

Closing The Gap

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER, 2010
VOLUME 29 - NUMBER 4

Solutions

HOW SCHOOLS CAN SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT IPOD TOUCH AND IPAD FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

THE AIMING FOR ACHIEVEMENT SERIES: WHAT EDUCATORS AND FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL

ECT IS AS BIG AS TEXAS: THE STORIES AND TIPS OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION TEACHING

DISCOVERIES

IPARENT: USING CREATIVE IDEAS UTILIZING APPLE'S TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE VISUAL SUPPORTS ACROSS ALL ENVIRONMENTS

READING ACCOMMODATIONS

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How Schools can Successfully Implement iPod touch and iPad *for Children with Special Needs*

By Eric Sailers



ERIC SAILERS is a speech-language pathologist and assistive technology specialist who implements iPod touch and iPad apps with K-8 students in a school district in San Diego, CA. He also does freelance work for Proloquo2go and is a co-developer of two applications: Percentally and ArtikPix. Additionally, he is a blogger at <http://slpsharing.com/> and a conference presenter who shares information regarding iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. He can be reached at esailers6@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

It is a very exciting time for children to use the iPod touch (starting at \$199) and iPad (starting at \$499) as assistive technology tools in school. The touch-screen devices are desirable because they are cool, portable, relatively low-cost and they have very interactive applications. With more than 200,000 apps available for the devices, there are apps designed specifically for assistive technology and other apps with built-in features that serve as assistive technology aids. Proloquo2Go (\$189.99), for example, is an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) app for nonverbal children to communicate. Another app, Wheels on the Bus (\$.99 for iPod touch), wasn't created for assistive technology, but the repetitive lyrics enable children to expand their verbal communication skills as they interact with the pictures.

In the past year, more schools have begun to implement the iPod touch and iPad for children with special needs. During that time, school professionals discovered the need for assistance with the technologies. They asked questions at workshops and on the Web to get answers. The intent of this article is provide answers via 10 steps for schools to successfully implement the iPod touch and iPad for children with special needs.

STEP 1: CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE DEVICE AND DEVICE STORAGE SIZE

It is not typically feasible for schools to purchase iPhones or the iPad 3G for students due to the monthly contract required for phone and/or data plans. So, the choice then is iPod touch or iPad Wi-Fi. If a child is ambulatory and doesn't have a physical disability or visual impairment,



then the portability of the iPod touch is optimal. On the other hand, if a child has a more involved disability with physical and visual needs, then the iPad might be a better choice. The iPad's larger size and built-in accessibility features are preferable for physical and visual access. Although the iPod touch 32GB and 64GB models have accessibility features, including VoiceOver for visual impairments, the lower models (e.g., 8 GB) do not come with them. Plus, iPad can be secured to a wheelchair via a mount. (See accessories in Step 4.)

The storage size purchased depends on the amount of media the child requires. If the child needs full-length movies, thousands of songs and hundreds of apps, for example, then a 32 GB or 64GB device would be required. On the other hand, if the device is only going to be used primarily for apps and photos, then the lowest models will suffice (8GB for iPod touch and 16 GB for iPad). To get an idea of file size, full-length movies can be more than 4GB and most apps are less than 20MB.

STEP 2: PURCHASE DEVICES AND APPS

Schools typically purchase devices, apps and accessories with purchase orders. Purchase orders can be used for devices and iTunes cards at particular stores (e.g., Costco, Best Buy) and for accessories online (e.g., Amazon). If you want to use a purchase order for Proloquo2Go with the device and accessories, then Origin Instruments offers a bundle pack for \$650.

STEP 3: CREATE AN ITUNES ACCOUNT

Even if you have a personal iTunes account, most school districts choose to create one or more school iTunes accounts. Additional accounts allow professionals to separate personal content from educational content. Up to five accounts are allowed per computer. According to Getting Started with iPod touch <http://images.apple.com/education/docs/Apple-iPodGettingStartedGuide081809.pdf>, many staff find creating a single student account to be the easiest way to manage and distribute content. That way, staff won't have to manage multiple students accounts.

If a school does not feel comfortable using the district's credit card to create an account, then an iTunes App Store account can be created without one. The process begins with downloading a free application, then creating a new account and selecting none for credit card. To download paid apps after that, the district might feel most comfortable using purchase orders to acquire iTunes gift cards for redeeming in the App Store.

STEP 4: PURCHASE ACCESSORIES

In special needs classrooms, accessories are needed for stability, protection and volume control. Below are suggested accessories for iPod touch and iPad:

IPOD TOUCH

Apple Earphones with remote and mic (\$29) - earphones for recording and playing audio

iMainGo2 (\$39.99) - protective speaker case

mophie juice pack air (\$79.95) - re-chargeable case

Otterbox Defender (\$29.95) - durable case

Pogo Stylus (\$14.95) - stylus for fine motor difficulties

Thumbtacks (\$12.99) - external mic for recording audio

X-mini (\$29.90) - speaker

IPAD

Apple iPad Camera Connection Kit (\$29) - use for importing photos and videos from a digital camera

Apple iPad Case (\$39) - case that folds to act as a stand

Otterbox Defender (\$89.95) - durable case with built-in stand

Pogo Stylus (\$14.95) - stylus for fine motor difficulties

RJ Cooper (prices vary) - stands, mounts and speakers

STEP 5: FIND APPS

One of the best ways to find apps is by searching the iTunes App Store (requires wireless internet that is unfiltered) for an app title or keyword (e.g., speech therapy). You can also go to a category, such as education, then look through lists, such as What's Hot, Top Free, Top Paid and Top Grossing. There are other lists (outside of the App Store) of apps for special needs, including one created by Eric Sailers and another created by Kate Ahern. Finally, you can learn about apps via online communities like Mobile Learning 4 Special Needs, IEAR, and Moms with Apps.

STEP 6: DOWNLOAD APPS AND SYNC DEVICES

Schools typically use the iTunes App Store on one computer to download apps, then transfer the apps by syncing multiple iPods and iPads. When utilizing a single account, apps are purchased once, then they can be synced to multiple iPods and iPads. For charging/ syncing multiple devices, schools use carts for iPods (<http://www.apple.com/education/labs/>) and iPads (<http://apple.bretford.com/products/mobilitycart>). An alternative low-cost option for syncing multiple devices is the D-Link 7-Port USB Hub (\$39.99) with the Apple-provided USB cables. Although the App Store can also be accessed on the devices, it's not as feasible because the apps need to be downloaded individually on each device.

STEP 7: GO BEYOND THE BASICS OF THE DEVICES AND ITUNES

Once you have learned the basics of controlling and navigating your device with apps, then you can expand your knowledge base. One important function to learn is the home button uses. Pushing the home button once on a given screen of apps will return you to the home screen. If you push home a second time, then you will be directed to the search screen for finding your apps. Although apps can be organized in folders on the iPod touch with the



Apple's icon for accessibility.



iPad with RJ Cooper stand and speaker.



Create an iTunes Account.

newest operating system (iOS 4), you will likely still use the search feature. The home button can also be triple-clicked to display accessibility settings (for iPod touch 32 and 64 GB and iPad), including VoiceOver, Zoom and White on Black. To utilize triple-click for accessibility settings, go to Settings --> General --> Accessibility --> Triple-click Home --> Ask.

It is also important to know how to utilize iTunes for syncing photos, eBooks,

and videos. The different types of media can be embedded in various apps. Using <http://www.epubbud.com/>, you can create and download eBooks. Once the eBook is downloaded to your computer, drag it to Books in your iTunes library. For photos, connect your device and drag the images to a folder designated by the photos tab. For videos, drag them into the movies of your library. Once your content is in iTunes, then sync with the USB cable.

STEP 8: FACILITATE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

While using apps with students, professionals should facilitate language development. When addressing AAC in an app like Proloquo2Go, target skills beyond wants and needs only. As Janice Light explains in an AAC-RERC Webcast for maximizing communication, it is important to increase student participation and to build literacy, social interaction and a greater complexity of language structures (e.g., combining words, using verb tenses and plural markers). Customize the student's AAC system so it includes a wide range of vocabulary comprising commonly used words and words individualized to the student. To select vocabulary, it is helpful to use a questionnaire, such as the one developed by Fallon et al. (2001). Then, implement the vocabulary in interactive and motivating contexts (e.g., songs, play, reading) to enable reciprocal communication between the student and communication partners.

In language therapy, model language structures in a fun and interactive music



iPod Learning Lab.



In iTunes, sync photos from folder.

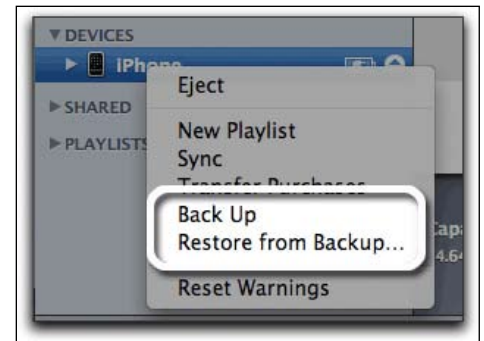
book, such as *Wheels on the Bus*. Sing along and use language stimulation techniques as the student is interacting with the images on the screen. Ask questions to target more than just nouns (Rather than saying "what's that," ask "what's the girl doing" to elicit "she is driving." If the student fails to produce an appropriate response, then use expansion and rephrasing techniques to facilitate language growth (Justice, Mashburn, Pence & Wiggins, 2008).

STEP 9: RESTORE FROM BACKUP

If an app is deleted accidentally on the device, then you can retrieve its data by restoring from backup in iTunes. To safeguard against losing the data, backup your apps regularly by syncing them to your computer. Sync manually by following this step-by-step procedure: iTunes --> Preferences --> Devices --> Prevent iPods...from syncing automatically. When you're ready to restore from backup, connect your device to iTunes. Then, control click on the device in iTunes, and select Restore from Backup. The most recent backup will be selected for you. To view Apple's tutorial, click <http://support.apple.com/kb/ht1414>.

STEP 10: TRAIN STAFF AND PARENTS

Once you are familiar with the device and apps that students need, then it is necessary to train staff and parents. It is important that you do not assume that everyone knows as much as you. It may be the first time that people are using an iPod touch or iPad, so make sure that you cover device basics, and then focus on the apps. Utilize a camera (e.g., iPevo Point 2 View camera, \$69) with projection to sufficiently demonstrate important features, then allow staff and parents to get hands-on time with the devices. Guide them through the process



Restore from Backup in iTunes.

of navigating the device and customizing apps.

CONCLUSION

There are remarkable possibilities with iPods and iPads for children with special needs in schools. However, it is very important to implement the mobile technologies so children reap the most educational benefits. The hope is that the above information will help staff to implement them. For more resources, visit the App Resources tab on Eric Sailers' blog. <http://slpsharing.com/>

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The AIMing for Achievement Series:

What Educators and Families Need to Know about Accessible Instructional Materials

Part One: Introduction and Legal Context

By Joy Smiley Zabala and Diana Carl

Both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently called NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) include compelling requirements for state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, receive the supports and services they need to access, participate and achieve in the general educational curriculum.

Unfortunately, the printed textbooks and instructional materials used in the general education curriculum are not useful to many students with disabilities. The very materials that are supposed to support learning actually create barriers to learning for students whose disabilities result in not being able to gain or use the information contained in typical textbooks and related printed instructional materials. These students require another way to gain the information needed to participate and achieve in the general curriculum. For many students, this need can be addressed by providing the students with the identical information in one or more specialized formats - Braille, large print, audio and/or digital. When specialized formats and supports for use are well-matched to a student's individual needs and abilities, the result can mean the difference between exclusion and achievement.

Recognizing both the statutory and practical importance of ensuring that all students have instructional materials in formats that are useful to them, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) of the United States Department of Education has funded several projects that, along with others funded directly by Congress, provide

products and services designed to help SEAs and LEAs improve the quality, availability and timely delivery of accessible instructional materials to K-12 students with disabilities that diminish the usefulness of traditional printed materials. Two of the current projects – the NIMAS Development Center and the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials Center – were awarded to CAST, a nonprofit research and development organization founded in 1984 as the Center for Applied Special Technology. The mission of CAST is to expand learning opportunities for all students through Universal Design for Learning and related initiatives.

The work of the current projects builds on the work begun, lessons learned and products developed by previous NIMAS/AIM projects at CAST – the initial NIMAS Development Center, the NIMAS Technical Assistance Center and the AIM Consortium. The work of these three projects is integrated into the continuing work of the National Center for Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM Center), which provides knowledge development, technical assistance and leadership to state and local education agencies, as well as to other stakeholders in the massive collaborative effort involved in getting high quality accessible materials into the hands of students who need them.

This article is the first in a series in which the work of the AIM Center, along with that of the NIMAS Center and the previous AIM Consortium, will be discussed. The focus is on the legal issues and definitions related to accessible instructional materials (AIM). Future articles in the series will highlight the array of supports, services and tools that are



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available to all states and territories, primarily via the AIM Center Web site at <http://aim.cast.org> including, but not limited to, those developed by the AIM Consortium to assist in the identification of a student's need for AIM, the selection, acquisition and use of AIM.

THE LEGAL CONTEXT OF ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

IDEA 2004 requires state educational agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to ensure that textbooks and related printed materials are provided in specialized formats to students with print disabilities, when needed, in a timely manner (C.F.R. Section 300.172). IDEA 2004 also established the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC).

While the intent that all students have instructional materials in formats that are useful to them is clear, educators, families and other stakeholders are often unclear about actions to take and also have questions about what some of the terms mean. In this section, frequently asked questions about actions required by the Final Regulations and about the language will be explored.

REQUIREMENTS IN THE FINAL REGULATIONS

What do the Final Regulations of IDEA 2004 require SEAs and LEAs to do?

In order to meet its responsibility to ensure that children with disabilities who need instructional materials in accessible formats are provided those materials in a timely manner, the SEA must:

1. Ensure that all public agencies take all reasonable steps to provide instructional materials in accessible formats to children with disabilities who need those instructional materials at the same time as other children receive instructional materials.
2. Adopt the NIMAS for the purposes of providing instructional materials to blind persons or other persons with print disabilities, in a timely manner after publication of the NIMAS in the Federal Register on July 19, 2006.
3. Establish a state definition of "timely manner."
4. Choose whether or not to coordinate with the NIMAC.

WHAT IS NIMAS?

The National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard, or NIMAS, is a standard file format mandated in IDEA 2004 for textbooks and related printed core instructional materials. A NIMAS conformant source file is not student ready but must be converted into

one of the specialized formats (i.e., Braille, audio, digital, large print) for student use.

WHAT IS THE NIMAC?

The National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) is the national repository that validates and distributes NIMAS-compliant source files of textbooks and related core materials provided by publishers, either proactively or when required to do so as a part of an SEA or LEA purchasing contract. Source files from the NIMAC are not student-ready, but each single source file can be used to create student-ready materials in all four specialized formats. Materials created from source files from the NIMAC can only be used by students who are both served as a student with disabilities under IDEA and certified by a competent authority as having a print disability as defined by copyright statute. Unless a student meets BOTH of these criteria, the NIMAC cannot be used as the source of materials that are provided to the student. The NIMAC is housed at the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. (APH) in Louisville, Kentucky.

Additional information on the NIMAC is available on the NIMAC Web site at <http://www.nimac.us/> and on the AIM Center Web site at <http://aim.cast.org> in a FAQ about NIMAS and NIMAC.

What has to be done if a state chooses to coordinate with the NIMAC?

If an SEA chooses to coordinate with the NIMAC, the SEA must enter into a written contract with the publisher of the print instructional materials as a part of any print instructional materials adoption process, procurement contract or other practice or instrument used for purchase of print instructional materials:

- Require the publisher to prepare and provide to the NIMAC electronic files containing the contents of the print instructional materials using the NIMAS, on or before delivery of the print instructional materials;
- Purchase instructional materials from the publisher that are produced in, or may be rendered in, specialized formats.

There is no discernable downside for states that elect to coordinate with the NIMAC, and there are compelling reasons to do so. First, there is no charge for SEAs and LEAs to coordinate with the NIMAC and no charge for gaining access to the files according to procedures established by the NIMAC. Second, and possibly most important, as the number and quality of source files in the NIMAC have increased, these files form a primary means for producing instructional materials in specialized formats for those students who are served under IDEA 2004 and have been certified as having a print disability as defined by copyright statute.

WHAT IF AN SEA CHOOSES NOT TO COORDINATE WITH THE NIMAC?

If an SEA chooses not to coordinate with the NIMAC, the SEA must provide an assurance to the Secretary of Education (currently Arne Duncan) that it will provide instructional materials to blind persons or other persons with print disabilities in a timely manner.

Not surprisingly, all 50 states and some territories have coordinated with the NIMAC.

Are these requirements limited to providing accessible instructional materials to students served under IDEA 2004 who also have a print disability as defined by copyright statute?

Nothing in the section relieves an SEA of its responsibility to ensure that children with disabilities who need instructional materials in accessible formats, but are not included under the definition of blind or other persons with print disabilities in C.F.R. Section 300.172(e) (1)(i) or who need materials that cannot be produced from NIMAS files, receive those instructional materials in a timely manner.

HOW IS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY MENTIONED IN SECTION 300.172?

In carrying out this section, the SEA, to the maximum extent possible, must work collaboratively with the State agency responsible for assistive technology programs.

By what authority are the requirements Section 300.172 authorized?

Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(23), 1474(e)

Now, about those other terms

WHAT ARE PRINT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS?

IDEA 2004 defines "print instructional materials" as printed "textbooks and related printed core materials that are written and published primarily for use in elementary school and secondary school instruction and are required by a state education agency or local education agency for use by students in a classroom" (IDEA [674(e)(3)(C)]).

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM "RELATED PRINTED CORE MATERIALS?"

As stated above, these materials are "written and published primarily for use in elementary and secondary school instruction and are required by a state education agency or local education agency for use by students in a classroom." They are generally thought to be the materials that are published and packaged as accompaniments to a textbook (e.g., workbook, reproducible supplementary materials, etc.) and included in the contract with the publisher. (IDEA [674(e)(3)(C)])

upon the student's needs and upon the technology being used.

WHAT DOES "IN A TIMELY MANNER" MEAN?

IDEA 2004 requires each state to define what it means in their state. Generally, it means "at the same time" that other students receive their core instructional materials in print format. The gold standard for timely manner is at the same time that other students receive their print materials. So, if other students get their textbooks the first day of school, then a student using an audio version should get the audio version of the same textbook on the same day. What many states have done is to include a clause related to extenuating circumstances. For example, if a student moves into the district and needs a Braille textbook, it might not be available. But, any time there is a delay in getting those materials then there would be the understanding that the delay would be addressed so it did not occur on a regular basis.

SO, WHAT DO EDUCATORS AND FAMILIES NEED TO DO?

Those of us who have worked in assistive technology for a long time found out that the most efficient and effective way to consider

the needs for assistive technology is through a decision-making process. And really, the same holds true for AIM.

Basically, there are four steps that teams must take in order to ensure that students who need materials in these formats have them when needed for educational participation and achievement. Those steps include:

1. Establish need for instructional materials in specialized formats
2. Select specialized format(s) needed by the student for educational participation and achievement
3. Commence SEA and/or LEA-defined steps to acquire needed formats in a timely manner
4. Determine supports needed for effective use for educational participation and achievement.

Part Two of the AIMing for Achievement Series will focus on the decision-making process and look closely at how each of the steps requires good thinking to determine whether or not the student may need AIM; then, when they are needed, determining which formats are appropriate and the sources from which to acquire the formats. Finally, the team will think about the supports and services that will be needed for the student

to use the formats effectively for participation and achievement.

Included in Part Two will be an introduction to several tools developed by the AIM Consortium that support teams with decision-making at every step of the process.

IN THE MEANTIME

Check out the Web site of the AIM Center at <http://aim.cast.org>. The AIM Center provides knowledge development, technical assistance and leadership to SEAs and LEAs, as well as to educators, families and others involved in the massive collaborative effort involved in getting high quality accessible materials into the hands of students who need them. The suite of tools produced by the AIM Consortium is among the large and growing resources – including a robust series of informative Webinars - available free of charge to all states and interested parties on the AIM Center Web site. A detailed "guided tour" of the AIM Center Web site will take place in a future part of the AIMing for Achievement Series. ■

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STILL AVAILABLE:
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The desktop version of ATT+ is still available to those who do not want to use the internet version.

ECT IS AS BIG AS TEXAS

THE STORIES AND TIPS OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION TEACHING

Part two of a two-part series

By Kelly Fonner, Andrina Hamil, Kenja James Johnson, Debra Stanley, Marguerite Hornèy, Ruth Solis, and Beth Coletta

Welcome back to the journey through implementing communication in real classrooms through our stories of student cases from the Environmental Communication Teaching training series. If you go to the link on Closing The Gap's Web site, you can download a document with the full description of ECT and the research information, but here is a short synopsis of the training that teams go through.

In order to participate in ECT you must attend as a part of a team. In the original research years, they found that the students who progressed communicatively had a minimum team of their teacher, teaching assistant and their direct SLP. The research of the students' communication was not measured one student against another, but by looking at the change in each student's pre and post numbers in initiations, responses, need for prompting, level of prompting and other measures. ECT trainers, when setting up trainings, should keep this in mind. From experience, every time I juggle with this formula, something sinks. It can be more than these people; it's absolutely the best when we can have a parent of the student participate during the whole training series. When a major communication partner is missing, part of the training seems to go missing as well.

The core strategies of ECT are mostly delivered in the first two days of the training that take place sometime in the first two months of school, before life in the classroom settles into too much of a routine. ECT has taken place in full-time and part-time special education, full-time regular education and everything in between. Name the disability that impacts communication, and an ECT trainer has had a team with that student. What we do look for though, are students that are showing the signs of communication intent. They may not have an established modality. They may not be intentional when YOU want them to be, but they are a student that has likes and/or dislikes and they are telling them to you somehow. Staff may think of it as behaviors. It may not be socially acceptable, but it is communicative if it gets a reaction from someone – even if your

reaction is to ignore... Anyway, that's another article.

Back to the ECT tips. In Part 1, we looked at ECT Tip #1 - Activities are the Foundation for Communication. Students have to have a purpose to communicate. You have to work from the student's real schedule. Don't make up fake communication opportunities. Give your students some credit. They know it, you know it. Don't do anything that you aren't willing to continue.

ECT Tip #2 was Build Communication Interaction Skills Within a Context. Teach communication within that chosen activity. All the parts of it. Don't just teach students to chose a toy or chose an area of the classroom to play in – that's just the beginning of the real communication opportunities. There's so much more to talk about after he's chosen the ball pit or after she's gets onto the rocking platform. There's the communication motivation of "more," "stop," "go," "again," "big push," "little push," "I want a friend to join me," "get out of here," "come back," "whoa," etc.

ECT TIP #3 – ENVIRONMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION

These are the little details that a team can get lost in before they even get started. For this, we're going to look at three very different cases from NEISD in San Antonio, all young women, two in middle schools and one in high school.

A remarkable learning experience occurred for not only the student and campus team, but also the trainers during our second year of ECT in North East ISD. When teaching the Environmental Arrangements portion of ECT, we are often confronted by the staff with fears about decreasing a student's independence in order to increase his/her need to communicate. Many of our students are very independent - but they don't communicate because they have no need to communicate! Everything they need is available or given to them without them making a request for it. Our student, Savannah, showed us that by increasing her expectations for communication, we also increased her independence!



From left to right, Kenja Johnson, Debra Stanley, Kelly Fonner and Andrina Hamil .



From left to right, Ruth Solis and Marguerite Horney.

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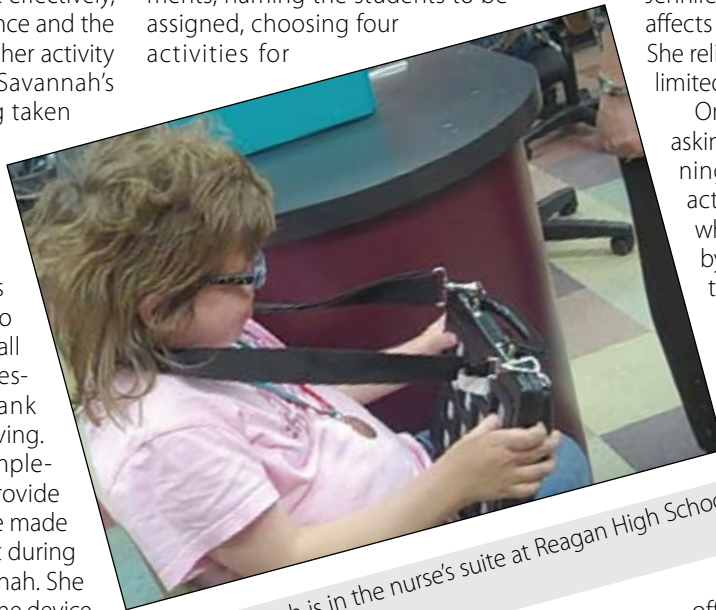
BETH COLETTA, M. A., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist for the North East Independent School District.

Savannah is a 16-year-old student diagnosed with visual impairment and cognitive disabilities. She spends the majority of her day in the specialized support classrooms at Reagan High School. Prior to ECT, Savannah was led from class to class and assisted in all academic and daily living activities. She communicated through a few sign approximations and “home” signs and had a keyring with picture symbols that she would use occasionally for preferred items. Due to a medical condition, it was necessary for Savannah to make frequent visits each day to the health clinic for eye drops and hydration. Team Reagan, consisting of Karen Kroeger, special education teacher; Maybie Giddens, paraprofessional; and Cynthia Enriquez, speech-language pathologist, chose Savannah based on her need to communicate more effectively, her need for increased independence and the awesome opportunity to practice her activity multiple times during the day! Savannah’s baseline video showed her being taken to the health clinic by an adult and the adult doing the majority of the interacting with the clinic staff.

Savannah’s Activity Based Objectives (we’ll get to those is ECT Tip #5) included requesting to go to the nurse, greeting in the hall and health clinic, requesting necessary procedures and saying thank you and good-bye as she was leaving. A Communication Builder was implemented with eight locations to provide voice output. Several changes were made in the environmental arrangement during the early interventions with Savannah. She was good about carrying/wearing the device in the hallway; however, to use the device, she had to twist it around. A simple adjustment in the strap allowed her to flip the device up and be able to see the icons in the correct orientation. Another issue was noted once she entered the health clinic and was seated in the chair for her procedures. The device was taken off and held by the accompanying adult until after the procedures were completed. The team soon determined that Savannah should have a way to keep her voice with her at all times. A second chair was placed by her treatment chair for times when she needed to take the device off. Savannah placed the device on the chair sometimes and other times continued to wear the device through her treatments. Eventually, a 16-location overlay was made to expand vocabulary opportunities. Placement of two of the messages on the overlay needed to be re-positioned due to the way in which Savannah held the device. Placement of her thumbs often cause “accidental” messages to be spoken. With the option of 16 locations, this was no longer a problem.

The greatest joy in watching Savannah’s journey through ECT this year was seeing her growth in independence through her growth communication skills. She began to take charge of an area of her life that was very personal and meaningful to her. All of us working with Savannah realized that we had been holding her back by helping her through her day!

Another great example of a change in environmental arrangement that supported a student’s success happened at Madison High School during the 2009-2010 school year. Laura, a junior in the specialized support classroom, enjoyed assigning recreation/leisure activities during a class period to her classmates. Her Activity Based Objectives included indicating that it was time for assignments, naming the students to be assigned, choosing four activities for



When Savannah is in the nurse’s suite at Reagan High School, she has quite a lot to say.

each student, telling students to begin their activities, signaling when it was time to change activities during the period, and indicating when it was time to finish and get ready for the bus.

A seven-level Communication Builder with a 16-location overlay was provided for voice output. The overlay for this activity was made with a combination of photographs and Boardmaker Picture Communication Symbols. Laura used the device to call students’ names and assign activities. She was also given an individual activity strip to fill with picture symbols representing each assigned activity for her classmates. After each activity strip was filled, Laura was to give it to the appropriate student as a personal agenda for the class period. Laura did well calling the names of her peers; however, she often duplicated activities on the activity strips.

The Madison team, consisting of Julie Reese, special education teacher; Cheree

Mahon, paraprofessional; and Yvonne Pleasant-Shelf, speech-language pathologist, decided to brainstorm. They determined that color coding the borders of the activity picture symbols would provide a visual support for Laura. This visual support was a minor tweak to the system that made a major impact on Laura’s ability to complete her assignments in a timely manner. Laura’s confidence grew as the year went by and her classmates began to try to influence Laura to choose favorite activities to place on their strips!

Jennifer, a 7th grader, had the support of Teresa Lawrence, special education teacher; Stephanie Denney, paraprofessional; and Jennifer Micek, speech-language pathologist, at White Middle School. The environment was a huge consideration throughout the year for Jennifer’s team. Jennifer has cerebral palsy that affects both her upper and lower extremities. She relies on a wheelchair for mobility and has limited control of her arms.

One of Jennifer’s ECT activities involved asking her classmates what they were planning to have for lunch. The order in this activity was not important until the end when she needed to terminate the activity by telling her classmates to line up to go to the cafeteria. The team began to see environmental concerns with placement of Jennifer’s manual book of lunch choices and the two BIGmacks - one recorded with her question “What do you want for lunch today?” and the other recorded with “It’s time to line up!”

Initially, an adult was holding the manual book with lunch choices, and the BIGmacks were offered when it was time for Jennifer to say something to a student. This system was awkward for all parties involved. Jennifer was reliant on someone to hold her systems, the students could not see the lunch choices with the adult in the way, and the adults were frustrated that Jennifer was not able to be independent in communication with her peers. Clearly, the environment needed to be arranged in a better format to meet Jennifer’s needs. After much trial and discussion, the team found a simple solution that would afford Jennifer much more independence. A table was the answer! Her system was placed on a table and she called students over to her rather than going to them. All of her communication modes were available to her during the entire activity!

Often it is the smallest change that makes the biggest difference for students! Each change in the environmental arrangement brought about increased communication opportunities, independence and success!

What do they say, “it’s all in the details”? Sometimes it’s that very piece that pulls ECT

together for a student and turns their communication opportunities in a classroom around.

That brings us to,

ECT TIP #4 – USE A PROMPTING HIERARCHY

This is one of the hardest pieces for teams to get, but it can be the most influential on a student's communication output, especially to get to that ultimate stage of initiation. You have to have a plan. You cannot just have a plan for what you are going to do for when everything goes well. Even more important is, what are you going to do when the student doesn't say what they are supposed to say? And what are you going to do when they still don't say what they are supposed to say? And still after that? And after that? That's what we get to in ECT training and that's the hard work of training day three. We introduce a prompting hierarchy on training day one. The teams script it out on day two and go back to their classrooms to try it out, but at that point they are still refining the activity and the environment. They aren't ready yet to accept that they are the biggest piece of the environmental influences on communication. We talk about it a little bit more on day three, and then look at it more closely during the next video review day. Some staff take that in, some are not quite ready yet. Some see quite clearly on video that they are talking so much that they are taking up ALL the air space of their students. But having a plan is key. Now, we head back to Corpus Christi and to Jonny.

Jonny is an 8th grade student in Martin Middle School. He is an energetic 14-year-old young man with autism and limited speech. His educational arrangement is in general education co-teaching for reading and math. He receives in-class support for science and social studies. He currently uses a Vantage Lite for expressive communication. His campus focused strongly in training all Jonny's teachers in the use of his communication device and the implementation of assistive technology into the classroom. During the 2009-2010 school year, his team, which consisted of the self-contained classroom teacher, paraprofessional, speech pathologist and his mother, began the process of ECT at the local education service center.

Jonny has had the Vantage for many years, yet had not become comfortable using the device to express his wants and needs. In addition to his academics, his team also felt Jonny needed to have socialization opportunities with his peers. Joining ECT provided the opportunity for Jonny to gain these skills in a highly motivating and structured environment.

Jonny's team developed two activity-based objectives and scripts to assist Jonny in expressing his wants and needs and socializing

with his peers. Jonny is proficient in the use of the Vantage and learning the vocabulary and steps in the activities were not difficult for him. The challenge for Jonny and his team was initiating conversations and expressing needs independently. The most beneficial part of the activity-based objectives was the prompt hierarchy that was written in the script. Until this school year, Jonny would only take out his Vantage Lite from his backpack upon request. He would answer or say what he needed to, close the visor and put the Vantage Lite back in his backpack. Jonny would never take his Vantage out until he was prompted and did

not use it to make his needs known. The activities developed for Jonny consisted of taking lunch orders from the self-contained students and ordering food from a fast food vendor at the local mall.

Through the activity-based objectives and the focus of the prompt hierarchy, Jonny was able to initiate conversations at the open question stage. Jonny only needed to have the environmental cue for the predetermined steps of the lunch activity in order to begin the task. This was an improvement from using a full model, as in previous school years. The prompt hierarchy steps were transitioned into other areas of Jonny's day and it has been a



Jennifer is quite popular as she moves around the room collecting the lunch count in her White Middle School classroom.



Proficient with his Vantage, Jonny gets the morning routine going in homeroom at Martin Middle School.



Jose and his team at Smith Elementary learned that building communication, no matter how challenging, is a step towards independence, and that is a lot to smile about!

great improvement for Jonny's education. Jonny's mom did the activity for the ordering food at the mall. This activity was a great help for both Jonny and his mother. Using the prompt hierarchy for the activity was also the best focus during the year. Jonny was able to take his Vantage with him to restaurant counter and use it to order his lunch or snack. The restaurant employee was very patient and did a great job in getting Jonny to complete the activity. During the year, Jonny was able to complete the activity, only being prompted at the open prompt stage. The next step was to transition the activity to other restaurants within the mall.

There was so much appreciation for the opportunity for this team to participate in ECT. The growth shown by Jonny and his team was a pleasure to witness. So much of this happened because his mother was able to be at all the trainings, along with his team, and there was great value for him in having the prompts carry over into an activity in the community. Jonny will continue to have activities designed for him using the ECT plan during summer programs and his campus next year. ECT is not just an instructional strategy for Jonny, it is a way of life.

At the Closing The Gap 2009 Conference, participants who attended the ECT Case Studies presentation got to see this next guy,

Jose, in action. We use Jose's case to be our tale with the last tip of our ECT article, but his story is the sum of all the parts of ECT.

