

10 Augmentative and Alternative Communication tips for the Classroom

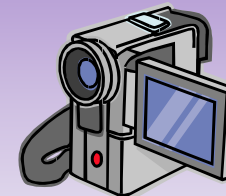
*Alecia Samuels
Kerstin Tönsing
Ensa Johnson*

Centre for AAC

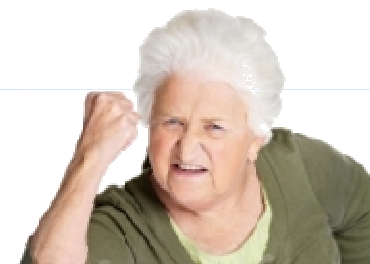
www.caac.up.ac.za



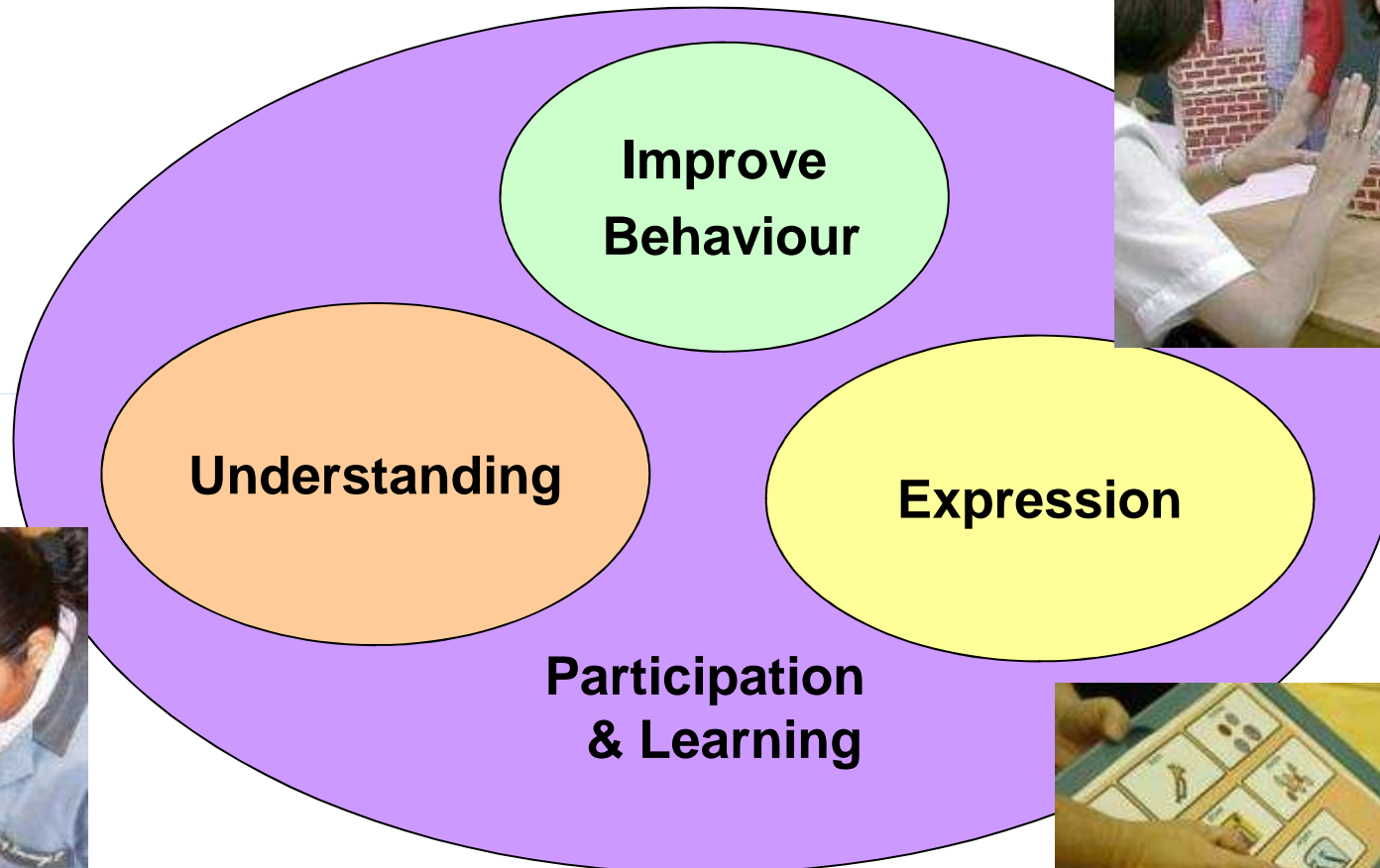
What is AAC?



- Includes all forms of communication that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas
- People with severe speech or language problems rely on AAC to supplement existing speech or replace speech that is not functional.
- We all use AAC when we make facial expressions or gestures, use symbols or pictures, or write.



Why use AAC in the classroom?



In education who relies on AAC ?

- Learners with significant problems in communicating using speech.
- Variety of disability groups: Physical-, intellectual-, sensory-, multiple disability, autism, DAS
- Learners whose 1st language differs from the language of teaching and learning (classroom language)



Benefits for the teacher

- Ensures that reach children with different learning styles e.g visual learners.
- Helps children to concentrate on the activity being presented
- Ensures that you reach children in your class with different home languages, as there is always a visual clue to help learn new vocabulary being taught in the classroom



How can teachers do this?

Graphic symbols are used to help the learners:

- Understand classroom rules and instructions
- Understand content
- Express what they know about what they have been taught



Understand Classroom rules

Classroom Arrival Rules

backpack



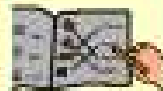
Hang up backpack

lunch bag



Put lunch away in cubby

homework



Turn in homework

math class

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{2}{3} & \frac{3}{2} \\ + & - \\ \hline \frac{5}{5} & -\frac{1}{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

Start math worksheet



Understand an activity e.g. Brushing teeth



I start by adding toothpaste to my toothbrush.



Next I will wet my toothbrush.



Then I brush my teeth on the top.



And I brush my teeth on the bottom.



Last I brush my tongue.



When I am finished I rinse off my toothbrush.



When I brush my teeth everyday I have a great smile.



This makes my Mom and Dad happy!

Understand the curriculum


Banana Bread

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 3 bananas  | 60 ml butter  | 250 ml sugar  | 1 egg  |
| 375 ml flour  | 1 ml salt  | 5 ml baking soda  | 5 ml vanilla  |
| 2.5 ml baking powder  | mixing bowl  | electric mixer  | loaf pan  |

1




* Turn oven to 350
Cream the butter and the sugar.


2



Add the egg.



Banana Bread
page 2

3




Mash the banana.

4




Add vanilla to the mashed banana.

5




Add the vanilla and mashed banana to the creamed mixture.

6



Measure the flour into a bowl.

7



Mix the other dry ingredients into the flour.

Aims for teaching

- “*Try and see*” vs “*wait and see*”
- Facilitate language development (receptive and expressive)
- Provide children with power and control
- Enhance social interaction
- Increase independence



Helping learners to understand

Aided visual strategies

**Aided language stimulation: Song
boards, story boards, activity
boards**



1. Aided Language Stimulation

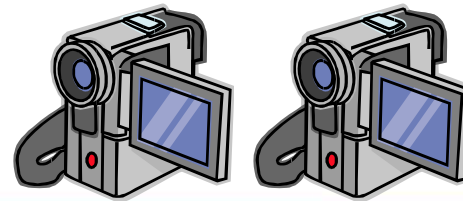
Why is it important?

