

Incorporating AAC into School Activities

Specials and extracurricular activities provide natural, motivating environments where AAC users can practice communication skills in different contexts. Here's how to make the most of these opportunities throughout the school day.

P.E./Playground

Target Vocabulary: Stop, Go, Play, Run, Jump, Throw, Catch, Kick, Ball, Game, Fast, Slow, Ready.

Key Phrases: "Let's go!", "My turn", "Do you want to play?", "That was fun", "Ready...Set....Go."

Implementation Ideas:

- Practice inviting others to play a game using phrases such as *"Do you want to play?"*
- Create opportunities for AAC users to be team leaders, using their devices to announce game rules or choose the activity of the day.
- Encourage AAC users to ask their peers what games they like and share their favorite activities or sports.
Ex: "I like soccer. You?"

Art

Target Vocabulary: Make, Draw, Give, Mix, On/off, Cut, Open, Paint, Glue, Crayons, Paper, Scissors, Shapes, Colors.

Key Phrases: "Look at that", "Wow, awesome", "I like it", "I need more ___", "Can you help me?"

Implementation Ideas:

- Encourage AAC users to make selections about which materials and colors they want for their projects
- Practice turn-taking with art supplies using phrases like *"my turn," "your turn,"* or *"pass the glue."*
- Art is also a great time to practice commenting and expressing opinions. Target phrases such as *"I like your drawing"* or *"I don't want that color."*
- Consider creating art-specific boards or pages featuring vocabulary related to the activity.

Music

Target Vocabulary: Sing, Play, Dance, Listen, Loud, Quiet, Fast, Slow, Instrument names, Stop, Start.

Key Phrases: "Let's play", "My favorite song is ___", "Too loud/too quiet", "I want ___"

Implementation Ideas:

- Program lyrics or key phrases from familiar songs like *"Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"* or current classroom favorites.
- Create opportunities for choice-making by letting students select instruments or choose between songs.

Tips for Success

- Make sure the AAC device is available during ALL school activities!
- Schedule brief training sessions with specialty teachers covering basic device use, troubleshooting common issues, and how to be an effective communication partner.
- Share this resource along with modeling strategies to help them get started!

Every moment of the school day is a communication opportunity. By intentionally incorporating AAC into all activities, we help students develop the skills they need to communicate across all environments and with all communication partners.