ECT TIP #5 – HAVE A WRITTEN PLAN – GET EVERYONE ON THE SAME “PAGE”

Jose participated in ECT as a 3rd grade student from Smith Elementary School. The staff at Smith Elementary school was eager for the opportunity to provide Jose with a stronger voice that would allow him to communicate with others. Jose receives support from Christina Blanco, paraprofessional, and a variety of related service personnel that included Fran Garza, SLP; Carolyn Buckley, PT; Kenja Johnson, music therapist; and Andrina Hamil, AE program coach. He is non-verbal and has cerebral palsy; however, he was introduced to augmentative communication through speech therapy services. Because of his willingness to learn and resilient motivation to actively participate in the activities of the school day, Jose was a perfect candidate for ECT. His smile and personality proved to be a great avenue for developing friendships and responding to the ECT strategies.

Jose's ECT journey began with developing a series of steps for an activity with a solid foundation for communication. His teacher,

Donnie Royal was mainly concerned about making sure that Jose was given the opportunity to "... speak in his own words in his own way." In order to do this, we had to consider access. Initially, the team was faced with some unique challenges with Jose's ability to communicate using the appropriate physical access. With the help of his physical therapist and the rest of the team, it was determined that an eye gaze frame, along with a Big Mac switch, would be most the appropriate AAC system to accomplish our goal.

Like other ECT students, two activities were chosen for Jose. One was for him to be a more active participant in snack time. Instead of it just being a time that he got drink and was fed, Jose would have responsibilities. He would have to call the other students to the table. He'd have to make his requests known and tell his snack assistant when he wanted more or was done. For Jose, a student who needs to learn how to manage care attendants, snack time is an important time to learn how to communicate with people who are attending to you; it's not just a time to be "done to" and handled. It's a time to learn social niceties, how to talk to people and how to tell people how you like things done for you. It's never too early to learn that, no matter what your modality of communication is. Some days, Jose's body wasn't as cooperative, and his team had to learn how to deal with alternative modes and how to present choices through partner assisted modalities, always in a context of a meaningful activity.

Jose's second activity was a classroom job responsibility. He had to take the attendance to the office. This isn't often a job given to the student who uses a wheelchair to travel - one that someone else has to push. It isn't a job that is often given to the student who uses his eyes or a single switch to tell the office staff what the teacher needs him to tell them. But Mr. Royal was determined that this was a job that Jose could handle for his classroom. Off they went to the office. Jose had to make requests for doors to be opened for him. He greeted people in the hallway. He told the office staff why he was in there and what he had for them from his teacher. Each step of his routine was outlined so that anyone could be Jose's "office assistant."

As a result of time, teamwork and Jose, we were able to achieve not only access to enhance his communication, but success in the years to come. For the final day of ECT, it seemed as though all of Smith Elementary School showed up for the presentation of Jose's and his classmate's case study presentations. The school principal, curriculum coordinator and other consultants to the district came to hear the team's results. For the next school year, ECT was accepted as a priority service strategy for the students in Smith Elementary who have communication chal-



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lenges. And we look forward to having Donnie and his staff attend ECT Level 2 training in the future.

As I write the conclusion to Part 2, I find myself in yet another back of the room. This time it's not ECT Day 5; instead, I am at the Bridges-To-Learning Conference in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, with some of my "favourite" Canadian hosts, the staff of Bridges. (<http://www.bridges-canada.com>) Prior to the conference, we've concluded two days of ECT Day 5 with our Winnipeg and Toronto teams here up North, and what a way to go out for the 2009-2010 school year! In Winnipeg, the six teams had fabulous presentations, including a kindergarten team from Western Ontario who were already planning for transition of their two students by bringing along the building principal, the two Grade 1 teachers and the Grade 1 resource teacher. We had views of students who had new communication devices, students in new activities and students who have taken over facilitating the changing of the pages of their own PODD books.

In Toronto, another five teams gave their testimonies with one team letting the technology do all the talking! Many tears were shed as two classmates from one team shared "just-the-girls" playtime at a dollhouse and as a parent of one of our Grade 4 students gave her perspective of what ECT has meant, not just to her daughter's increased opportunities in her school, but to her opportunity as a parent and communication partner of her daughter to participate in each and every training, right alongside her daughter's teacher, instructional assistant and SLP.

I love the back of the room. It's where every teacher/trainer should be at some point during the year. I also sit here, glad that I've already signed up online for another learning event. I'll soon be in Level 2 of the Literacy and AAC with David Koppenhaver and Karen Erickson this summer at the University of Florida in Gainesville. (<http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/events>) And, of course, there will be the content gained from all of you who present at national events and are in the exhibit halls of Closing The Gap, ATIA and CSUN. All of this content will feed ECT for 2010-11.

As I listen to the Bridges-to-Learning keynote, Steve Kukic, who I heard speak at an Intellitools Master's Institute many moons ago and gained so much energy from, he asks us if we have a personal mission statement. I do. I write down my two words: KIDS FIRST.

That's what ECT is about. It doesn't matter what your role is with those kids. I don't care what you think you know or don't know about communication or AAC coming in to ECT Day 1 or who you studied under and at what university, blah blah blah. Everyone connected to that kid is equally important when it comes to teaching and supporting his/her communication. End of AAC pecking orders. In order

to let kids talk first, when we write "initiate" in speech goals, you have to do the thing that I tell all my teams – the adults have to "shut up." That's not a polite thing to say, but it makes my point. And that's what I'm about to do, and let this two-part article about ECT do all the talking, "Y'all!"

For more comprehensive information on Environmental Communication Teaching, there is a PDF document describing the history and details of ECT available at < <http://www.closingthegap.com/media/pdfs/ECTDescription.pdf> > In addition, the training teams have made their full communication scripts and prompting sets of Activity Based Objectives (ABOs) for each of the students highlighted in Parts 1 & 2 available. Please contact Kelly Fonner for more information at < kfonner@wi.rr.com >. ■

closingthegap.com/media/pdfs/ECTDescription.pdf > In addition, the training teams have made their full communication scripts and prompting sets of Activity Based Objectives (ABOs) for each of the students highlighted in Parts 1 & 2 available. Please contact Kelly Fonner for more information at < kfonner@wi.rr.com >. ■

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Special Needs: New Software, DVDs and Professional Resources

By Joan Tanenhaus

Tenth Planet Literacy Bundle (Sunburst: 800-321-7511, www.sunburst.com) This is an excellent literacy series that has motivating hands-on activities that help learners to increase reading, spelling and writing skills. Age appropriate for older students and adults, it has phonemic awareness activities, activities for letter-sound relationships and vowel and word-parts, and helps develop awareness of patterns of letters and sounds and awareness of larger units of meaning. Letter Sounds:

This is the first in the series, designed for Preschool to Grade 1 skills, and stresses sound symbol associations of consonants. Users sort words based on sounds, build words with letters that represent those sounds and use these words to create tongue twisters and other alliterative compositions. They explore individual phonemes with the goal of building words. They order letters (word scramble) to build the words for pictures they select. Vowels: Short and Long: For K-2 level, this program explores the role of short and long vowels in words. Activities work on discriminating sounds and representing those sounds with regular spelling patterns. Students sort sets of pictures/words based on

the vowel sounds they have in common, add initial and ending consonants in order to build familiar words, add initial sounds to common short and long vowels to make rhyming families of word, and build a series of words, where each word is different from the last by just one sound. Word Parts: In this program, students

develop their ability to decode and spell multi-syllabic words. They are encouraged to “chunk” or divide words into manageable units, such as syllables, simple morphemes and common sequences of letters and sounds. They learn they can use word parts in combination to build longer more complex words. They learn, too, that breaking longer, unfamiliar words down into smaller parts can help them decode and spell. They will sort words based on common sound patterns and syllables,

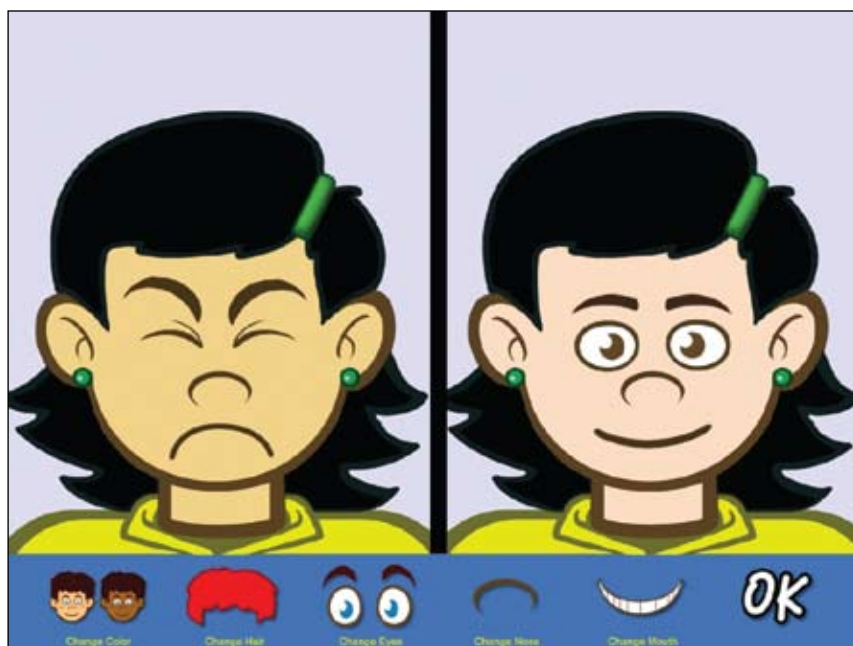
They sort pictures by sounds, build words with letters that represent those sounds, and apply these concepts to creating tongue twisters and riddles. Roots, Prefixes and Suffixes: Students learn to recognize morphemes within words and to apply this information to spell and understand other words. They work with the meaning of individual roots, prefixes and suffixes and to use context to find the meaning of unknown words. All the programs in this series allow students to save

personalized work, to use a journal of progress, word banks and word study notebooks. Activities can be customized to select individual letter sounds or combinations to focus on. This is an excellent series to use with adult learners who are having difficulty with writing, spelling and reading.

Mac Speech Dictate

(Nuance: 781-565-5000, www.Nuance.com) Nuance, the publisher of Dragon Naturally Speaking for Windows, has now published MacSpeech Dictate, speech recognition for Macintosh computers. As with all speech recognition, you use your voice, instead of typing, to input text. Mouse commands are spoken. After installing

the program and setting up my profile, I spent approximately five minutes training it. This involved reading aloud the text that was displayed on screen. It was a brief description, containing information on the importance of controlling noise in the environment and how to talk to a computer. Within minutes,



Potato Face (Marblesoft)

build big words using familiar parts, and use their words to create poems, answer riddles and compose Mad-Lib-type stories. Consonant Blends and Digraphs: In this program, students focus on hearing consonant blends and digraphs within single-syllable words and connecting those sounds to letter patterns.

I was able to type a paragraph in Word and send out an e-mail – with accuracy that was almost 100 percent for simple conversational speech. Very impressive! If you have trouble with recognition or want to improve it even more, you can return to the training modules and read more. New users do have to learn the common voice commands (i.e., to turn microphone on/off, to go to a new line, new paragraph, scratch that (to delete the last thing you said) and remember to speak punctuation (period, comma, question mark, etc.). Instead of using your mouse to select menu commands or your keyboard to type shortcuts, just speak a command. With the Key Combo command, you can enter specific keys and keyboard modifiers like Command, Option, Shift and Control. MacSpeech Dictate can also read a document's contents or a portion of it. You can move your cursor forwards, backwards, up and down with your voice. It works with Microsoft Word, Adobe Photoshop, as well as iChat, iPhoto and Keynote. MacSpeech Dictate also has a spelling mode that lets you spell words, names and acronyms with either natural language or the International Radio Alphabet. A headset microphone is included with the program. For extra help, there is an online, searchable help book. System requirements are Intel-based Mac, Mac OS X 10.4.11 or greater "Tiger", Mac OS X 10.5.1 or greater "Leopard", Internet connection required for product registration. Internal microphone is not supported. If you have been waiting for speech recognition on the Macintosh, here it is – accurate, easy to use and train and compatible with many applications. Don't wait any longer!!

Pick & Choose (Judy Lynn Software: 732-390-8845, www.judylynn.com) This is a great new program from Judy Lynn. It is designed and modeled after the popular sound board story books. In this program, you can display between one and 10 choice buttons with pictures or text. The buttons can be displayed horizontally or vertically on any side of the board. Choice buttons can be made larger or smaller by pressing the + or – keys. Users can select the buttons with a switch, mouse click, touch window or keyboard. When a button is pressed, a reward is presented on-screen – this can be a picture, text, music, sound effect or video clip. When all of the choice buttons are pressed, a new set of buttons appear. The program contains many premade games, books, quizzes, etc., but is also designed as an authoring program so that you can create your own buttons with your own graphics and sounds. You can also import and export games to share with others. Some of the games included are simple cause and effect soundboards, curriculum-based games, quizzes, video displays, photo albums, storybooks, etc. A free trial version with four pre-made games and 15 trials can be down-

loaded from the Judy Lynn Web site. Try it – great program!

Survival Signs Software Series (Attainment Software: 800-327-4269, www.AttainmentCompany.com) This is a series of three programs that teach recognition of basic, survival and community signs and words that are commonly found in the environment. Each program includes instructional videos and multiple choice questions. There is an easy-to-use management system that lets the trainer make assignments and track student progress (select signs to use, attempt limit, time display, distracter options and switch options.) When each sign is presented, the narrator says, "This sign says ..." (for example, Beware of Dog). Then the video shows a short clip (for example, the dog walking around his dog house with the sign on it). The narrator continues with "When you see this sign, you should ..." (for example, be careful not to approach the dog). There is a replay button that lets the user repeat the words and/or videos as many times as they would like. After the assigned words are all completed, the instructional component begins. There are three parts to this – in Auditory Cue and Word Discrimination, the picture is presented and the student has to match a spoken word or phrase with the visual content. In the Generalization Phase, students select the sign or text to match a visual cue from the video. Basic Signs Software teaches signs and words that are encountered every day – Bus Stop, Don't Walk, Toilet, Wet Paint, Danger, Police, Do Not Enter, etc. Community Signs Software identifies important places and services in the community, such as airport, bank, hospital, school, zoo, etc. Safety Signs covers safety signs and words found in your community, such as Danger, Fragile, Exit, Poison, Stop, etc. The programs can be purchased individually or as a complete series.

Survival Signs & Symbols Flash Cards and Software (Attainment Software: 800-327-4269, www.AttainmentCompany.com) This is a combination package, including a software program and a set of 75 important survival signs with definitions flash cards. The software has three activities: Practice, Match and Test. The graphics are bold and the definitions are simple and easy to understand. You can select all words, use a category or create your own list. Practice mode shows each card in the list in order. The word is spoken and the user can click Flip Card to see the back of the card and hear the definition spoken. In Match mode, the cards are shown in random order and there are three possible summary definitions of the card. The definitions can be spoken aloud and there is a feedback option. Test mode is similar to Match mode, except that the first answer is recorded and the next card is then shown. The software can be used with scanning and single switch. The flash cards are on 3 x 6 inch plastic



Pick & Choose (Judy Lynn Software)



Survival Signs Software Series (Attainment Software)

coated cards, with sign on one side and definition on other side.

Potato Face (Marblesoft: 888-755-1402, www.marblesoft.com) This new program from Marblesoft gives young children the opportunity to play and work with different faces, facial expressions and appearances, using the keyboard, mouse, touch screen, track ball or up to three switches. The illustrations are large, fun and clear. There are options to choose male/female, five skin colors, many different hair styles and dozens of eyes, noses and mouths. There are also jewelry, accessories and lots of funny body parts. On the cause and effect level, players use a key or switch to scroll through a variety of facial expressions. In Funny Face, every time the switch is pressed, a new random part is added to the face. In Potato Face, you can build a face from dozens of illustrated parts. Add shirts and hats, jewelry, nail polish, glasses and moustaches. With Make A Face, players experiment with changing skin color, hair, eyes, noses and mouths with a simple interface. In My Face, you can make your own face, a friend's face or other familiar faces. In Face to Face, players try to make their face the same as a given face by changing parts until they match. Great fun and good learning, for both Macintosh and Windows computers.

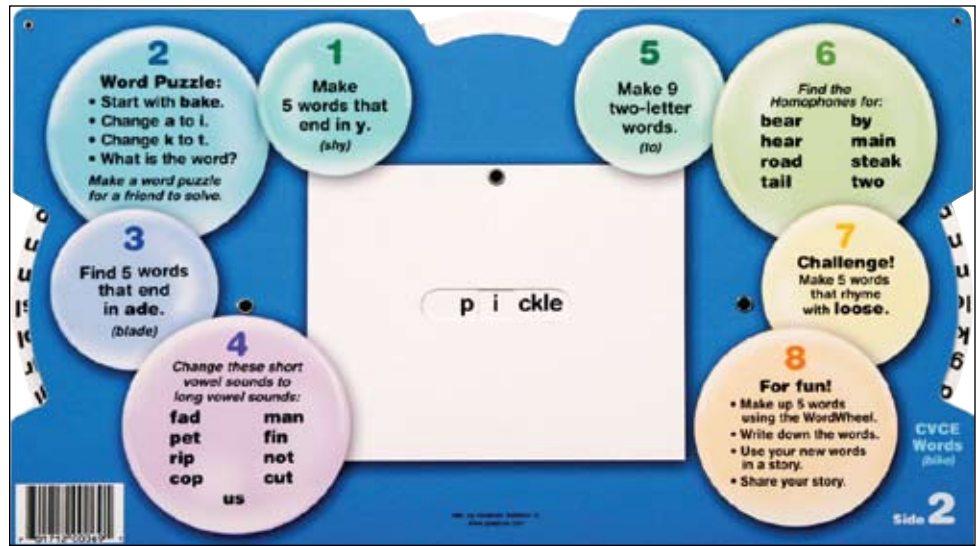
Click to Read: Life Skills (Marblesoft: 888-755-1402, www.marblesoft.com) This is a



Click to Read: Life Skills (Marblesoft)

collection of four stories for early readers using SymbolStix picture communication symbols. (These symbols are color-coded by part of speech) Designed for ages 5-7, each story has a reading mode, where the reader learns the symbols while listening to the story; an interactive mode where they can explore and plan; and a telling mode where they tell the story by arranging the symbols in any of three reading levels. There is a Show What You Know activity for each story, where the players can demonstrate their understanding of the core vocabulary in a practice mode or by playing Bingo or Concentration with the picture symbols. The stories included are Ben Goes Shopping, Community Signs, What Time Is It? and How Much is it Worth? Each story builds vocabulary through simple text and picture support and encourages literacy while providing student independence and success. The program works with mouse, touch screen or switches and has many options to change voice (male/female, background, etc.). Along with each program is a "print book" that allows you to print a copy of the story for each student that may be used during guided reading, for independent practice or for home reading. The core vocabulary is also provided on small cards that you may print, laminate and cut apart.