- Typically in class teachers emphasize expression e,g asking questions, commands and “show me”.
- **BUT** typically developing children hear and understand language for one year before they are expected to start speaking it (output)
- Emphasis on talking to the child even if the child does not “understand”



1. Aided Language Stimulation

- Strategy that helps learners to understand instructions, ideas and the curriculum better.
- Teacher points to, or shows picture symbols on a communication display as she speaks.
- So the learner is not just hearing the message but also can see it i.e. making the message visible.
- 80:20 Ratio (Statements: Questions)



**Aided Language
Stimulation SONG
BOARD**

House



Motse

burning



tsha

come



etla

quickly



ka pela



Mollo

pour



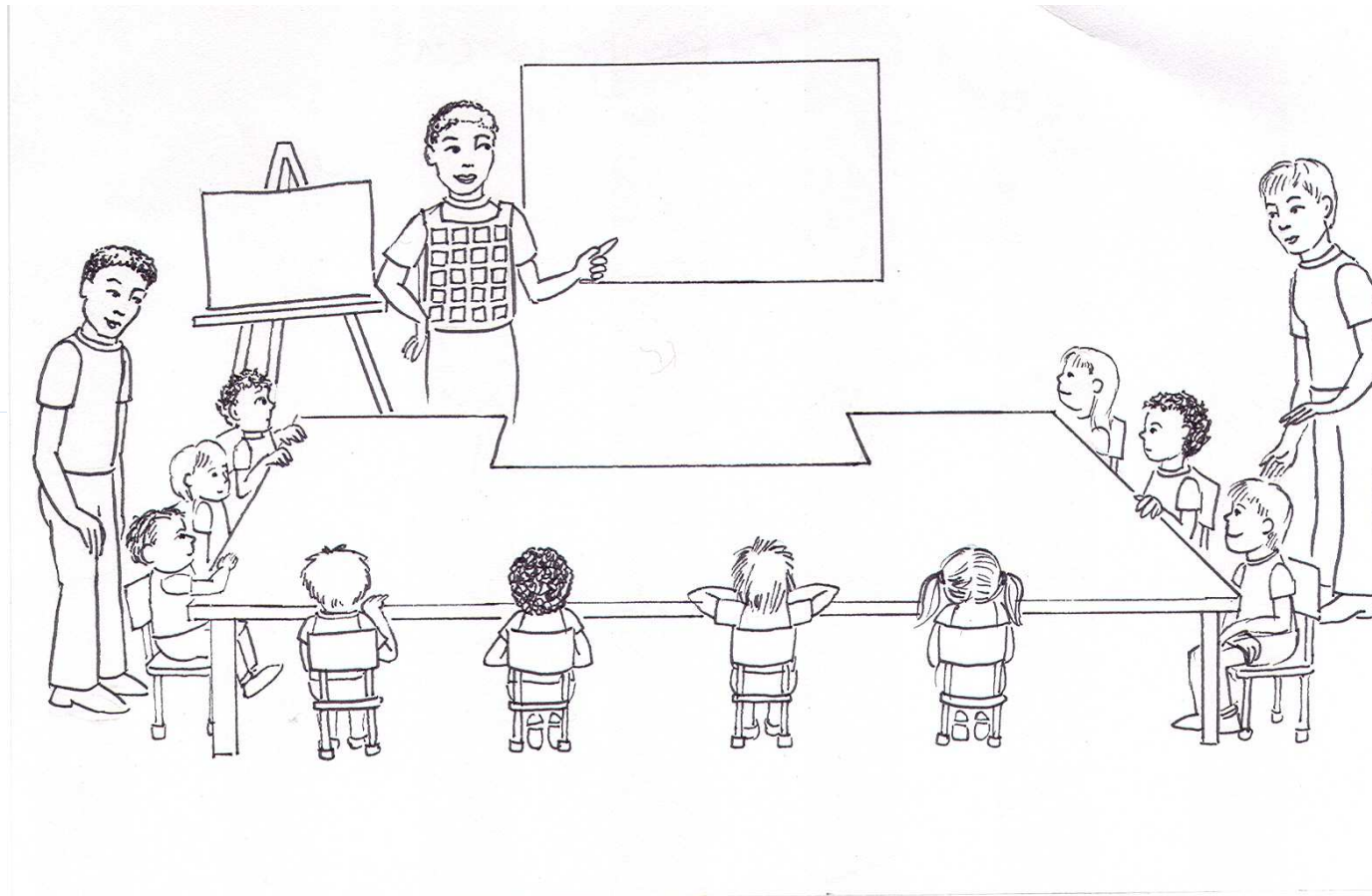
tshela

water

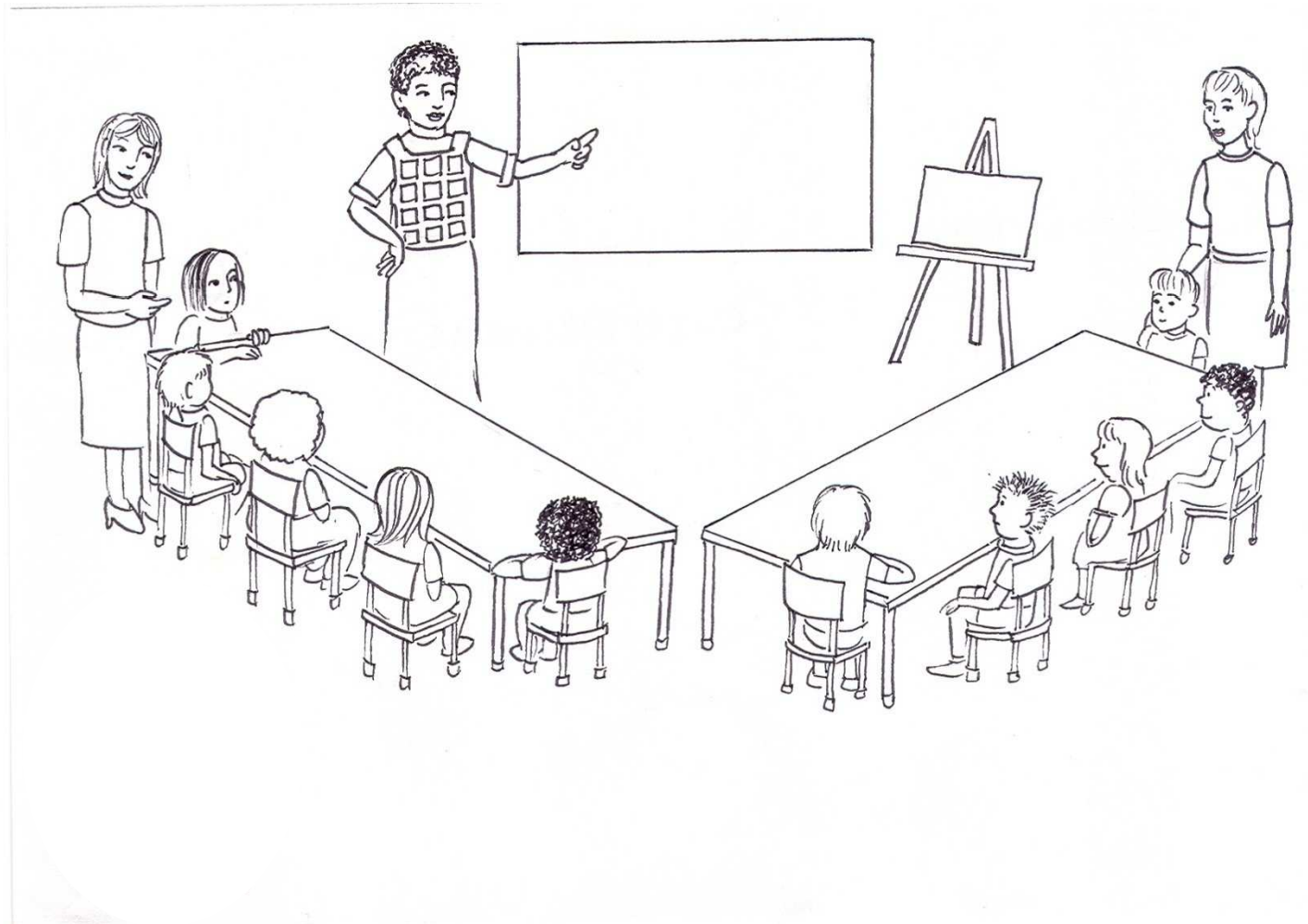


meetse

2. Placement in the classroom: U-shape



2. Placement in the classroom: V-shaped table



3. Visual schedules

Why visual schedules?

