

Modeling vs. Prompting

When introducing AAC to a new user, speech therapists often say we should **model**, not **prompt**, but what's the difference?

Modeling

- No expectation the user will copy you
- You use the device yourself by activating icons (e.g., activating MORE as you hand them another block during play)
- Occurs in natural opportunities
- Provides exposure to new vocabulary
- Promotes the user's autonomy over what they want to say

Prompting

- Requires the user to activate a specific icon
- Uses direct instruction (e.g., verbally cueing "say MORE" and withholding the block until they activate the icon)
- Can lead to the device becoming aversive
- Users may become dependent on our prompts to use the device
- The word we prompt may not be what the user wants to say

Research shows **modeling** is the most effective method to expose users to their new language, support their autonomy over what they want to say, and create independent communicators. Give it a try in your next session!