WordWheel Program (Attainment Software: 800-327-4269, www.Attainment-Company.com) This is an excellent tool for reinforcing and practicing phonic skills for students of all ages – it's age appropriate for adults as well as for children. The program has two components: The WordWheel and the WordWheel Workbook with CD-ROM. The WordWheel has three self-contained wheels – one for word beginnings, one for middle vowels and one for word endings. The left and right wheels have single consonants, consonant blends and diagraphs. The middle wheel consists of vowel sounds. By moving each wheel independently, the individual letters appear in the center and users can make endless combinations of words. There



WordWheel Program (Attainment Software)

are two sides to the WordWheel – one for making easier words and one for more challenging combinations. On each side, there are suggested activities – such as "Find 7 words that start with s" and "Find 7 words that rhyme with in." Each wheel has at least two or more blank spaces to present sounds in isolation. The WordWheel Workbook has 15 chapters of student worksheets for use with or without the WordWheel. There are activities to change initial letters (sounds) to make new words, change final sounds, change vowels, word puzzles, to change CVC words into long vowel words with a silent e, etc. Worksheets are uncluttered and illustrations are age neutral, making them an ideal phonics supplement for older students. The workbook also contains a Window/Macintosh CD with printable PDF files of the entire workbook. If you are looking to find phonics learning material for older students, this is highly recommended.

Assistive Technology Tracker Web (Adaptive Solutions: www.Adaptive-sol.com) The Assistive Technology Tracker, (previously reviewed in DISKOVeries) is now available online as a Web-based database that resides on a server and is accessed via a Web browser. You can access the database from anywhere via a PC connected to the Internet. Assistive Technology, Response to Intervention and Accessible Instructional Materials can all be tracked. You can also track your assessments, referrals, technical support and equipment check in/out and print specific reports on all data. Go to www.Adaptive-sol.com for more information.

DVDS AND CDS

Scholastic Storybook Treasures (Scholastic: www.scholastic.com) Scholastic Storybook Treasures has added a new line of DVDs to their award-winning storybooks on DVD. The new series is the new American Sign Language (ASL) series, designed for children ages 3-9. They feature expertly signed adaptations of beloved and best-selling children's stories. Each of the first releases contain classic stories enhanced by both vocal and ASL sign language narration, story text, sign language vocabulary lessons and reading comprehension questions to support early literacy skills. The new releases are: Goodnight Moon (with two other stories – A Creature Was Stirring and Gladys Goes Out to Lunch) and A Pocket for Corduroy (with two other stories – Blue Burt and Wiggles and Big Al).

Scholastic Storybook Treasures: The Wheels on the Bus Sing-Along Travel Kit (Scholastic: www.scholastic.com) This collection is designed to provide children, ages 3-9, with a group of activities that can be used on a long plane, train or car ride. There are two musical DVDs featuring 15 animated literary classics, including such favorites as Wheels on the Bus, This Land is Your Land, Over in the Meadow, The Chinese Violin, Musical Max (in English and Spanish), Keeping House and others. There is also a CD that contains 13 sing-along songs, some crayons and a 34-page activity booklet loaded with games and activities that support early math and literacy skills. They are all packedged in a portable travel case with a handle. Great traveling fun and good at home and school too.

Sing and Learn Series (Master Communications: 800-765-5885, www.master-comm.com)

com) There are three DVDs in this excellent series, good for young children, ages 3 and older. It is an effective tool for Spanish and English language learners. In *Sing and Learn English*, good for learning English as a first language or as a second language, songs are presented on various themes (Animals, Garden, House, What Do They Do, etc.). Vocabulary and sentences are demonstrated in context and in real-life situations. Music, rhythm and rhyme stimulates this development as well. In *Sing and Learn Spanish* and *Sing and Learn More Spanish*, children are exposed to multicultural rhythms from around the world with video showing children engaged in fun, everyday activities. Good for teaching Spanish as a second language or preserving a native language at home. Each DVD also includes a PDF of the Teacher's Guide filled with suggested lesson plans, vocabulary lists, songs (in English and Spanish) and a list of additional resources.

Hap Palmer Learning in Two Languages/ Aprendiendo en dos idiomas (www.happalmer.com) Through the years, Hap Palmer has taught us that music is an excellent way to help children master language skills and that learning is more effective when it is active and multisensory. This new CD features 20 original songs designed to

help children, ages 4-9, build vocabulary in both English and Spanish through this kind of active, multisensory participation. Fans of Hap Palmer will recognize some of their favorites along with many new ones. Some songs deal with key early learning topics, including colors, days of the week, opposites, articles of clothing, identifying sounds, adverbs of place and prepositions. There is a range of musical styles, from jazz to mariachi, performed on a range of instruments, including piano, drums, guitar, trumpet, trombone, sax, flute, violin, bongos and more. These songs enhance the development of motor skills, language acquisition, reading readiness and math concepts, as well as nurturing the imagination and encouraging creative problem solving. A Learning in Two Languages teaching guide includes lyrics in English and Spanish, activities and photos, and is available at www.happalmer.com/Files/Lyrics%20Two%20Languages.html.

Let's Grow: Safety First (Lionsgate and HIT Entertainment: www.hitentertainment.com) Featuring episodes from preschool favorites, Barney, Thomas & Friends, Bob the Builder, Fireman Sam and Kipper, these stories teach, inform and entertain while demonstrating life lessons and important safety tips along the way. Episodes are woven together by live-action segments featuring hosts and their

puppet friend, Chica the Chicken. Each story is introduced and there are demonstrations of easy-to-make crafts tied to the program's theme. A parent guide is included too. (There's also a bonus episode from Angelina Ballerina.)

Art House (www.intheartshouse.com) This DVD was designed to teach children, ages 3 and up, how to draw using basic shapes – squares, circles, triangle, etc. – as a base to illustrate almost anything. In Volume 1: Basic Shapes and Animals, children draw fish, dogs, monkeys, birds, dinosaurs and more. With animation, music and live-action visuals, the program is fun and easy to follow. It comes with printable coloring book pages too.

Sara Hickman Big Bird, Little Bird (Sleeveless: www.sarahickman.com) This sweet, new DVD features 13 of Sara Hickman's soothing songs for children, ages five and under. There are bright, colorful computer animations that are engaging and calming. The DVD also includes 14 short parenting tips, offering ideas on what to expect as children get older. Tips include: First Hello, Introduce Your Baby, Being Polite, No-No to Pacifiers, Feeling Frustrated and others.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

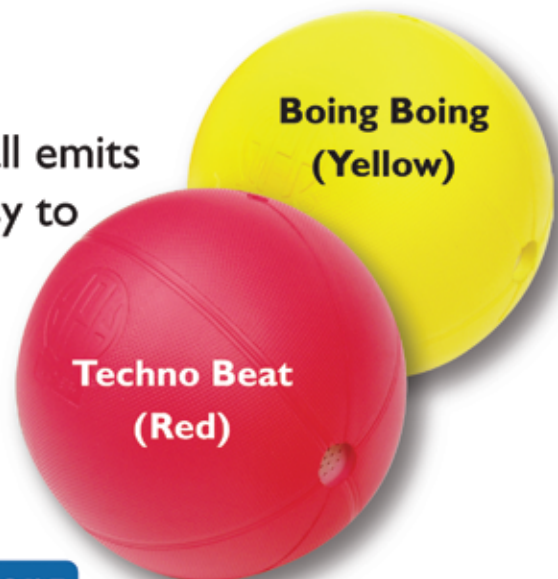
Omnipage Professional 17 (Nuance: 781-565-5000, www.Nuance.com) This

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APH Sound Ball

Durable, rechargeable 7 1/2 inch foam ball emits a constant two-tone sound, making it easy to locate during game play. Use to improve motor skills, play games, and practice sound localization.

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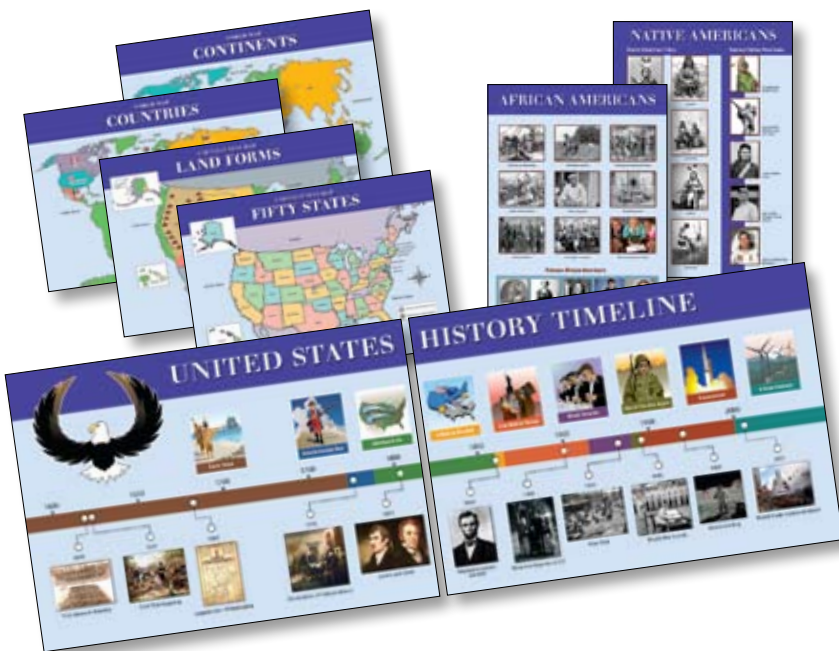
ENDORSED BY



- Endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE).
- Validated by four years of classroom research.
- Features all five NRP components.
- Scripted lessons, multiyear program.
- Accommodates AAC users.

Teach to standards

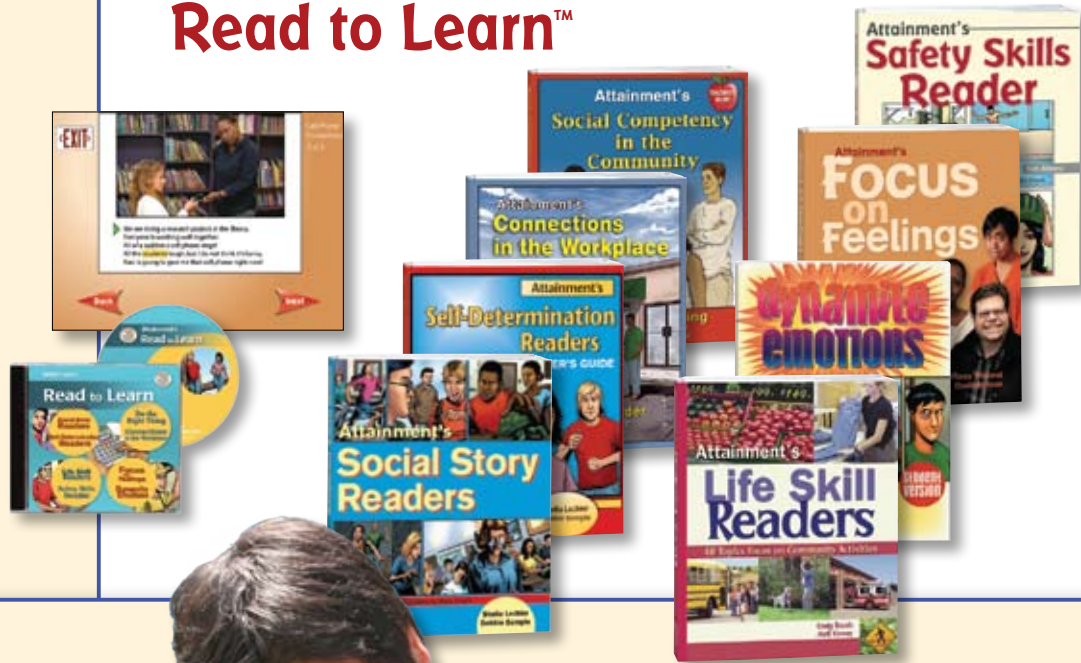
Explore American History



- Focuses on the use of social study tools like timelines, maps, photos, and graphs.
- Covers colonial times to the present.
- Heavily illustrated with photos, artwork, and symbols.
- Detailed lesson plans with extension activities.
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Read to Learn™

- Language arts curriculum for transition age students.
- Covers essential life skills.
- Books with talking software to support struggling readers.
- Easy-to-administer comprehension assessments.



New programs for students with moderate to severe developmental disabilities including autism



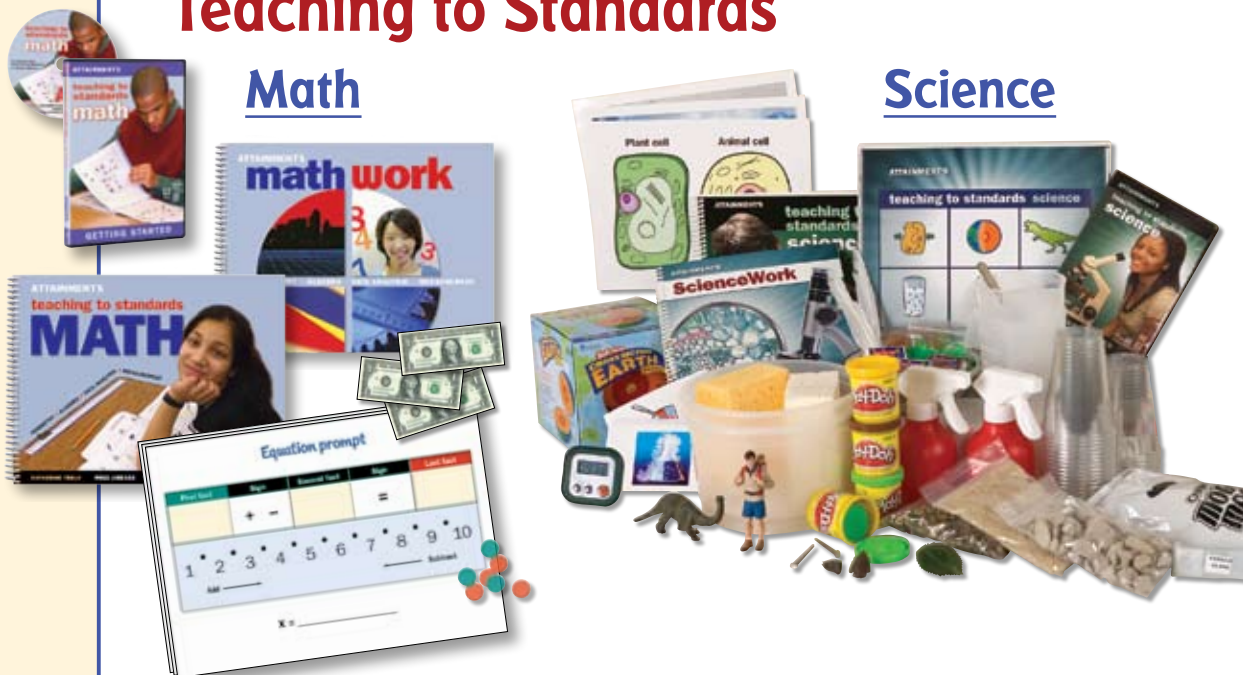
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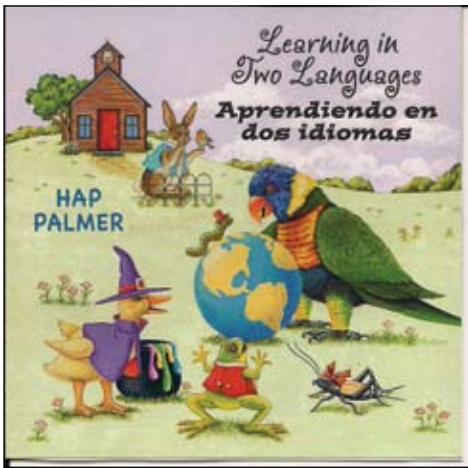
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Sample PDFs,
video clips, and
research summaries at
www.AtainmentCompany.com

Teaching to Standards

- Validated by two years of classroom research.
- Age appropriate for grades 7–12.
- Scripted lessons.
- Math covers algebra, geometry, data analysis, and measurement.
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Hap Palmer Learning in Two Languages (Hap Palmer)

program can be used to convert a variety of documents (simple one column formats, complex magazine-style formats, etc.) into editable text and PDF files. Its basic Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is excellent. If there are any errors, they can easily be fixed using OmniPage's built-in proofreading and text editing tools. There is improved OCR support for Microsoft Office 2007 with toolbars that now have separate Nuance OCR tables within Word, Excel and PowerPoint. There is also enhanced support for digital camera images of two megapixels and more. There is also a new Kindle Assistant option that helps you set up a macro that automatically sends a converted document to an Amazon Kindle book reader. There are over 120 languages supported with the newest support for Chinese, Japanese and Korean documents, Omnipage works with any scanner and supports PDF, HTML, Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint 2007, plus many more formats.