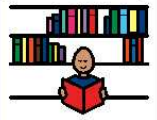
- Ensure that classroom time is used optimally
- Learners can anticipate what will happen
- Reduce anxiety between transitions
- Useful to redirect learners to the activity
- Encourage participation in planning and choice making



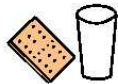
I think this afternoon we will...



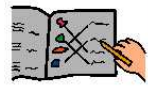
go to the library



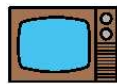
have a snack



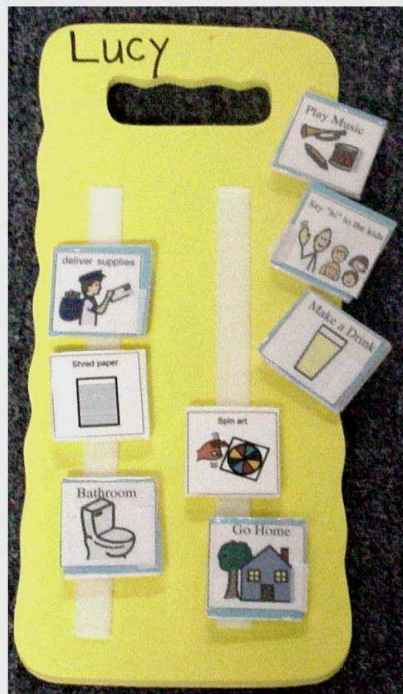
do homework



watch TV



eat dinner



Josh's Schedule

Room 116

Break

Teacher

Assistant

Mrs. Jones



B Block

Stagecraft



Mr. Collett



Mr. McBride

Room 105

Wednesday

Advisory 34



Mrs. Fairley



Mrs. Jones

Room 201

C Block

Reading Skills



Mrs. Mercier



Mrs. Alley

Room 116

Lunch

Cafeteria



Mrs. Miller

D Block

Family Management



Mrs. Catherwood



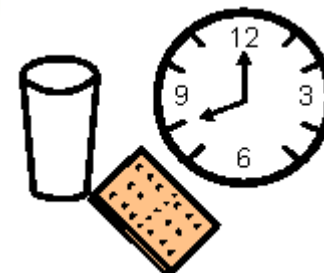
Ms. Cridge

Room 223



Designing a visual schedule

- Write down the classroom activities in chronological order, e.g.:
 - *Arrival time*
 - *Circle time (greeting, song, weather...)*
 - *Snack time*
 - *Theme time....*
- Select the **level(s) of representation** to be used - usually more than one (objects, photographs, line drawings...)
- Choose suitable symbol(s) for each activity – symbols that most learners will understand



Choose symbols

ACTIVITY

Circle Time

Numeracy

Playtime

REAL OBJECT

Piece of carpet



Calculator



Ball



LINE DRAWINGS

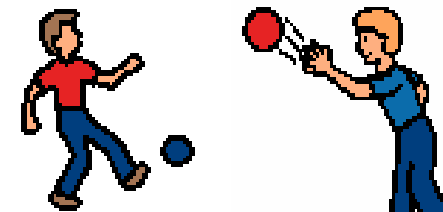
Picture of children sitting in a circle on a mat



Written numbers

1 2 3 4 5

Children playing with a ball



Choose a method to display

- Should learners see all or only one symbol?
- Select a method to indicate the current activity
- Select a method to indicate that the activity is finished

