVERYBODY DO THIS: Lead-in symbol message: *Let's play "Everybody Do This." I'll be IT first.* Follow-up symbols: *raise your hands, clap your hands, make a noise*

Topic Setter Actions 8 (Musselwhite, 2000)

COLLECTIONS: Normative Play Materials
## (Musselwhite, 1997)

RATIONALE: Collections can be appropriate at any age, and offer a way to "normalize" unusual interests. Collections can also serve a variety of functions for persons with severe handicaps.

FUNCTIONS OF COLLECTIONS:
- A topic of conversation
- Something to look for on field trips or vacations
- A joint activity (e.g., with peers, clubs, volunteers)
- A gift idea

SAMPLE ITEMS:

matchbox cars   jewelry   key chains
puppets   post cards   patches
message buttons   baseball caps   transforming
toys   stuffed animals   stamps
squirt guns   sunglasses   baseball cards
comic books   stickers
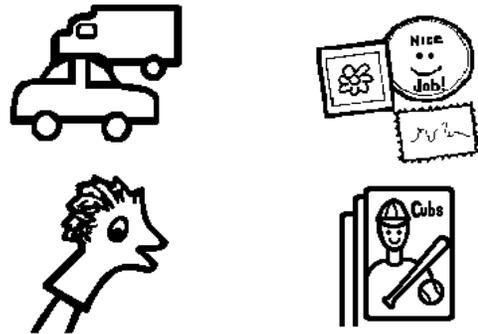
STORING COLLECTIONS:
Pegs on the wall (hat), or pegboard (necklaces)
Tackle box (key chains, jewelry, matchbox cars)
Wall displays — use Tempo Display fabric to mount:
    Elastic: squirtguns, sunglasses, small animals
    Velcro: hankies, bandanas
    Hooks: ncklaces, bracelets, key chains
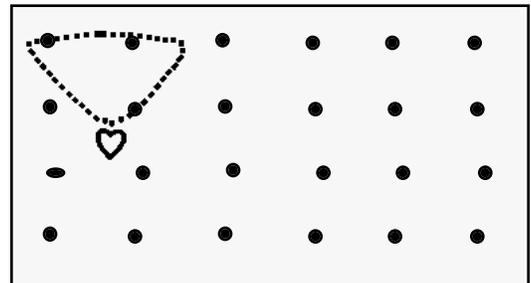
CHOOSING ITEMS:
Various displays can be used to select the item of the day; for example, a Choice Board could be used.
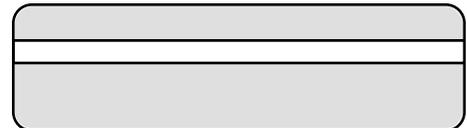
DISPLAY ITEMS:
Affixed to waist by spiral key chain (e.g., whistles, toys)
Worn on body (e.g., hair ornament, message button, bandana)
Affixed to chair (e.g., sunglasses velcroed to chair) or laptray
    (e.g., toy attached with elastic)

MAXIMIZING USE OF COLLECTIONS:
Use a wall reminder chart to prompt appropriate use of collections. Include information such as: Name, collection; storage (e.g., wall display); display (e.g., laptray / elastic); choice method (e.g., choice board - 3 items - reaching); and use (e.g., choosing, turntaking, eye-gaze to comments, visual tracking).

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