Nuance PDF Converter 6 Pro (Nuance: 781-565-5000, www.Nuance.com) This excellent utility lets you create, convert and edit PDF files. For Windows computers, it has many features that are not available with the free readers. It allows you to convert PDF files into fully formatted Microsoft Office documents and to create high-quality PDF files from any application or scanner. You can make quick edits to your PDF files and share your documents by creating industry standard PDF files from any PC application. Toolbar shortcuts for Microsoft Office allow you to make a PDF copy of your documents with a single click. Great product to have.

CorelDRAW Graphics Suite (Corel: www.corel.com) This is an excellent new all-in-one graphics suite that has everything for graphics illustration, layout, tracing, photo editing, Web graphics and animation all in one complete suite of integrated applications. The applications include CorelDraw (vector illustration and page-layout application); Corel Photo-

Paint (image-editing application that lets you retouch and enhance photos); Corel PowerTRACE (convert bitmaps into editable vector graphics); Corel Connect (full-screen browser lets you search suite's digital content and search your computer or local network) and Corel Photo – Paint (guidebook that introduces each application's workspace and includes tips and techniques for users of all skill levels, in-depth tutorial and insights from various industry experts.) There are built-in learning tools, video tutorials and an illustrated online guidebook, along with a hard cover, full-color, printed guidebook. There are over 1,000 professional fonts, premium clipart, royalty free photos and templates. The program lets you create distinctive logos and signs, marketing material, Web graphics, and much more. You can import and export files with dozens of supported file formats, including PDF, JPG, PNG, EPS, AI, TIFF, PSD and DOCX. Some of the new features include a Built-in Content Organizer (helps you find graphics, templates, fonts and images on your computer); Re-designed Color Management Engine (with greater color accuracy); Web Graphics and Animation Tools (includes a Pixels mode that shows exactly how your content will display online), and a new Web animation tool. This latest version is optimized for Windows 7 and offers new touch-screen support, as well as support for Vista and XP.

INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS: NEW WII, DS AND PSP PROGRAMS

Coldstone Creamery Scoop It Up for Wii (Zoo Publishing: www.zoogamesinc.com) This is a cute Wii program for young children. They can mix and match different flavors of ice cream and toppings before giving them to customers. There are 25 different ice cream flavors and many yummy mix-ins. There are mini games for single and multiplayer modes and include Ice Cream Twisting (twist the Wii Remote to make ice cream) and Candy topping (shake the Wii remote to make candy). You can slice fruit, make smoothies and shake sprinkles onto plates. There's one game where you catch scoops of ice cream onto a cone. Players can design their own ice cream billboards. You can play with one remote, but with two, players can simulate both hands – one to pick up the cone or bowl, the other to scoop the ice cream. In Career Mode, you get to choose setting, city and run your own ice cream store. Good fun!

MLB 10 The Show for PSP (Sony Computer Entertainment, www.us.playstation.com) A great baseball game for the PSP – with pitching, batting, base running, sliding and fielding, all controlled by the PSP controls. There are five games modes: Exhibition, Manager Mode, Road to the Show, Season and Home Run Derby. You can also play a quick game between two teams. With great graphics,

animation and an updated team roster, this is a fun program for PSP baseball fans .

Madden NFL 11 for Wii and PSP (EA Sports: www.ea.com) The football game everyone waits for ... Madden NFL 11 lets you lead your favorite NFL team. New players can get up to speed quickly with the all-new GameFlow system. The plays are called for you until you are ready to go it alone. There is a completely new franchise mode – assistant coaches guide you through every scenario. Do well and the fans will line up around your stadium waiting for the next game, do poorly and the fans picket you. There are new weather effects (rain and snow), uniforms (players' uniforms will degrade along with the weather and they will also have practice uniforms), and field degradation so that players slip and slide in mud when the weather is bad. New stadiums will match their real life counterparts with improved lighting. Love the New Orleans Saints and Drew Brees? You will love this game! Madden NFL 11 is also available for the PSP. Features included in the PlayStation Portable (PSP) version include Franchise mode, Superstar Challenge mode, Mini-Camp Competition mode, the ability to customize your team's playbook and more. Fight for fumbles, design your own plays, and feel what it's like to be an NFL superstar. Exciting new commentary is available. Gus Johnson, one of the most well-known play-by-play commentators in sports, joins Cris Collinsworth in the booth, bringing a whole new level of excitement to every play.

OTHER IPOD FEATURES/ APPLICATIONS:

iPod: Did you know that you can get Closed Captioning in videos on your iPod? Go to iTunes preferences and select Playback->Show closed captioning when available. Search for closed-captioned movies in the iTunes Store by choosing Movies->Power Search (on the right) and selecting "Search for movies that contain closed captioning". Also, did you know your iPod speaks? (Thanks, RJ, for this.) You must have the latest generation Nano (4th generation) and the latest 8.x iTunes software. When connected, you'll find a new option in iTunes to "Enable spoken menus for accessibility." When you sync, iTunes 8 creates spoken descriptions for the contents of your iPod nano using the text-to-speech engine on your computer (in Mac OS X, Windows XP and Windows Vista) and then syncs them to your iPod Nano (4th generation) along with your music.

Joan Tanenhaus, M.A., CCC, Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist, is Founder and Executive Director of Technology for Language and Learning, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the use of computers and technology with children and adults with Special Needs. (e-mail: ForTLL@aol.com) ■

iParent:

By Marie Duggan

Using Creative Ideas Utilizing Apple's Technology to Create Visual Supports Across All Environments

This story is about a mom, a son with autism, visual supports, AAC/AT, trials and tribulations, emerging speech, technology, family and unconditional love. Let me introduce myself. My name is Marie Duggan, I am the mother of six beautiful children.

Michael was diagnosed with autism when he was 18 months old. We started to implement visuals when he was three years old as he was non-verbal. There were a lot of loud ear piercing vocalizations, but no speech. We progressed from low tech to high tech AAC/AT. Michael had emerging speech at the age of 12! I am going to tell you what our journey has been like thus far, where we were, where we've been and where we are going. Michael is 20 years old now, comprehending and using visual supports and technology across all environments.

First, let me explain to you what I mean by visuals. Visual supports are a way to make auditory information understandable. We use visual supports because auditory information is transient; visual information remains present for as long as the child may need it. When we present information to a child visually and verbally, the child is better able to understand the verbal information by means of the visual information being portrayed. As a result, visuals eliminate the guesswork and make the message clear and concrete for the child.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF USING VISUAL SUPPORTS?

1. Reduce communication breakdowns
2. Reduce anxiety and behavioral meltdowns
3. Teach functional skills
4. Help with transitions
5. Teach independence
6. Can be used to establish structure
7. Can be used for verbal communication
8. Can be used for education

Currently parents, caregivers, teachers, SLPs, OTs, PTs, aids, etc. are spending a lot of money and time on Velcro, contact paper, Veltex fabric, scissors, clear packing tape, binders, photo key rings, timers, printing, ink costs, paper, cutting and pasting. Yes, it works, but this is the 21st century – we have to come up with better solutions.



Mike Duggan and his brother.

WHO NEEDS VISUAL SUPPORTS?

The simple answer is WE ALL DO! So, if this is the case, let's pause for a moment and ask ourselves these questions: Why don't kids need those same supports? And, if they had them, how would they benefit from them?

Hopefully, I have you thinking visually now, which brings me to "How can technology make it easier?"

I started using visual supports when my son was three years old on the recommendation of Howard Shane, PhD., Director of the Communication Enhancement Center at Children's Hospital, Boston. After seeing many doctors and specialists, he told me that "my son had the goods but we needed to provide him with the tools." These were the most profound words ever spoken to me by a professional. Hope was now my new mantra.

I left his office with a plan. I started with six of Michael's favorite foods, cut the logos off of the food packages and laminated them to a manilla file folder. Whenever Michael wanted something, I would not allow him to pull me by the hand and push my hand in the direction of what he wanted, screaming and tantruming. I would direct him to his folder, isolate his index finger and have him point to the appropriate picture of what he wanted. I said what it was and immediately acted. I noticed that his frustration level was beginning to decrease.

In order to make this more effective, I locked all my cabinets with file cabinet locks. I cut out pictures of what was inside the cabinet, laminated them and Velcroed the pictures to the cabinets. For the refrigerator, I used a bike

lock and magnetic strips instead of Velcro. Mike was now realizing that he couldn't just climb up and get what he wanted, ignore us and be on his merry way. (He would have been quite content to do that.) By creating a visual immersive environment for him, he had no choice but to establish joint attention. This was working! The whole family was thrilled. There were less meltdowns, less frustration and Michael was quickly learning that speech was power!

I went on to label and lock everything in the house. The hardware store became my new best friend with the array of locks they carried. Mike would usually leave the room when we would sit down for dinner, but not anymore with the doors locked! I didn't care if he was eating or not, but he was staying in the same room with the rest of the family. I put locks on all of my doors. Now he was staying with us - wherever we were!

Mike's six pictures on a manilla file folder very quickly turned into a binder, larger than the yellow pages, with hundreds of symbols, which I categorized. He would navigate the binder and search for the picture he wanted. I spent countless hours on the creation of his communication book and the rest of my home became a visual spotlight for Mike, his siblings and his communication. Everything had a label and everything had a picture/symbol/icon/drawing.

Life was good, Mike still had no expressive speech, but thus far we were communicating with some sign, some symbols, logos, magazine pictures and his communication book I made with Boardmaker Symbols by Mayer-Johnson (<http://www.mayer-johnson.com/default.aspx>). I was happy with this. Of course I never stopped praying for speech, but if he communicated with some sign and pictures, I was happy with that.

Until one day, Michael refused to use his communication book, started throwing it across the room and tearing it apart. The aggressive behavior came back, full swing, and the frustration was through the roof. What had gone wrong, I thought to myself. I called Dr. Shane right away. He had me bring Michael in and told me to bring his communication book with me.

HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY MAKE IT EASIER?

I was about to find out! On our visit, Dr. Shane took one look at the size of Mike's communication book and the amount of symbols I so proudly had assembled for my son, that seemed to be working terrifically for a while now, and said to me, "Would you want to go through this process every time you wanted to say something?"

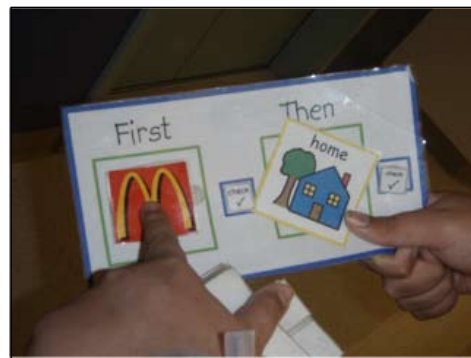
I was confused. Yes, it was a process that entailed locating the picture, taking it off the Velcro page, putting it on a removable sentence strip, locating another and going through the same process until he was done, and then he would give it to me. I would again isolate his index finger and say each picture aloud, then act and give him hugs and tickles and social praise for his efforts. Isn't this what the doctor wanted me to do? Puzzled, I asked, "but isn't this is what you wanted?" He looked at me and told me it was time for an AT (Assistive Technology) evaluation.

We introduced Mike to what would become his very first AT device in 1998, called the Freestyle. Developed at the CCE at Children's Hospital by Dr Shane. It was a fully functional computer, extremely durable, with a touch screen running a MAC OS and

Companion software, which we refer to now as visual scene cues.

Mike did terrific with his new device. I recreated his communication book on the Freestyle using a program called Speaking Dynamically Pro (<http://www.mayer-johnson.com/default.aspx>), which was a program that allowed Boardmaker symbols to speak. I recorded Mike's siblings' voices behind every symbol. Hearing familiar voices, as opposed to the computer voice, made an incredible difference. Although Michael had no expressive speech, he could still make a grammatically correct sentence. As he touched each symbol, it would appear in a message window, highlight and speak it's word. When Michael completed his sentence, he would touch a speak icon and the computer would act as his expressive speech, reading the sentence aloud.

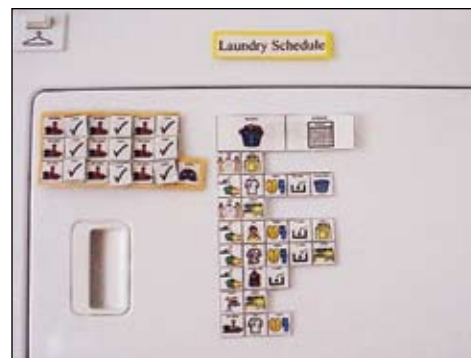
In 2000, Michael's AT device needed to be upgraded to the Gemini by ATI, which was an updated version of the Freestyle with a MAC OS running Classic. It had a touch screen and extremely durable tablet with a stand. This AT device had the added bonus of a CD/DVD ROM, which would allow Michael to play his favorite Disney videos. Michael continued to excel with this device and I became more creative in designing and programming his boards for him.



First/Then communication book.



Using visuals at the beach.



Visual laundry schedule.

When Apple upgraded to OSX, sadly, ATI stopped making AT devices with a MAC OS. We were left no choice but to switch to a PC. Michael did not take to this and, honestly, neither did I. At this point, wherever we went, we had a static visual support, as it wasn't feasible and was physically stigmatizing for him to carry this large tablet computer around with him.

This is when I started getting very creative with Apple's array of products, using Michael's First Generation iPod and creating playlists of his favorite music that he would earn for good behavior. Then I moved on to his Video iPod, iPod Touch, iPhone 3G, iPhone 3Gs, Nano and, most recently, the iPad. Before the app store came out, I was using Michael's Video iPod to develop picture schedules, behavioral rules, first/thens and animated visual schedules on these various Apple products using the



SIMPLY SMARTER SPEECH RECOGNITION

BIG NEWS: Dragon is now available on the Mac.

TURN TALK INTO TEXT

Instead of a keyboard, use your voice to produce text. Speak your thoughts; then watch your words appear on screen in your favorite Mac applications.

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existing functionality of my MacBook Pro to create these visual supports.

I would scan favorite books, send them to my .mac e-mail account, save the .jpgs to my iPhoto Library and make albums of favorite books and sequences of schedules and routines, etc., and put them in albums, too. Then I would start up iMovie, enter the correct sequence of a story book from front cover to back, add voice narration - my own recorded voice to the images - and then share to iPod and do a sync. Michael would hear Mom's voice.

This was a huge help as he always wanted my undivided attention when one of my other kids needed help with homework or I needed to get dinner ready. I would give Michael his Video iPod. He could see his favorite story and hear Mom's voice reading it to him. As the iPods kept advancing, so did the creation of my visual supports on the devices. I started to create visually animated schedules and so much more - shopping lists, animated chore schedules, with and without voice output.

One of the biggest successes for Michael and the family unit as a whole was the fact that we all realized the power behind the visuals. We had visual supports for home, school and community, and these went with him across all environments. We have visual supports for the beach, for the car, for the community, for swimming, for shopping, for shaving, showering, toothbrushing, multiple medical procedures and so much more. We all knew that when Michael "saw it, he understood it." This became so much more work, but we all reaped the benefits, especially Michael. I have so many visual supports that my goal is to put them on a CD to share with others.

Michael's younger brother created a visual support that was for behavior that was similar to a First/Then, but was called "If I ... (aberrant behavior in box) Then I Lose ... (preferred activity in a box)." The whole family got involved in Michael's communication and offered me suggestions for programming. Now we are putting all these visuals on handheld devices and Michael uses a Bose Wireless Quiet Comfort 2 Headset. He looks just like his typical peers when he goes into the community and is cool with his iPod Touch, iPad, etc.

I am encouraged that Michael will continue to improve with his multiple modes of communication. I will never give up on my son. Let me end this with what I hope will give others who work with children with autism HOPE also.

By using technology with my son, he had emerging speech at the age of 12! He came home from school, opened his backpack, took out his computer and I set it up on the stand on my kitchen counter. He turned it on, navigated through an array of boards to find his "Fast Foods" categories and selected

McDonald's. He went on to create a sentence that visually read, "I want to go to McDonald's please Mommy." However, he did not hit the icon that would make the sentence speak. I said to him, like I always did, "Mike use your words (even though he didn't have any), use your communication book, or make your computer speak." He looked right into my eyes and very robotically said, "Nooooooooo!" I froze. My daughter was doing her math homework and said, "Mommy he spoke!" I said, "I know, what do we do?!"

We saw what Michael had put on his message window but still he had not hit the speak icon. He stared at me like a puppy and I stared back, for what seemed like forever, and then, finally, he went on to speak. It was very robotic, since he had never spoken before, and his articulation off, but there wasn't a question in our minds. "I want to go to McDonald's please Mommy." I stared at him with tears streaming down my face, afraid to move, and just kept staring. Finally, my daughter said, "Mom, will you just take him!" and I did. There must have been an angel with me as I drove. I don't recall ever looking forward, but only in the rearview mirror, replaying his voice in my head and wondering if he would ever speak again.