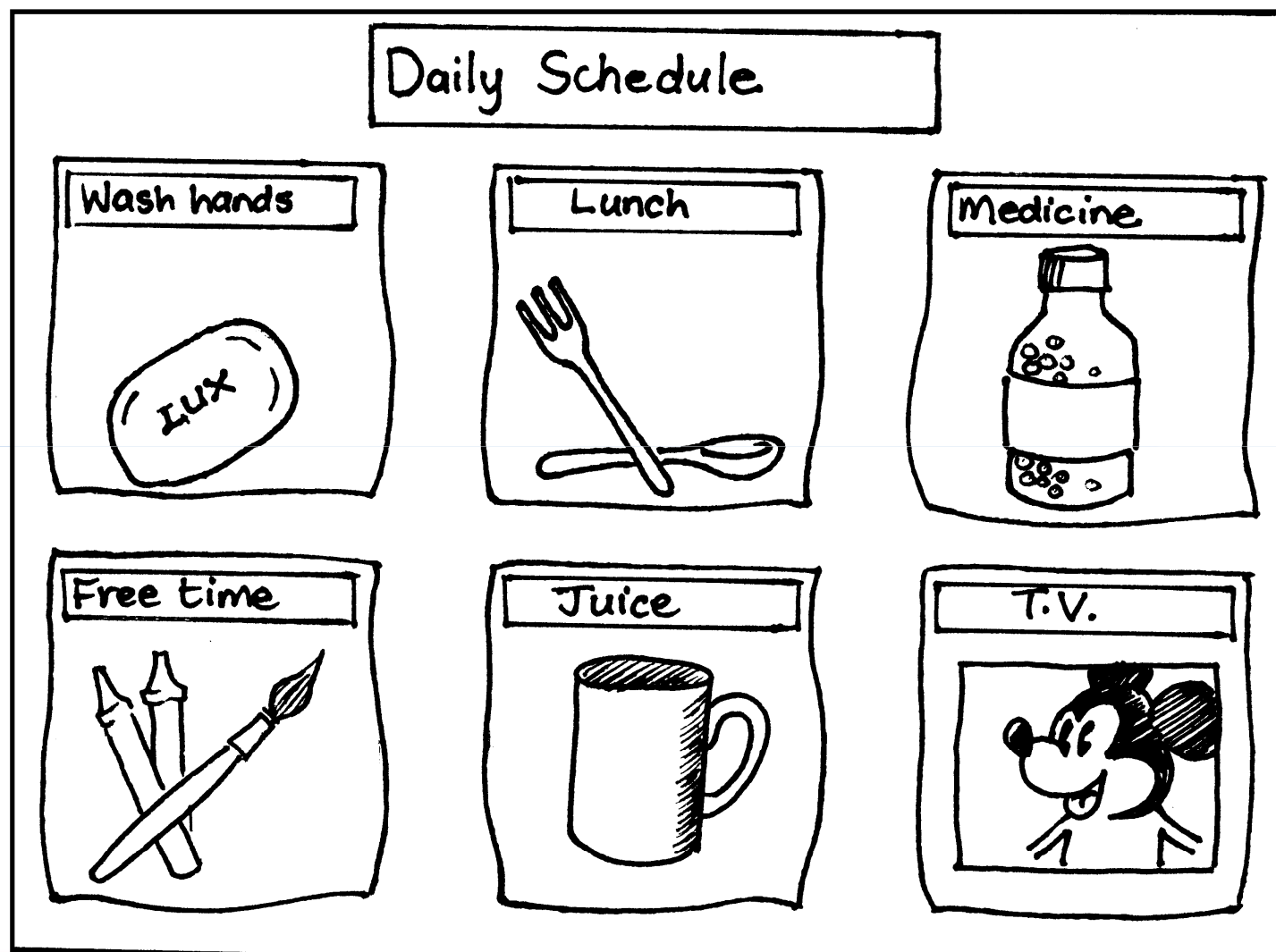
Washing line format



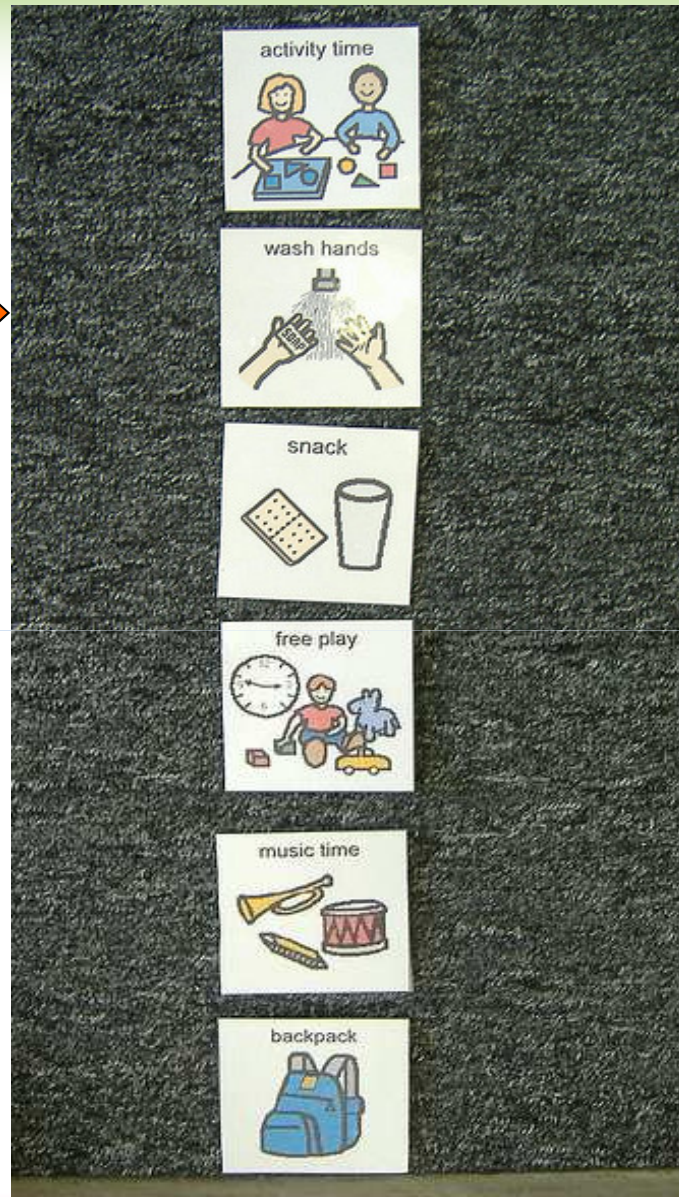
Box format



Plastic bag format



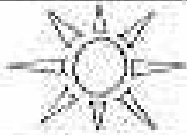











Strip



Board



| ACTIVITY | OBJECT/SYMBOL | PHOTOGRAPH OR LINE DRAWING |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Circle time: Opening |  |  circle time |
| Weather |  |  weather |
| Theme discussion |  |  wool |
| Snack Time |  |  Snack |
| Arts and crafts |  |  Paint |
| Outside play |  |  play |

Using a visual schedule

Before each step of the activity, do the following with the learner:

- Go to the visual schedule
- Point to/indicate the symbol that represents the activity (e.g. by a washing peg, opening a box) OR
- You may take off the symbol and take it with to the activity
- **NB! Don't use it in the activity** – it is a symbol.
- Indicating that that step is complete by doing one of the following:
 - take the symbol off the visual schedule and turn it over
 - ...or move the arrow indicator
 - ...or cover it (lid, fabric)
 - ...or throw it into the 'finished' basket.



Visual schedules : Task analysis

Task analysis (Mini-schedules)

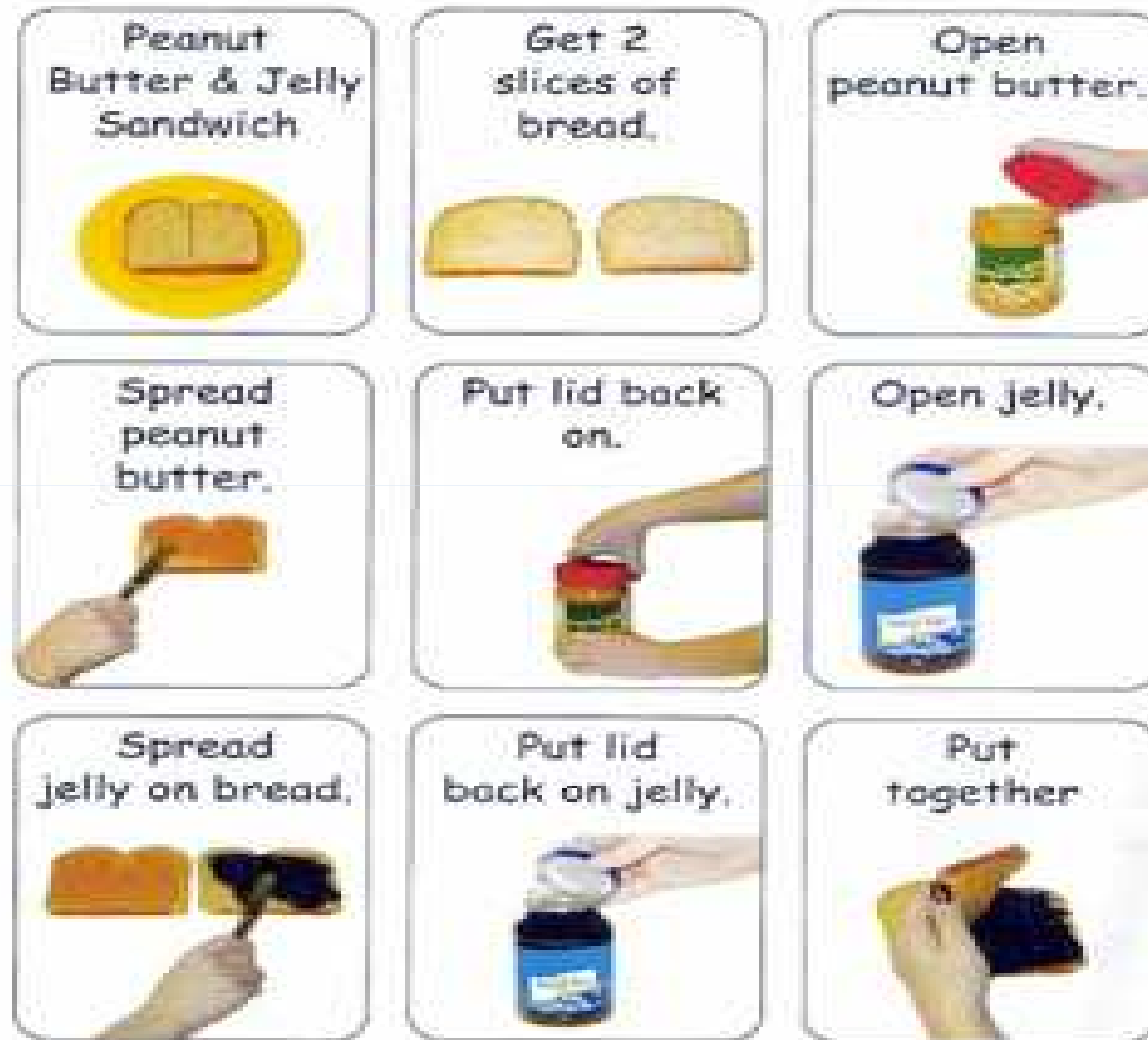
Supplement the visual schedule

- Cover only one activity or a part of it
- Direct the learner's choices/sequence of the activity
- Teach independence
- Example: Hand-washing











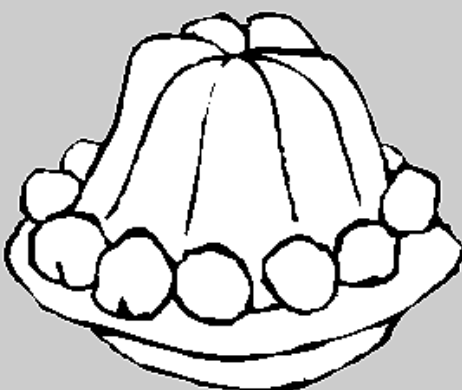




Open tap





















4. Visual recipe books: Photos



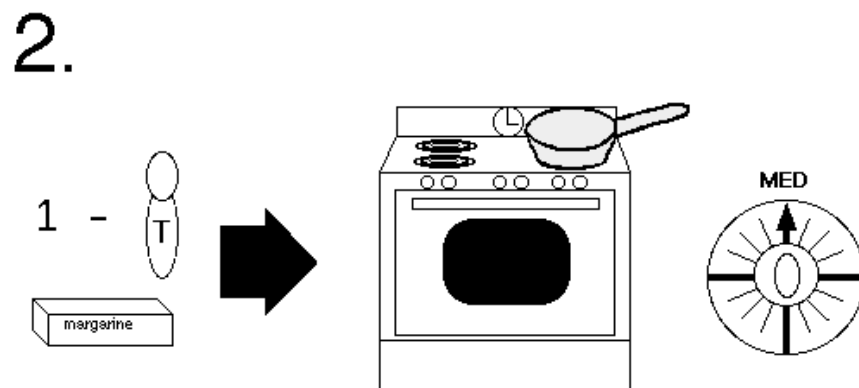
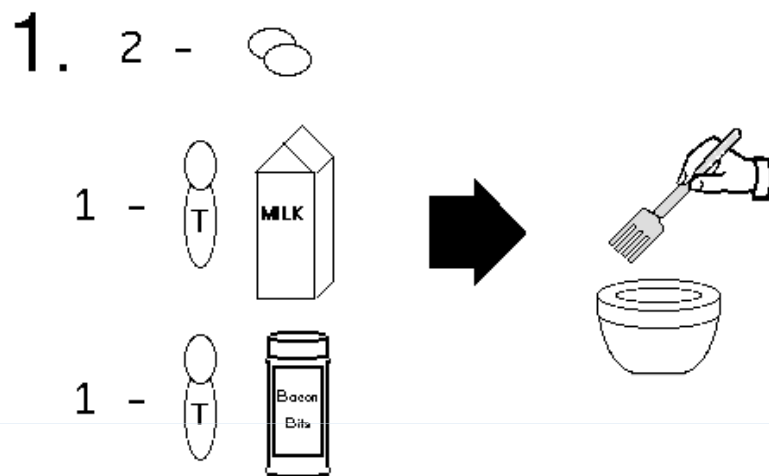
Visual recipe books

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| Jellie | |  | | Jelly | |
| Gereedschap | | | Utensils | | |
| meetbeker measuring jug | mengbak mixing bowl | lepel spoon | lepel electric kettle | klip scissors | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| vorms moulds | bord plate | bord plate | 2 lepels 2 spoons | | |
|  |  |  |  | | |
| Bestanddele | | | Ingredients | | |
| jellie jelly | kookwater boiling water | water water | cook a bake cook a bake |  | |
|  |  |  |  | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Metode | |  | | Method | |
| meetbeker measuring jug 200 ml | kookwater boiling water | → | mengbak mixing bowl | & | klip scissors |
|  |  | |  | |  |
| 1 | jellie jelly | | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| meetbeker measuring jug 250 ml | water water | → | mengbak mixing bowl | & | klip scissors |
|  |  | |  | |  |
| cook a bake cook a bake | vorms moulds | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| giet pour | → | in de fridge | & | afgeven wait | |
|  | |  | |  | |
| vorms moulds | → | borden plates | & | bedien serve | |
|  | |  | |  | |

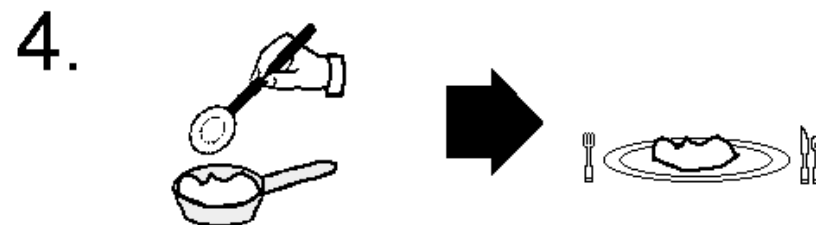
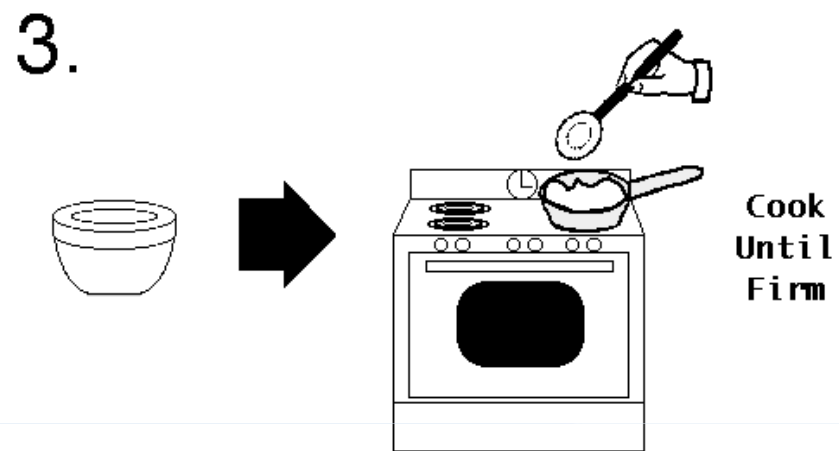
Visual recipe books

Fancy Scrambled Eggs



Bry-Bach Manor 2001

Page 2



ENJOY!