My son does have the goods and I did provide him with the tools, and, as technology evolves, I, too, will evolve with it to better help




Mike's two sisters sing a song for him.

my son communicate. Without visuals and technology, I can't imagine where he would be today. Never give up. This mom sure won't!

Marie Duggan can be contacted at Technology For Autism Now, Inc., 60 Bradfield Avenue, Boston, MA 02131-1934; E-mail: kidsarecool@me.com ; tw: @bak2ack , Phone: 617-435-2307. ■

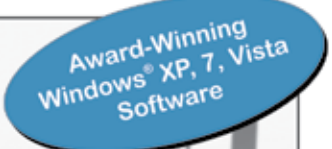


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READING Accommodations

By Denise DeCoste



DR. DENISE DECOSTE is the team leader for the Montgomery County Public School's High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) Team in Maryland. <http://www.montgomery-schoolsmd.org/departments/hiat/> She is the coauthor of the Handbook of Augmentative and Alternative Communication, and the author of Assistive Technology Assessment: Developing a Written Productivity Profile (Don Johnston, Inc.). She is also a coauthor of AT Teams: Many ways to do it right (NATE). She can be reached at dcdecoste@gmail.com

No Child Left Behind and IDEA regulations have set the stage for using standardized assessments to measure the progress of all students. Test scores influence key decisions regarding placement, graduation and school effectiveness. With over six million students with disabilities, accountability through testing is imperative, but only if we can ensure that students' test performance are valid and reliable measures of knowledge, skills and abilities. The role of accommodations has "become more central in discussions about test fairness and accessibility, as well as evidence of validity" (Finch, Barton, & Meyer, 2009, p. 38).

Accommodations are defined as "changes to materials and procedures that do not change the construct being measured" (Thurlow, Lazarus, & Christensen, 2008, p. 126). It is not sufficient, however, merely to assign accommodations without individualized assessments. According to Hehir (2008), teachers and parents need to make carefully chosen accommodation decisions. "There is evidence that accommodation decisions for students with disabilities are not done as thoughtfully as they could and . . . further, the wrong accommodations may actually depress performance for some disabled students" (Hehir, 2008, p. 132).

READING ACCOMMODATIONS

Reading accommodations are one of the most studied in the literature. Some states do not permit read-aloud accommodations because they consider decoding to be the primary construct. Some states allow it on some forms of tests where decoding is seen as a secondary construct. And some states allow all tests to be accommodated because of the belief that decoding is not the essential construct being measured (Laitusis, 2010).

According to Shaywitz (2003), 75-90 percent of students with learning disabilities have reading disabilities, and there is strong

evidence that students do not completely outgrow reading disabilities so that accommodations grow in importance as these students progress through school. At older levels, students may read more accurately, but remain slow readers. Elkind and Elkind (2002) demonstrated that slow readers using text-to-speech accommodations doubled or tripled the number of pages read with less fatigue, and that students with attention disorders increased sustained reading by 60 percent. Dolan, Hall, Banerjee, Chun & Strangman (2005) found that high school students with learning disabilities improved their scores on tests using text-to-speech. Studies of reading accommodations on math tests have shown that students with reading disabilities benefited from having the questions read to them (Johnson, 2000; Calhoun, Fuchs & Hamlett, 2000). In a study of 181 students with learning disabilities, Fuchs et al. (2000) found that students benefited from adult read-alouds. However, there is some evidence that human read-alouds compromise validity because readers differ in quality and may inadvertently influence responses, and because students tend not to ask for portions to be reread as needed (Landau, Russell, Gourgey, Erin & Cowan (2003). While there are an increasing number of studies examining reading accommodations across a variety of conditions, there is no clear answer on what accommodations work best, under what conditions, for which students.

In principle, accommodations should lead to greater score improvements for students with disabilities compared to students without disabilities. There should be a differential boost, but it should not provide an undue advantage. (Hehir, 2008; Sireci, 2008). In practice, tests need to be well designed from the outset with clearly targeted constructs, as well as engineered for universal access. Test features should be examined relative to construct irrelevancy.

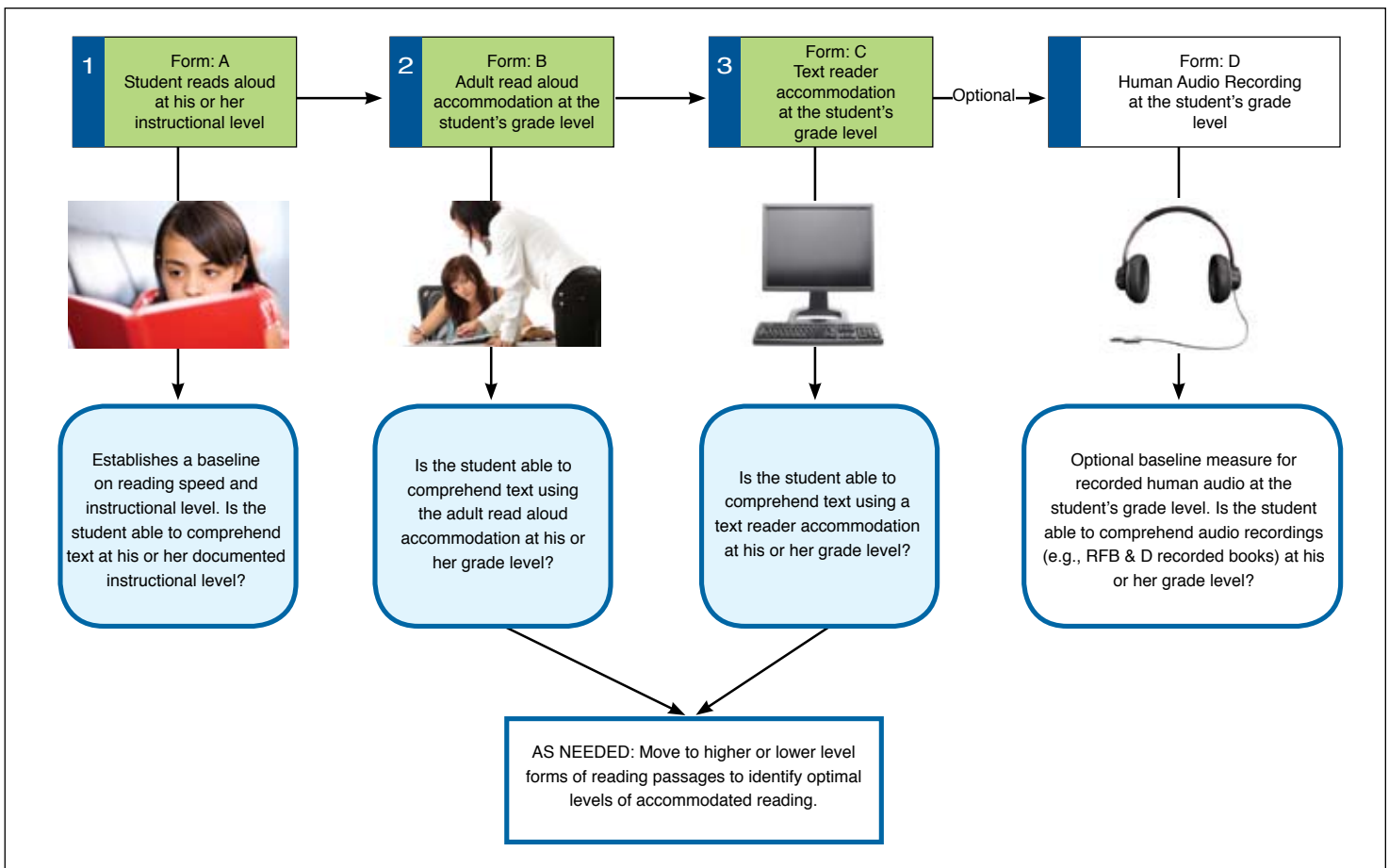


Figure 1: Reading Accommodations Profile

For example, reading skills are needed to read math problems, and yet the targeted construct is the ability to solve math problems, not reading. Accommodations should be allowed to get beyond the barrier of secondary or irrelevant constructs. However, as Hehir (2008, p. 140) states, “the issue is not just the accommodations students should receive during the high stakes test but rather the important role well-thought out accommodations play in the entire education process.”

In the context of the school environment, accommodation decisions still need to be made on a case by case basis. “The absence of clear research evidence means that opinion and expert judgment are the primary basis for decisions about which accommodations are allowable and which, if used, invalidate test scores” (Thurlow, Lazarus, Thompson, & Robey, 2002). At the school level, there are two major concerns: 1) testing drives accommodation decisions, not instruction, such that students may not be getting ample use of accommodations instructionally, and 2) accommodation decisions are not systematically considered for testing and are instead merely checked from a list of options.

THE NEED FOR A SYSTEMATIC PROCESS FOR READING ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS

Typically, the local IEP team makes decisions regarding accommodations. Often, these decisions are quickly considered judgments and are not data driven. “It appears in some instances educators approach the deci http://www.istockphoto.com/file_thumbview_approve/10859332/2/istockphoto_10859332-teacher-and-student.jpg sions about accommodations as they do a menu, checking off what might be desirable without giving each item careful thought. This behavior is reinforced by many states and local districts that provide lists of approved accommodations” (Hehir, 2008, p. 140). Research by Erickson and Thurlow (1996) found that IEP teams made decisions in idiosyncratic ways, with vague decision-making rules that often focused on superficial barriers. In a study by Fuchs and Fuchs (2000), teacher decisions did not correspond well to those students who benefitted from the accommodation. Shriner and Destefano (2003) reviewed the accommodation practices in three school districts and found wide variation in the provision of testing accom-

modations that reduced the overall comparability and usefulness of test scores.

The research on teachers’ perceptions of accommodations suggests the potential for bias against accommodations, based on the belief that accommodations might provide an unfair advantage to the student with a disability. In a three-year meta-analysis of accommodation-related research across 50 states, Cox, Herner, Demczyk, & Nieberding (2006, p. 350) found that “educators have tended to think of accommodations narrowly, as adjustments to the assessment process rather than as specific teaching strategies designed to minimize the effects of a student’s disability and to maximize a student’s ability to learn.” The authors also reported that teachers saw accommodations that altered the test format (e.g., extended time, read aloud, rewording questions, reduced test items per page) as invalid, whereas, accommodations for students with sensory impairments, where the response format was altered, were perceived to be equitable. Hehir (2008) asserts that there is a perception in education that disabilities must be overcome and that there is “an ingrained prejudice against performing activities in ways that might be more efficient for disabled people but that

are different from how nondisabled perform them" (p. 18).

The exactness of accommodated test scores may ultimately depend upon matching accommodations to student characteristics, not disability status. Selecting fair accommodations may depend upon individual diagnostics (Cawthon, Etching, Patel, Potvin, & Trundt, 2009; Cox et al., 2006; Fuchs et al., 2000). Using accommodations as part of daily instruction will ensure that students have ample experience prior to testing. Assessment accommodations should be "chosen on the basis of the individual student's needs and should generally be consistent with the accommodations provided during instruction." (Dolan, Hall, Banerjee, Chun & Strangemen, 2005, p 6).

A PROTOCOL FOR MAKING READING ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS

Considering the heterogeneity of students with disabilities, and in the absence of a valid universal screening tool that could be administered to all students to delineate their most effective methods for reading and processing text, educators need a systematic process for making individualized instructional reading accommodation decisions well in advance of testing. In Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland, assistive technology teams have used the Written Productivity Profile (available from Don Johnston, Inc., (www.donjohnston.com) for many years as a way to make informed decisions regarding writing tools and writing accommodations (e.g., keyboarding, word prediction, graphic organizers.) However, we did not have a similar systematic approach to reading accommodations. Over the past two years, the High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) Team has been exploring the use of an individualized screening protocol for making informed reading accommodation decisions.

Figure 1 shows the three basic steps we use to develop a Reading Accommodation Profile (RAP). The intent of the RAP is not to test reading or identify reading interventions, but to examine the effectiveness of reading accommodations to help a student access the curriculum. The RAP is not a diagnostic assessment tool, but a protocol to help teachers make informed decisions on accommodated reading strategies to support instruction in the general education curriculum.

To begin, we identified the publisher of reading passages that were used in our district to assess reading comprehension. At least three (preferably four) equivalent passages for each grade level were needed with accompanying comprehension questions. With permission from the publisher,

Key:

- Comprehension in the top quartile (75% and above)
- Comprehension in the 2nd or 3rd quartile
- Comprehension at the lower quartile (25% and below)



These exploratory field tests demonstrated that the RAP was able to provide objective data that lead to more informed discussions on AT consideration for students with reading deficits.



we digitized one form of the reading passages to use with the text reader. We also used another form for recorded human audio.

When schools request help from the HIAT team to determine effective reading tools, we work with the school team to develop a reading accommodation profile. It is important to get background information from the team on the student's documented reading level and to establish how often reading accommodations have been used by the student. The main steps in the protocol include:

The student first reads aloud the reading passage (Form A) at his or her documented instructional reading level to serve as a baseline and to gauge reading speed. Comprehension questions are verbally presented by the adult and scored according to the publisher's manual.

To determine the effectiveness of the adult read aloud accommodation, the adult reads a passage (Form B) at the student's grade level aloud while the student follows on a paper copy of the passage. Again, comprehension questions are verbally presented by the adult and scored according to the publisher's manual.

To examine the effectiveness of using text-to-speech accommodations, the student uses the text reader available at his or her school (e.g., Read:Outloud, Kurzweil) to read an equivalent passage (Form C) at the student's grade level. The text-to-speech rate is set at 20 percent higher than the student's oral reading rate and then the

Grade Level	Oral Read		
	by Student	Adult read with text	Text Reader
11			
10			
9			
8			
7			
6*			
5			

Figure 2: 11th grade student with learning disabilities with a documented instructional reading level at the 6th grade level.

Grade Level	Oral Read			Silent Read by Student
	by Student	Adult read with text	Text Reader	
11				
10				
9				
8				
7				
6				
5				
4*				
3				

Figure 3: 8th grade student with learning disabilities with a documented instructional reading level at the 4th grade.

Grade Level	Oral Read		
	by Student	Adult read with text	Text Reader
11			
10			
9			
8			
7			
6			
5*			
4			

Figure 4: 7th grade student with learning disabilities with a documented instructional reading level at the 5th grade.

student is given an opportunity to increase or decrease the rate of text-to-speech and increase or decrease font size. Again, comprehension questions are presented verbally and scored based on the publisher's manual.

Because we are interested in the use of reading accommodations for instruction, we do not remove the paper form of the reading passage, nor the on-screen text when asking comprehension questions. Using a four-point Likert scale, students are asked to rate whether they like or dislike each reading modality and, at the conclusion of the session, to state which methods they preferred

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PROTOCOL

Based on repeated use of the RAP protocol, two options have been added. If the student scores poorly using accommodated readings at his or her grade level, Forms B and C at lower reading levels are administered at a subsequent session to determine the optimal level of reading using the accommodation. Because adult read aloud accommodations do not promote learning independence, another option was added. Human audio recorded passages (Form D) are used when the student does not appear to do well with a text reader, but does appear to do well with the adult read aloud. In the case of two students with brain injuries and resulting memory issues, we evaluated the utility of reading each passage twice.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Our experiences thus far have been consistent with the understanding that students with disabilities are not homogeneous and that a protocol for screening reading accommodations is highly useful. During the 2009 and 2010 school years, the RAP was used to screen reading accommodations for 18 students. These exploratory

field tests demonstrated that the RAP was able to provide objective data that lead to more informed discussions on AT consideration for students with reading deficits. In some instances, the results show that a text reader allowed the student to achieve grade level reading independence as shown in Figure 2. In other instances, the results indicate that students needed adjusted content to ensure comprehension (Figure 3), while others needed additional scaffolding, such as rereading and reviewing. As shown in the example in Figure 4, some students performed best with an adult reader, as this was the accommodation with which they had the most experience. The latter finding led to useful discussions on how best to introduce AT that would move students toward reading independence, such as a trial with a text reader or additional screening to see if human recorded audio texts would be useful from Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D). Results of the RAP led to team discussions on which accommodations appeared to help students the most and the accommodations with which students needed more experience.

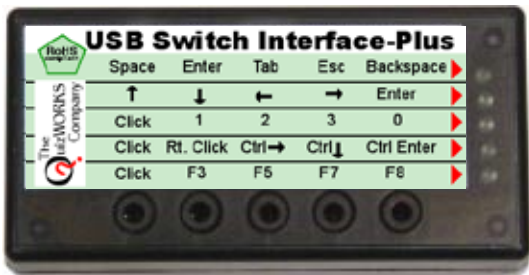
The results of the RAP comprehension scores were also compared to the data from the student's Likert scores. It was important to make sure that the student was providing a preference for the modality and not the content of the passage. More often, the student's preference matched his or her best accommodated reading modality. At times, however, a student would express a different view and this provided an opportunity to discuss other options with the student and family.

DISCUSSION

As discussed in this article, the RAP is a procedural protocol to help formulate impressions on the effectiveness of reading accom-

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modations. Additional observations and additional evaluation may be needed to confirm or update these impressions. The focus of the RAP is the use of accommodations to support instruction, not just for testing. "The decisions concerning test accommodations should flow from instructional accommodations and be relatively straight forward. Waiting until test time to determine accommodations based on a list is indicative of a far greater problem in the child's total educational program" (Hehir, 2008, p. 140). Simply checking off possible accommodations from a list suggests that we are just complying with the law instead of ensuring the best strategies for students with disabilities. Even with more universally designed assessments, it is likely that there will still be a need to identify and document accommodation decisions for some students on an individual basis. Decisions regarding accommodations should be considered carefully to provide access to the curriculum. Testing using accommodations is only as good as the instruction that precedes it. As stated in the conclusion of the National Center on Educational Outcomes report (Thompson, Johnstone, & Thurlow, 2002), "While universally designed assessments can make tests more equitable, producing

results that are more valid for all students, they cannot replace instructional opportunity." And so, while we await research that clarifies the validity of accommodations under various conditions, as educators, our role is to focus on the careful consideration of accommodations combined with good instruction, because our job is to maximize every student's ability to learn.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Assistive Technology Assessment: Developing a Written Productivity Profile by Denise DeCoste, is Published by Don Johnston Incorporated. For more information go to: http://www.donjohnston.com/products/teacher_resources/assistive_tech_assess/index.html

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The advertisement features a large, stylized '30' in purple and pink script, followed by the text 'Years of Life-Changing Assistive Technologies'. On the left, a child is shown using a large, tactile keyboard. In the center, there is a computer monitor displaying a house icon. On the right, a child is smiling while using a laptop with headphones. The Don Johnston logo, featuring a stylized figure and the text 'DON JOHNSTON 1980 - 2010', is in the top right corner. Below the main text, two product logos are highlighted: 'CO:Writer 6' and 'READ:OutLoud 6'. At the bottom, a purple banner contains the text: 'After 30 years, we're more dedicated than ever to creating AT tools that grow with you—products like Co:Writer 6, the most popular word prediction program available, and Read:OutLoud 6, our whole school text reader. See these and over 200 other products at our website!'. The website 'www.donjohnston.com' and phone number '800.999.4660' are listed at the bottom. A small portrait of a man in a suit is in the bottom right corner.

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WHY ATTEND? Participants will have numerous and unique opportunities to learn, first-hand, from experts in the field, network, ask questions, and see and try the latest AT products and strategies available today.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

<p>Monday, October 18 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm Registration Desk Open</p> <p>Tuesday, October 19 7:00 am - 8:00 pm Registration Desk Open 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Preconference Workshops</p> <p>Wednesday, October 20 7:00 am - 9:00 pm Registration Desk Open 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Preconference Workshops 5:00 pm..... Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm Preview of Exhibits</p> <p>Thursday, October 21 7:00 am - 5:30 pm Registration Desk Open</p>	<p>8:00 am - 4:30 pmPresentations *10:00 am - 5:30 pm Commercial Exhibits</p> <p>Friday, October 22 7:30 am - 5:30 pm Registration Desk Open 8:00 am - 4:30 pmPresentations *10:00 am - 5:30 pm..... Commercial Exhibits</p> <p>Saturday, October 23 7:30 am - 2:00 pm Registration Desk Open 8:00 am - 1:30 pmPresentations 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Commercial Exhibits</p> <p><i>*The exhibit floor will close for an exhibitor break from 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm.</i></p>
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AAC INSTITUTE CEUS / CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE

AAC Institute has been authorized to provide CEUs by IACET (International Association for Continuing Education and Training). CEUs will be offered for all conference learning sessions without charge. AAC Institute CEUs that relate to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology can be used for ASHA certification maintenance. RESNA accepts AAC Institute CEUs for ATP/ATS credential maintenance. Most

state licensure systems accept AAC Institute CEUs or other forms of self-reporting. Pre-conference workshops are offered for up to 1.4 CEUs. The conference is offered for up to 2.0 CEUs. For additional information visit www.aac institute.org/CEUs. CEU details and documentation will be available at the Closing The Gap registration desk located on the second floor of the Sheraton.

CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE

Closing The Gap-issued Certificates of Attendance for conference participation will be available upon request at no additional fee. All preconference workshop participants will receive a Closing The Gap-issued, present-er-signed Certificate of Preconference Workshop Attendance upon completion of the workshop.



ACADEMIC CREDIT

Graduate-level academic credit from Hamline University is available for a variety of levels of conference attendance. Participants will have the option of one, two or three full semester credits.

ONE FULL SEMESTER CREDIT Cost: \$123

Requirements:

- 12 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(12 contact hours require conference participation or two preconference workshops.)

TWO FULL SEMESTER CREDITS Cost: \$246

Requirements:

- 24 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(24 contact hours require conference participation AND at least one preconference workshop.)

THREE FULL SEMESTER CREDITS Cost: \$369

Requirements:

- 36 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(36 contact hours require conference participation Thursday - Saturday AND two preconference workshops.)



Accessing the Artist Within Art Contest And Adapted Art Show

Anne Carlsen Center of North Dakota is opening a contest for artists using adaptive equipment

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED:

- Paintings
- Video
- Drawings
- Film
- Photography
- Musical Composition
- Digital Art

Submissions are currently being accepted by the Anne Carlsen Center and will be posted as they are received. A minimum of ten pieces of art will be selected to be shown at the 28th Annual Closing The Gap Conference, October 21-23, 2010.

Requirements: Age 5 - 21. Each artist must use some type of assistive technology to create his/her work of art.

For more information

www.accessingtheartistwithin.org
1 - 8 0 0 - 5 6 8 - 5 1 7 5

24 PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19-20, 2010

Tuesday and Wednesday,
October 19 - 20 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

PC-1 Multi-Modal Communication Strategies for Children Who Have Complex Communication Needs - PODD Communication Books (Two-Day Introductory Workshop)

Linda J. Burkhart, B.S., is a Special Educator/ Augmentative Communication Specialist/ Technology Integration Specialist in private practice, Eldersburg, MD and Dale Gardner Fox, M.S., RPT, is an Assistive Technology Consultant, Hampshire Educational Collaborative, CCATT, Northampton, MA.

Tuesday, October 19 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

PC-2 Getting Writing on the Radar for Students with the Most Significant Disabilities, Including Deaf-Blindness

Gretchen Hanser, Ph.D., is the Associate Director of School-Aged Services, Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC and Toy Dills Booth, M.Ed., NBCT, is a Special Educator, The North Shelby School, Shelby, NC.

PC-3 Reaching Every Learner with Free Technology

Paul Hamilton, M.Ed., is an Assistive Technology Consultant, SET-BC (Special Education Technology), Courtenay, BC Canada.

PC-4 Facing the Challenges of Access with Students Who've Had Less Than Successful Experiences

Karen M. Kangas, OTR/L, ATP, is an Occupational Therapist, AT Specialist, Seating and Mobility Specialist and Clinical Educator in private practice, Karen M. Kangas OTR/L, Shamokin, PA.

PC-5 Evaluation of Effectiveness: The Role of Data in AT Assessment and Implementation

Jane Korsten, M.A., is a Speech Language Pathologist, AT Resource Specialist and Co-Author of EMC, Every Move Counts, Inc., Lee's Summit, MO and Terry Foss, M.Ed., is an AT Resource Facilitator, Shawnee Mission Public Schools and Co-Author of EMC, Every Move Counts, Inc., Lee's Summit, MO.

PC-6 Assistive Technology Supports for Struggling Students: Hands-On!

Pati King DeBaun, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant specializing in assistive technology, Creative Communicating, Park City, UT and Dan Herlihy is an Assistive Technology/ Technology Resource Specialist, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc., Hoosick, NY.

PC-7 Expressive Communication Needs Across the Autism Spectrum - From AAC to Social Communication: Tech Tools for Assessment and Intervention

Susan L. Stokes, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an Educational Autism Consultant and Trainer in private practice, Fond du Lac, WI.

PC-8 "Help!, I'm an AT Specialist and I Can't Get Up!" Creating Manageable School-Based AT Services

Keri Huddleston, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist, Teru Langsdale, M.S., CCC-

SLP, is a Special Education Consultant, and Moira Soulia, M.S., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist, all, Washoe County School District, Reno, NV.

PC-9 Teaching Reading When Students are at Emergent Level: For Students with Autism and Other Severe Disabilities of All Ages

Susan Norwell, M.A., is an Educational Specialist in private practice/Focused Learning Solutions and Instructor, Northeastern Illinois University, Buffalo Grove, IL.

PC-10 Supporting Students Using AAC Through a Core Vocabulary-Based Curriculum

Gail M. Van Tatenhove, M.S., CCC-SLP, is an AAC-focused Speech Language Pathologist in private practice and the President, AACell, Inc., Orlando, FL.

PC-11 Helping Teachers Integrate AIM in Classroom Instruction

Gayl Bowser, M.S. Ed., is an Independent Consultant, Roseburg, OR and Joy Smiley Zabala, Ed.D., ATP, is the Director of Technical Assistance, CAST and the National Center on AIM, Wakefield, MA.

PC-12 Keeping Current with Lite Tech AAC Systems and Innovations While Avoiding Technology Overload

Elizabeth (Libby) S. Rush, M.A., CCC-SLP, CPM, is an AAC Consultant in private practice, Durham, NC and Celeste Helling, M.A., CCC-SLP, ATP, is a Speech Language Pathologist, North Carolina Assistive Technology Program, Charlotte, NC.

Wednesday, October 20 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

PC-13 Literacy Frameworks That Guide Technology-Supported Assessment and Intervention

David A. Koppenhaver, Ph.D., is a Professor, Dept. of Language, Reading and Exceptionalities, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC and Barbara Wollak, M.S., CCC-SLP, is a Speech Pathologist, AAC and Assistive Technology Specialist, St. Paul Schools, St. Paul, MN.

PC-14 iPod touch, iPhone and iPad as Assistive Technology: From AAC to Planning Tool

David Niemeijer, Ph.D., is the CEO, AssistiveWare, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Mark Coppin, B.S., is an Apple Distinguished Educator and the Director of Assistive Technology, Anne Carlsen Center for Children, Jamestown, ND; Eric Sillers, M.A., CCC-SLP, is a Speech Language Pathologist and Assistive Technology Specialist, La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, La Mesa, CA; and Jennifer Marden, M.S., M.A., is a Speech Language Pathologist, Technically Speaking, Roslindale, MA.

PC-15 Powered Mobility Assessment and Training with Children: How to, With What, Where, When and Why (especially for those children never previously considered candidates for powered mobility)

Karen M. Kangas, OTR/L, ATP, is an Occupational Therapist, AT Specialist, Seating and Mobility Specialist and Clinical Educator in private practice, Karen M. Kangas OTR/L, Shamokin, PA and Lisa

Rotelli, A.S. in Physical Therapy, is an Educational Consultant, Adaptive Switch Labs, Inc., Spicewood, TX.

PC-16 Asperger Syndrome and School: What Does It Take, REALLY?

Keri Huddleston, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist and Teru Langsdale, M.S., CCC-SLP, is a Special Education Consultant, Washoe County School District, Reno, NV.

PC-17 Literacy Instruction for Individuals with Complex Communication Needs

David McNaughton, Ph.D., is a Professor of Education, Dept. of Education Psychology, School of Psychology and Special Education, Penn State University, University Park, PA.

PC-18 Using 21st Century Tools for Teaching and Accessible Learning

Dan Herlihy is an Assistive Technology/Technology Resource Specialist, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc., Hoosick, NY and Liz Medvets is an Applications Training and Support Specialist, University at Albany, Albany, NY.

PC-19 Designing, Implementing and Evaluating Universal Design for Learning Interventions

Dave L. Edyburn, Ph.D., is a Professor, Dept. of Exceptional Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

PC-20 Adding MORE to Your Bag of Tricks ... and Treats!

Mo Buti, M.A., is the Chicago Public Schools' Coordinator of Autism and Cognitive Disabilities, Chicago, IL.

PC-21 Teaching Non-Verbal Children to Read: The Link Between Reading and Communication

Susan Norwell, M.A., is an Educational Specialist in private practice/Focused Learning Solutions and Instructor, Northeastern Illinois University, Buffalo Grove, IL.

PC-22 COMMUNICATION CIRCLES: With a Little Help from My Friends

Caroline Musselwhite, Ed.D., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Consultant and Author, AAC Intervention, Litchfield Park, AZ; Jerolyn Allen, M.Ed., OTR/L, ATACP, is an Occupational Therapist and Assistive Technology Coordinator, Litchfield Elementary School District, Litchfield Park, AZ; Jane Odom, M.Ed., is an Education Segment Manager, Prentke Romich Company, Surprise, AZ; Jan Pilling, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist, Brandon Public Schools, Brandon, MB Canada; and Deanna Wagner, M.S., CCC-CLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist, Madison Elementary School District, Phoenix, AZ.

PC-23 Flipping Over Adobe Acrobat

Judith P. Sweeney, M.A. Special Education, is an AT Consultant and the President, Onion Mountain Technology, Inc., Canton, CT.

PC-24 Teaching AAC

Pati King DeBaun, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant specializing in assistive technology, Creative Communicating, Park City, UT and Karen Biggerstaff, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant, San Antonio, TX.

CONFERENCE PRESENTERS For over 25 years, Closing the Gap has been bringing together distinguished leaders in the field to share their knowledge and expertise with others.

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SCHREIBER, LINDA R. - Chippewa Falls, WI
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SENNOTT, SAMUEL - State College, PA
SHAFF, TOM - Iowa City, IA
SIMMS, MAJOR - Winfield, WV
SLATER, JEAN - Guffey, CO
SLOTZNICK, BEN - Mt Gretna, PA
SRINIVASAN, SRI LEKHA - El Cerrito, CA
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STACHOWIAK, JAMES - Iowa City, IA
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STEFANINI, GINA - Brookline, MA
STOKES, SUSAN - Fond du Lac, WI
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WOLLAK, BARBARA - Golden Valley, MN
ZABALA, JOY - Lake Jackson, TX



OVER 200 PRESENTATIONS THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21-23, 2010

ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL

300 Switch Hits a Day

A Sound-Based Alternative Method to Teach Students with Multiple Impairments to Recognize and Sort Objects

AIM Decision-Making Tools: Free Online at the National AIM Center (2nd of Two Block Session)

AIM Decision-Making Tools: Free Online at the National AIM Center (Two Block Session)

Alternative Formats 101: The Basics (2nd of Two Block Session)

Alternative Formats 101: The Basics (Two Block Session)

An AT Win-Win: Community Teaming

Bookshare in the Classroom: Strategies for Success

Co:Writer 6: Bring Us Your Tired Writers, Your Poorest Performers, Your Huddled Masses with IEPs

Computers, Literacy and Young Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities

Connect the Dots: Easy, Low Cost Uses of Assistive Technology in the Classroom (2nd of Two Block Session)

Connect the Dots: Easy, Low Cost Uses of Assistive Technology in the Classroom (Two Block Session)

Create Your Own Computerized Intervention System for Students with Learning Disabilities: Integrating Charts, Video and Progress Notes

eBooks: A Practical Guide to Finding eBooks and Playing Them on DAISY

Equals Mathematics = Math for All

Fraction Action: Tools and Techniques for Making Fractions Accessible

Hot Off the Hard Drive: Click to Read

Implementation: Get on the AT Bus Gus, Help Me Make a New Plan Stan

Inspiration: It's Not Just for Brainstorming!

Integrating AIM into Classroom Instruction: The Cliff Notes Version

Intel Reader

Learning Applications for the Logan Prox Talker

Making All the Difference by Making It Different

Making Language and Literacy Visible in the Early Childhood Classroom

Read:OutLoud: How to Get eBooks and Make Them Accessible with Read:OutLoud

Track It ALL: AT, RTI and AIM - How? Assistive Technology Tracker Web is Here at Last

Using Digital Books to Close the Learning Gap for Students with Print Disabilities

WHICH BOOKS? Considerations for Selecting Accessible Print Materials for Students with Disabilities

ASSESSMENT

Assessment That Drives Curriculum

Classroom Suite 4 Accessible Assessment: Is It a WANT or NEED?

Data Collection: Counting What Counts (2nd of Two Block Session)

Data Collection: Counting What Counts (Two Block Session)

Head Access, Why and How to Start Here, Especially When Head Control Seems Inconsistent

How Do I Know He's Really Reading?

New Ways to Jump Start Your AAC Evaluation Process

Personal Choices: Considering Self-Assessment

Prompting: How's That Workin' for Ya? (2nd of Two Block Session)

Prompting: How's That Workin' for Ya? (Two Block Session)

The Switch is Not the Activity (2nd of Two Block Session)

The Switch is Not the Activity (Two Block Session)

Transition Assessment and Curriculum

Where's My Teacher's Manual? Creating Math, Reading and Science Instructional Materials for Alternate Assessments

AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

AAC Evals: Tips and Toolkits

AAC on iPod and iPad: Hands-On with Proloquo2Go 2.0 (2nd of Two Block Session)

AAC on iPod and iPad: Hands-On with Proloquo2Go 2.0 (Two Block Session)

Aided Language Stimulation, Research to Practice (2nd of Two Block Session)

Aided Language Stimulation, Research to Practice (Two Block Session)

Alexicom Tech: World's First Internet-Based AAC System

All the Ways to Use Your Eyes - For Kids

Barriers to Acquiring AAC Devices: Solutions Revealed

Communication Intervention Possibilities with the iPhone, iPod touch and iPad (2nd of Two Block Session)

Communication Intervention Possibilities with the iPhone, iPod touch and iPad (Two Block Session)

Designing Your Classroom to Build Language Skills

Enhancing Communication for Girls with Rett Syndrome: Improving Access and Regulating Sensory Input

Go Talk About What?