Bry-Bach Manor 2001

Apple-Cheese Bake

Ingredients

Makes 6-8 servings

6 cups **apples**, peeled and sliced



1 Tablespoon **lemon juice**



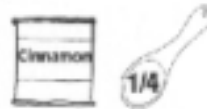
1/2 cup **sugar**



1/2 cup **flour**



1/4 teaspoon **cinnamon**



1/4 cup **margarine**



2/3 cup **cheese**, grated



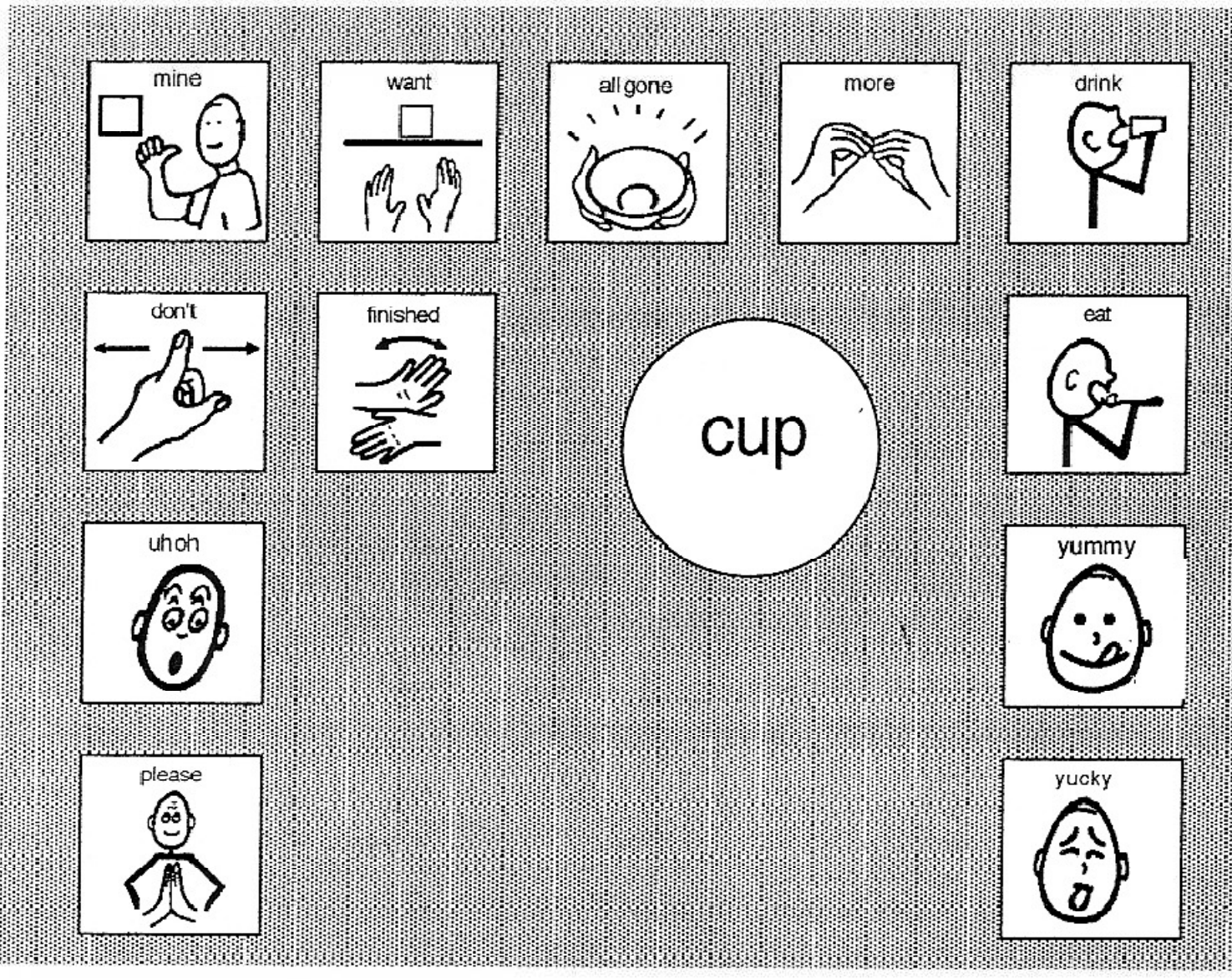
5. Placemats



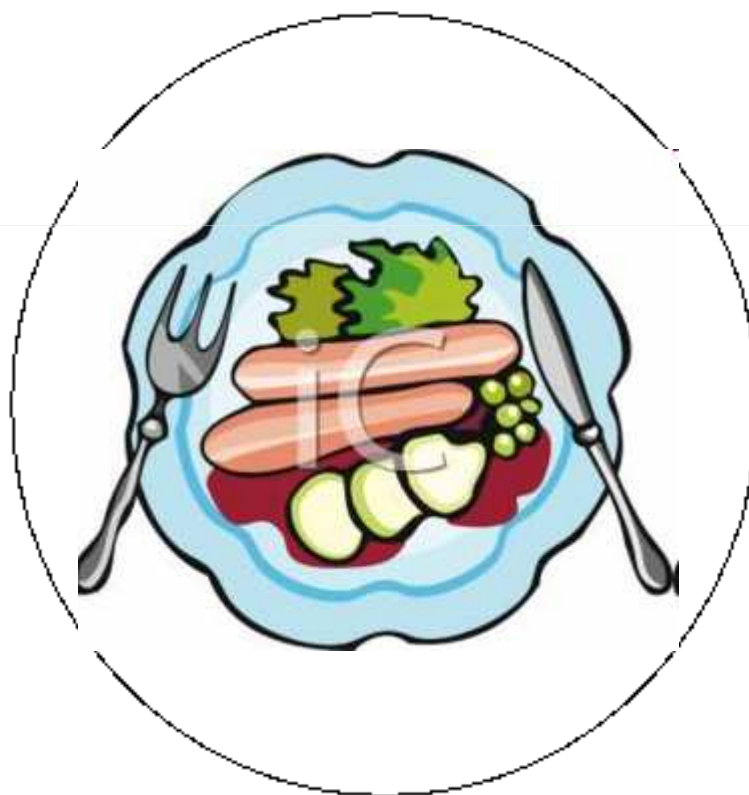
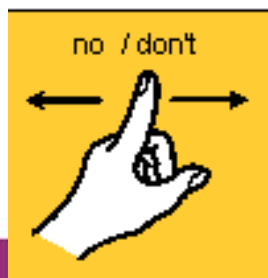
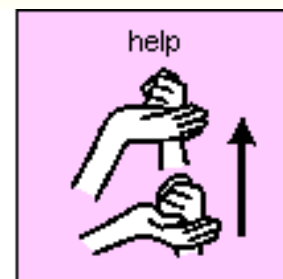
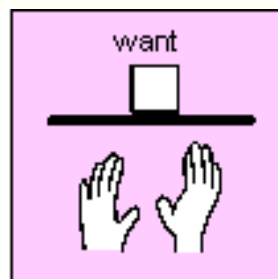
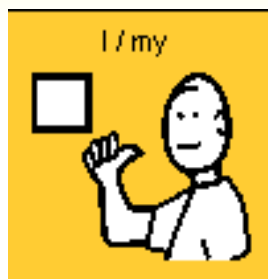
**Add
fringe vocabulary**



5. Placemats



5. Placemats

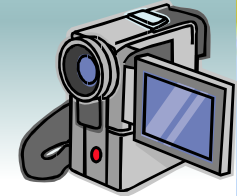


6. Engineer the environment for AAC and Literacy

Labelling the environment;
Exit the Room Requests;
Symbol and Text Displays



7. Teach Language not just Nouns



- **Different communication functions**
 - Greeting
 - Requesting
 - Protesting
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Commenting
 - Social interaction
 - Labelling
- **Allow time for children who use AAC to respond to the questions or initiating comments**



7. Teach Language not just Nouns (cont.)

- **All learners need to say the same things in classroom**
 - Importance of routines
 - Use of symbols, key word signs (Let the peers practice these skills with modeling or role playing different situations)
- **Supply with appropriate vocabulary in accessible & understandable format**



Generic “quick talk” examples

Can we play a game?

Look at me!

I don't understand.

Ah please!

Where are we going today?

My turn / I want a turn please

That's cool / awesome!

Let's do it again!

Yeah right!

Loser!

You look great today! (*compliment*)

Leave me alone!

What's happening?

More

Let me try!

•See you later alligator! (*sarcasm*)



8. Use repetitive lines in reading

- Good to use with learners who are developing emergent literacy skills.
- Provide the learner with a means to say the repeated line at the appropriate time in the story line e.g. a speech generating device e.g. **BigMack**
- Prompt for learner to “speak” the line until s/he can do it for her/himself, e.g.
 - pausing,
 - looking expectantly at the learner,
 - calling the learner’s name,
 - taking the learner’s hand and physically accessing the system or device



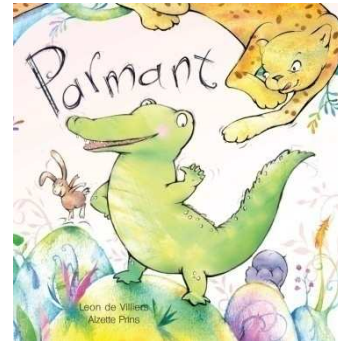
Repetitive lines



**A Gruffalo!
What's a
Gruffalo?**



**Not now
Bernard**



**“Nee!”
“Dit is my
lyfie en ek
sê: nee,
nee, nee!”**





**We're going
on a bear
hunt .
We're
gonna
catch a big
one**



9. Voting by Names

- **Making active choices:**
e.g. “*What’s for lunch?*” or “*What story are we going to read today?*”
- **Determining opinions:** e.g.
 - Do you want to read story A/B?
 - Do you like song A /B?
 - Do you think we should have a classroom party?
 - What do you want for lunch today?
- **Testing knowledge:** e.g.
 - Do you think an asteroid was the primary cause of the extinction of the dinosaurs?

| | | |
|--------|----------|-------|
| Julia | Gabriela | |
| Ethan | Katie | Dante |
| Joseph | Kyla | Matt |

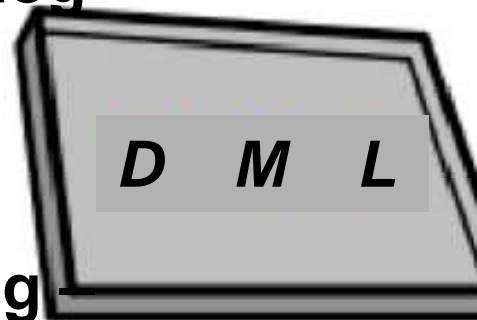
| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Matt | Julia |
| Kyla | Katie |
| Ethan | Gabriela |
| Dante | |
| Joseph | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

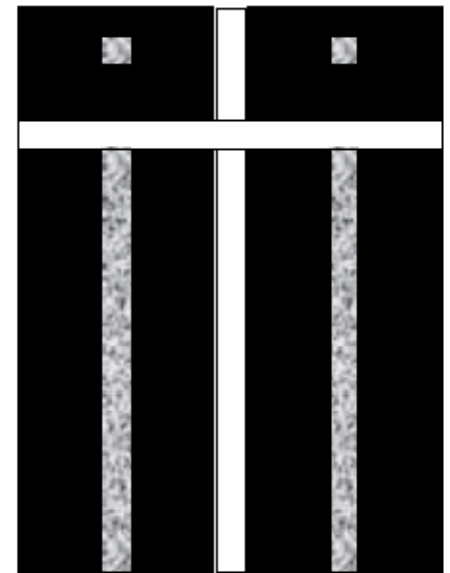
| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Matt | Julia |
| Kyla | Katie |
| Ethan | Gaby |
| Dante | |
| Joseph | |

Voting by Letters

- Hold the 2 options for book reading in front of learner
- Learner eye points to “dog”
- Hold the magnetic letters in front of learner. When she/he chooses “M” you say: “/m/ dog – No! Try again”
- Remove the “M” letter
- Learner chooses “D”. “/d/ dog – D for Dog”. Praise correct response
- Put learner’s name under the “Dog story”



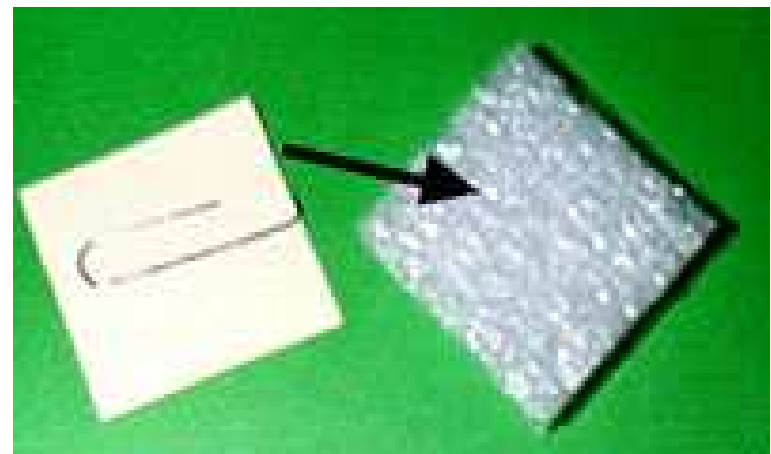
Magnetic letters



10. Adapting books

Page fluffers:

These **add spaces between each page** for easy page turning. Page fluffers can be made out of foam, cloth pegs, ice cream sticks, hot glue dots, etc.



Adapting books

Pull off symbols:

The symbols are **duplicates used in the story** and are found on the **bottom** of each story **page**. The teacher will first point to the symbol and then pull off the extra symbol and show it to the learner (in-your-face-communication). Lastly, the learner can pull the symbol off to manipulate and explore.

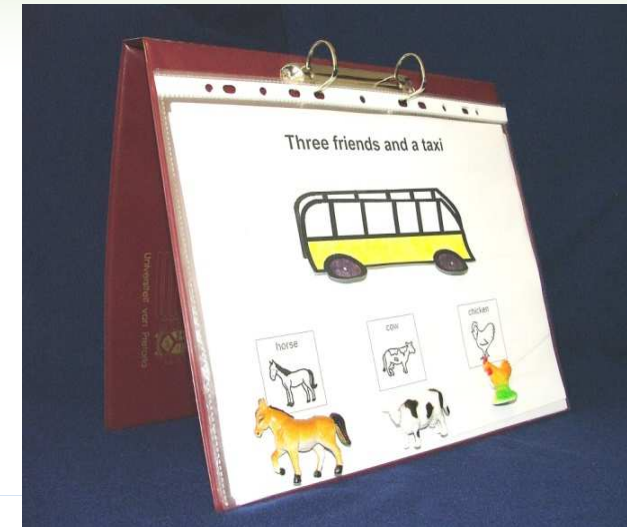


Adapting books

Object Book Props:

Use **3 dimensional objects** that correlate with the pictures/symbols in the story.

- Add Velcro to the objects
- Place them on a separate felt board after they “appeared” in the story, so they do not distract the learners.
- These objects can also be attached on each page, as the story progresses.
- A ring bind file is a good option for stability and now you only have to flip the pages over and have your hands free to augment your communication.



Adapting books

Multi-sensory:

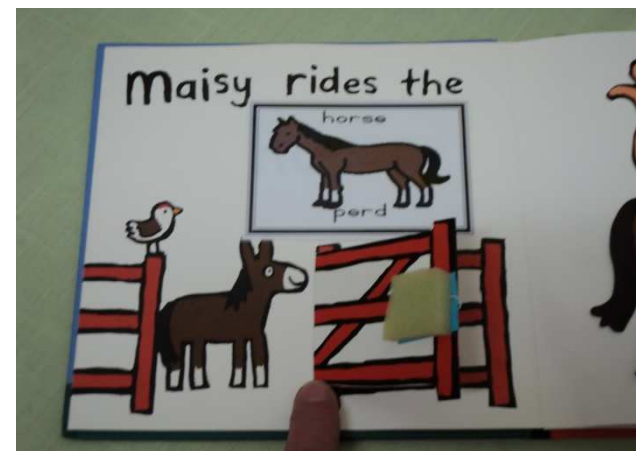
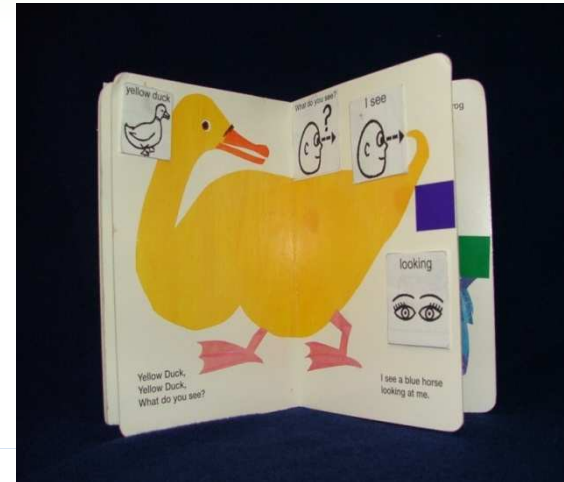
- Add as many **textures** to the pictures to make it a sensory experience.
- Keep the learner's attention
- Learner participates in feeling the textures on each page
- Makes the story more concrete to the learner
- Add textures like sandpaper, cotton wool, cloth, seeds, feathers, glitter, beads, etc.



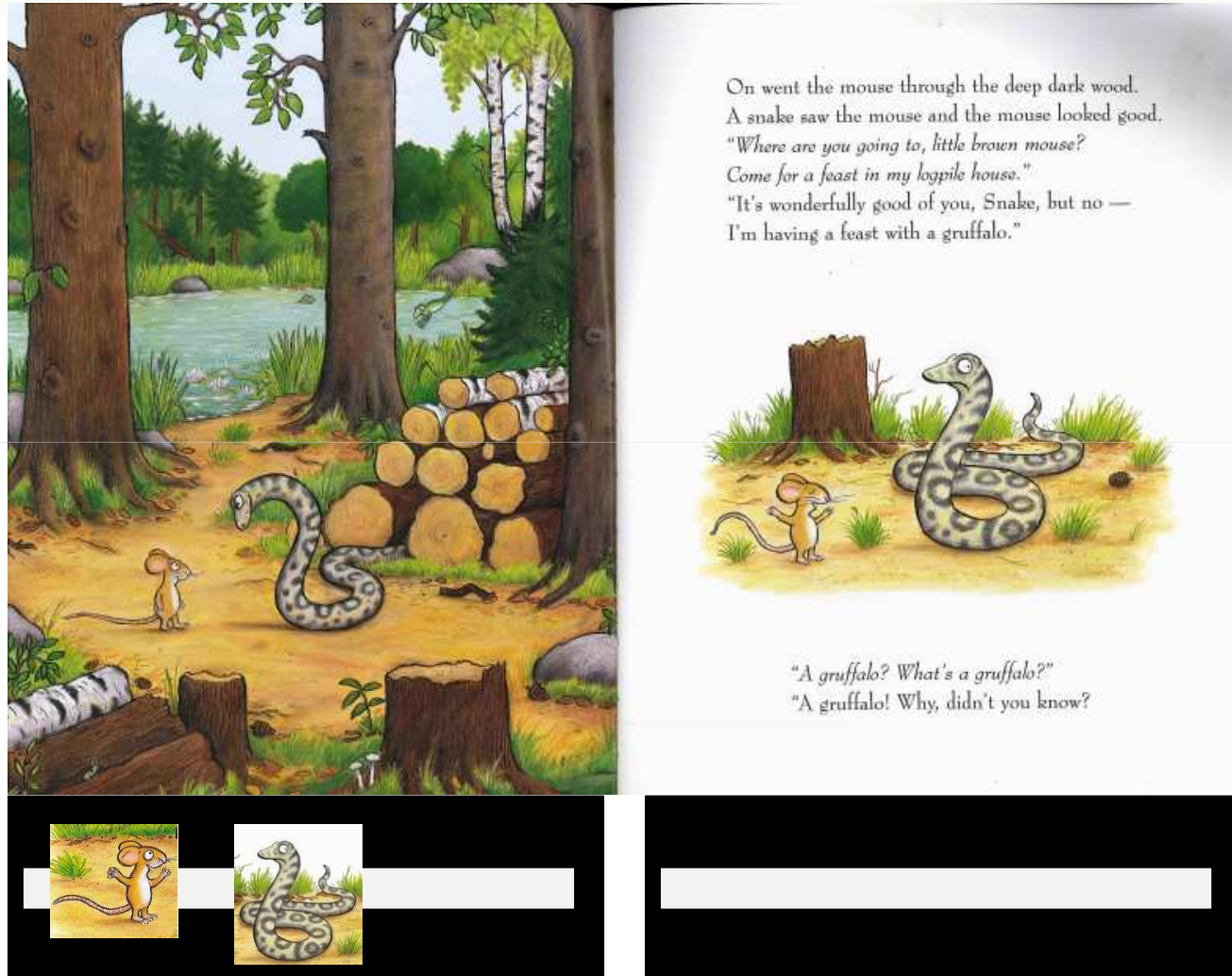
Adapting books

Add symbols:

Books with **simple backgrounds, lots of repetitive text, or rhymes,** and the **correct vocabulary level** for the learners. The example here repeats the phrases “...What do you see? ... I see a “...*animal*...” (*name the “animal” in the story*) looking at me”.



Adapting books: Making Literacy Strips



Adapting books: Making Literacy Strips

- **Materials Needed:**
 - Strip of black cardboard, self-adhesive Velcro, scissors, laminated symbols
- **Cut black cardboard to width of book.**
- **Cut Velcro (female) to fit the literacy strip (back and front). All symbols stay on the back until needed for the story**
- **Stick Velcro (Male) strips to the back and front of the book. This is for the literacy strip to attach to the book**
- **Laminate page of symbols**
- **Cut out symbols**
- **Attach Velcro (Male) to each symbol**
- **Attach symbols on to the back of the literacy strip**
- **Have fun reading to your learners!**



Adapting books

Car mats:

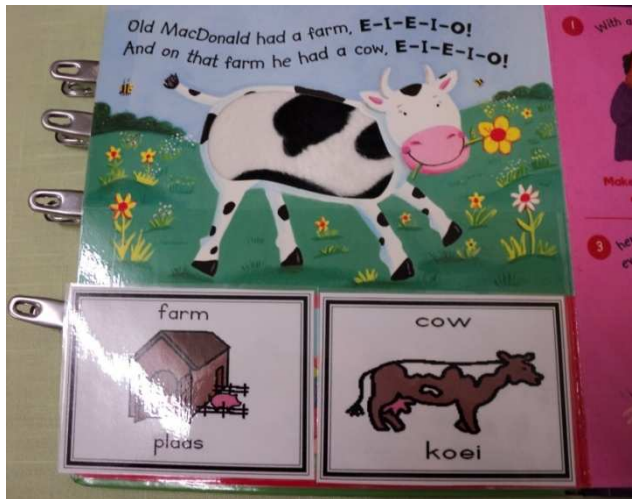
- are Velcro friendly;
- can be purchased locally
- are not expensive;
- punch holes in to allow mounting to a wall or door if needed;
- can easily display four quite large symbols and many smaller symbols;
- come in a variety of sizes to suit all symbol purposes;
- non-toxic and safe



Resources

- **Dr Caroline Musselwhite:** www.aacintervention.com
- **Linda Burkhart:** www.lindaburkhart.com
- **See it, say it, write it:** <http://www.seeitsayitwriteit.com/>
- **Picture recipes**
 - <http://www.symbolworld.org/learning/cooking/index.htm> <http://www.symbolworld.org>
 - <http://www.moorcroft.hillingdon.sch.uk/recipes.htm>
 - <http://www.bry-backmanor.org/picturerecipes.html> <http://www.tinsnips.org/Pages/cooking.html>
- **Talksense:** <http://talksense.weebly.com/literacy-and-aac.html>





Thank you



**For more information:
Contact the Centre for Augmentative and
Alternative Communication : 012 420 2001**

**kerstin.tonsing@up.ac.za;
alecia.samuels@up.ac.za;
ensa.johnson@up.ac.za**