Hands-On Communication: Nurturing Communicative Intent through Tactile and Tangible Systems

Harnessing the Power of the Internet for Children with Special Needs

I + Want + That = Novel AAC Users

In-Depth Hands-On with iPod touch Assistive Technology Apps (2nd of Two Block Session)

In-Depth Hands-On with iPod touch Assistive Technology Apps (Two Block Session)

IntelliTools Extreme! Focusing on the Student with Classroom Suite 4

Make and Take Literacy and AAC Activity

Mentoring and Modeling: AAC with a Little Help from My Friends

New Aphasia Apps and Devices from Lingraphica

Real Life Communication for Individuals with ALS

Rebuilding Communication for People with Aphasia: High Tech and Lite Tech Solutions

Springboard Lite and ALT-Chat: What is the Difference?

Strategically Switching In! Including AAC Switch-Users in Group Activities

The Power of PODD: Autonomous Communication for Beginning Communicators (2nd of Two Block Session)

The Power of PODD: Autonomous Communication for Beginning Communicators (Two Block Session)

The VoicePal Levels: A Functional Tool for Teachers

Twitter for Poor Readers, Non-Readers and AAC Users

Working with Young Children Using Assistive Technology in the Home

AUTISM

Autism Research to Reality: Implementing Research-Based Strategies Using Boardmaker Studio

Behavior Solutions and Autism: Light to High Tech

Comic Life and Web 2.0 Comics: Interactive Tools That Support Positive Social Behaviors

Creating a Web of Learning for Children with ASD: 26 Strategies

Creating and Sharing Visual Stories on the iPod touch and iPad

Developing Question Comprehension and Use: Theory and Research-Based Approaches

Expressive Communication Needs Across the Autism Spectrum - From AAC to Social Communication: Tech Tools for Assessment and Intervention (Two Block Session)

Expressive Communication Needs Across the Autism Spectrum - From AAC to Social Communication: Tech Tools for Assessment and Intervention (2nd of Two Block Session)

If I Can See It, I Can Do It! Hands-On (2nd of Two Block Session)

If I Can See It, I Can Do It! Hands-On (Two Block Session)

iParent: Using Visual Supports and Apple's Technology and Others to Increase Comprehension and Functionality Across All Environments

Knowing What Works: A Research Review on AT and Autism

Life in the Real World

S.O.S.: Socially Optimizing Solutions

This Kid Won't Be Your Last, Trust Me! Classroom Strategies for Students with Social Differences

Train Functional Vocabulary with the New Language Activities of Daily Living Series

Using Music and Movement to Transform, Increasing Attention, Focus and Calm

VizZle: Practical Visual Language Applications (2nd of Two Block Session)

VizZle: Practical Visual Language Applications (Two Block Session)

Web 2.0 Home/School Communication Systems

COGNITIVE REDEVELOPMENT

Pick & Choose: A Versatile Multipurpose Choice-Making Program

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT / MODIFICATIONS

A Roadmap to Adapting Curriculum: The POWER of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. (2nd of Two Block Session)

A Roadmap to Adapting Curriculum: The POWER of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. (Two Block Session)

Academic Exploration through Switch Access

Adapting Math: An Easy Four-Step Instructional Formula

An Accessible On-Ramp to the Information Highway

Clicking in the Fast Lane with Clicker 5 and WriteOnline

Freedom to Speak: Using Speech Recognition Software with Students

It's Showtime! Using Videos in Classroom Suite

Make Them Laugh - The Four-Blocks Way

No Problem! Just Give Me a Minute! (2nd of Two Block Session)

No Problem! Just Give Me a Minute! (Two Block Session)

Supporting Literacy Learning with Boardmaker Studio

Totally Terrific Tips That Will Score You a Touchdown in Your Classroom! (2nd of Two Block Session)

Totally Terrific Tips That Will Score You a Touchdown in Your Classroom! (Two Block Session)

Unique + Classroom Suite 4 = Student Success, Curriculum, Data

Using Clicker to Get Started with Early Literacy

Using Sequencing and Randomizing Switches to Encourage Young and Low-Functioning Children to Participate in School-Related Activities

DEAF COMMUNICATIONS

Overcoming Communications Barriers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Becoming a Conventional Writer: Decreasing Prompts and Supports

Differentiated Learning Styles and AAC

From Planning to Publishing with WriteOnline

From Truant to Tycoon!

Rett Syndrome: Communication and Learning Strategies (2nd of Two Block Session)

Rett Syndrome: Communication and Learning Strategies (Two Block Session)

Using PowerPoint 2007/2008 Themes to Differentiate

functional living skills

10 Things I Can Do for Myself

Exploring Organizational Development: Tools and Methods

FUNDING

Funding AAC Systems

GERIATRICS

New Solutions for Vision Impaired Mac Users

IEP / IPP

Projects to Support the Creation of Effective Local AT Teams

INCLUSION / COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Inclusion Made Easy

Note-Taking Continuums (2nd of Two Block Session)

Note-Taking Continuums (Two Block Session)

SMART Inclusion = SMART Board + AT + Inclusive Practice + Critical Pedagogy (2nd of Two Block Session)

SMART Inclusion = SMART Board + AT + Inclusive Practice + Critical Pedagogy (Two Block Session)

SMART Inclusion Classroom Demonstration: How do Interactive Whiteboards and AT Support Inclusion?

So, What's the Difference? Co:Writer, SpellCatcher, Texthelp and WordQ's Prediction

Take Note of OneNote: Note Taking, Organization, Collaboration and Beyond! (2nd of Two Block Session)

Take Note of OneNote: Note Taking, Organization, Collaboration and Beyond! (Two Block Session)

KEYBOARD ALTERNATIVES

Computer Accessibility for Those with Physical Impairments

Exploring Voice Recognition Options

LEARNING STYLES

Google in Your Classroom?

Livescribe Pulse Smartpen: Next Generation Audio Recording and Note Taking

Technology Training: Tips for Success

Wiggle Web 2.0 for 2010

LITERACY

ALL Write

Assistive Technology and Reading

Boardmaker Studio + Interactive Whiteboards = Engagement for the Entire Class

Building Literacy in Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities Using Stories and AT

News-2-You, Unique Learning System and SymbolStix ON-LINE: Inform and Include All Learners

Osseo Schools' UDL Key to Student Success: Read&Write GOLD

Phonics Phun: Research to Practice for Older Students with Disabilities

Read&Write 4 GOLD for Mac: Discover the Newest Solution for Success (2nd of Two Block Session)

Read&Write 4 GOLD for Mac: Discover the Newest Solution for Success (Two Block Session)

Shared Reading for Persons of All Ages: Utilizing Age Appropriate Strategies to Foster Emergent Literacy and Beginning Communication

Shared Reading: It's About the Interaction! (2nd of Two Block Session)

Shared Reading: It's About the Interaction! (Two Block Session)

Students with Significant Disabilities as Writers: From Letter Exploration to Sound Spelling (2nd of Two Block Session)

Students with Significant Disabilities as Writers: From Letter Exploration to Sound Spelling (Two Block Session)

Supporting Conventional Writing for Students with Disabilities: Tips and Tricks

Using Read Naturally Technology to Improve Reading Fluency and Comprehension

Using Read Naturally's Fluency Program with Blind and Visually Impaired Students

Writing Accommodations: The Spoken Word

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A Day in the Life of Three Ordinary Teachers: AT Professional Development the Web 2.0 Way

Data-Driven Decisions in Directing A University-Based Assistive Technology Training

Parents' Guide to the Closing The Gap Conference

Professional Development That Works: Moving from Training to Implementation

QIAT Conversations 2010

Teaching Independent Living Skills Using the Functional Skills System and the iPod touch

The Communication Enhancement Project: A School District's Vision of Integrating AAC for Students with Significant Disabilities

Using Cloud Tools to Stretch the Impact of Your Professional Development Supports (2nd of Two Block Session)

Using Cloud Tools to Stretch the Impact of Your Professional Development Supports (Two Block Session)

RESEARCH

Software for Math in the UDL Classroom: A Research Study

Special Education Technology Research: What Have We Learned Lately?

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

DO-IT: Research-Based Interventions That Maximize Transition to College

SCREEN ALTERNATIVES

Magnification and Multiple Monitors: Increasing Productivity for People with Low Vision

SEATING / POSITIONING / MOBILITY

Sensory Processing, Sensory Integration and Seating and Access (2nd of Two Block Session)

Sensory Processing, Sensory Integration and Seating and Access (Two Block Session)

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

3-D Worlds and Virtual Instruction: Addressing 21st Century Skills for Students with Disabilities

Amazing Technology to Support Hospital/Homebound Students

ARRA Funds: How's That Working for You?

Can Everybody Hear My Colors?

Dan & Sam: Cool, Free or ... You've Gotta Have It Applications!

Get an iLife! Tips and Tricks for iLife '09

Hello I'm A Mac (2nd of Two Block Session)

Hello I'm A Mac (Two Block Session)

iPad: Where the Computer Gaming Industry Meets Special Education

iPads, iPods and iTouch: Getting Files in, Getting Files Out

iPod touch and iPad for Children with Special Needs: AAC, AT and More

iPods are Cool and Now They are for School

Quick Content Creation Tools: Creating Engaging and Interactive Activities with Boardmaker Software Family (2nd of Two Block Session)

Quick Content Creation Tools: Creating Engaging and Interactive Activities with Boardmaker Studio (Two Block Session)

Using iPod Technology in High School and Post-Secondary Settings

Using the Joystick on a Powered Chair as a Mouse

Wisconsin School District Prepares Students for Success with Literacy Technology

TRANSITION

Improving the Transition Planning Process: The Top 10 Things Everyone Should Know About the Transition Planning Process and Fostering Independence (Two Block Session)

Improving the Transition Planning Process: The Top 10 Things Everyone Should Know About the Transition Planning Process and Fostering Independence (2nd of Two Block Session)

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

From Theory to Practice: Making UDL Happen

The AT Real-Time Band

Using Technology to Implement Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom

WEB 2.0

Developing Your Assistive Technology Personal Learning Network (PLN)

How to Create Goal Oriented Vision Videos to Prepare Students for Their Futures

STATE-OF-THE-ART COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

WEDNESDAY EVENING THROUGH SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20-23, 2010

BELOW ARE THE CONTRACTED COMPANIES TO DATE

❖ DENOTES SCAVENGER HUNT SPONSOR

AAC Institute

AAC Institute is a resource for AAC families and professionals. Products, services and resources support evidence-based practice and promote the highest communication performance possible.

AAC TechConnect, Inc.

A company that simplifies augmentative communication (AAC) evaluations by providing national workshops, online clinical/evaluation toolkits and is a one-stop Web resource center for AAC info.

AbleNet

AbleNet offers a complete line of assistive technology products, including communication aids, switches, environmental control, computer access and mounting devices. We also offer research-based special education curricula.

Accelerations Educational Software (AES)

AES offers two effective, affordable and robust products for individuals with autism and other learning challenges. The DT Trainer and the Activity Trainer.

Accessing the Artist Within

The Accessing the Artist Within project is an effort to raise awareness of how assistive technologies can empower children and teens with disabilities to express themselves through art.

Adaptivation, Inc.

Adaptivation produces innovative and affordable switches, environmental controls, alternative augmentative communication devices and other assistive technology for individuals with a wide range of special needs.

❖ Adaptive Solutions

Adaptive Solutions is owned by Sherry Hollingsworth and she is the developer of Assistive Technology Tracker. We are a reseller of assistive technology hardware and software.

Adaptive Switch Laboratories

ASL is dedicated to designing and adapting devices that allow individuals with severe disabilities to achieve independent movement, environmental control and communication/computer access.

AIMEE Solutions, Inc.

Ready-to-use theme-based language materials and communication supports for home, school and community. Check out our new Click to Read series!

Alexicom Tech

Alexicom Tech is the world's first Internet-based AAC system. The service works on Smartphones, Tablet PCs, iPod, iPhone, Smartboards, PCs, Macs, online and offline.

AMDi

AMDi manufactures quality, durable, low to mid range communication devices focusing on providing simple to use solutions for communication to any age group.

AssistiveWare

AssistiveWare is the worldwide leader in innovative assistive technology software for Mac OS X and iOS, with products such as Proloquo2Go, KeyStrokes and GhostReader

❖ Atomic Learning

Atomic Learning's Assistive Technology Skills Collection provides hundreds of easy-to-understand tutorials focused on helping educators use and apply assistive technology - including training on accessibility features.

Attainment Company

Attainment Company products are created for individuals with developmental, learning and/or communicative disabilities to foster independence and increase active participation in classrooms and communities.

❖ Augmentative Resources

AAC and Language products. Check out our new Communication Charm Bracelets, Pen Friend Portable Voice Output Device, Easy-Push Talking Pockets and Timer Companion Schedule System!

Beacon-Ridge

Beacon Ridge is a general educational materials and supply resource. We have many low tech solutions for time management, organization, handwriting, computer access and communication.

BlueSky Designs, Inc.

Mount'n Mover: a flexible, accessible and movable mount for laptops, communications aids, cameras, trays and more. Easily set memory lock positions, height and tilt angle.

Bookshare

Bookshare is the world's largest online library of accessible digital books for people with print disabilities. Our services are free for U.S. students of any age.

Brightlines Paper

Brightlines Paper is adaptive writing paper in yellow or blue; effective for individuals

with low vision, visual perception issues and attention disorders. New: Raised Line Paper!

❖ Cadan Computers dba Technology for Education

Products for Deaf/HOH, instant translation software for different languages. B-calm autism product, Orbitrack, Desktop Desk, Proxtalker, Leap Frog, Smart Cat, Livescribe Echo Smart Pen and many more.

Cambium Learning Technologies

A leading source for educational technology to help students learn to their fullest potential, serving students who use assistive technology or need additional instructional support for any other reason.

❖ CJT Enterprises, Inc.

Modular mounting systems allowing AT devices to be optimally positioned to accommodate an individual's unique needs. Come see our NEW products for 2010.

❖ Closing The Gap

Try, first-hand, the online subscription tool that allows users to search for and compare the latest in AT products and allows users to find, read and share articles that highlight effective AT strategies.

❖ Cognitopia Software

Picture Planner by Cognitopia Software, an affordable icon-based personal organizer using customizable pictures and symbols; compatible with iPod Touch and iPad. Supports transition and self-determination.

Conley Solutions

TapSpeak apps for emerging communicators eliminates most set up time, provides great visuals, configurability, and usability and can save thousands over conventional devices.

Creative Communicating

Creative Communicating is dedicated to creating fun, simple and universally accessible resources for communication, early literacy and creativity for students with disabilities.

❖ Crick Software, Inc.

Our mission is to improve literacy achievement for students of all abilities by providing educators with innovative solutions that are easy to use and cost-effective.

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

Open to the public Saturday!

SCAVENGER HUNT WORTH OVER \$7000 IN PRIZES

DO-IT, University of Washington

DO-IT serves to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers, through the use of technology, mentoring, training, and advocacy.

Dolphin Computer Access, Inc.

Dolphin Computer Access delivers independence to people with visual impairment and learning disabilities through complete access solutions such as Dolphin SuperNova and the ultimate alternative format tool, EasyConverter.

Don Johnston, Inc.

Award-winning products build in physical accessibility, integrate validated research, capitalize on new discoveries in brain science, align to standards and are presented in multiple medias through engaging instructional models.

DynaVox Mayer-Johnson

DynaVox Mayer-Johnson offers assistive technology solutions for individuals with complex communication and learning challenges, including the V/Vmax, Xpress, EyeMax and Boardmaker Software Family.

Exceptional Parent

EP Global Communications is a 39-year-old publishing company that provides advice and support to families of children and adults with disabilities and special needs.

Experia USA

Experia USA is the designer and manufacturer of the next generation of wireless multi-sensory rooms and equipment. Join us at booth 232 to discover our products!

Flexiciser International

Our product is designed to facilitate the law of movement therapy. Movement Therapy Device strengthens muscles, improves circulation and reduces spasticity for the mobility-challenged.

Fraser

Fraser is a nationally renowned Minnesota nonprofit serving children and adults with special needs through comprehensive education, healthcare and housing services.

HumanWare

HumanWare provides innovative solutions, empowering people who are blind, deaf/blind, visually impaired or learning disabled.

Inclusive TLC Special Needs

Aim to include all learners, by providing the very best special needs software, switches and computer access devices, as well as simple communication aids and assistive technology.

InfoCor

InfoCor developed and manufactures the satalight Interactive Learning Station. It's designed to create an interactive workspace accessible to people physically disabled and/or have cognitive disabilities.

Inspiration Software

Award-winning technology tools based on proven visual learning methodologies that help students and educators think, learn, brainstorm, analyze and write. Visit inspiration.com for descriptions and free trials.

Judy Lynn Software, Inc.

Captivating switch and touch window software for students functioning at 9 months and up. Stop by booth 274 for a free catalog and demo.

Laureate Learning Systems, Inc.

Researched-based, award-winning software for language assessment and intervention, communication, auditory processing, and reading designed to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

Lightspeed Technologies, Inc.

The New Sound of Achievement, check out the new all-in-one REDCAT. This quick-set system saves the teacher's voice and raises academic achievement.

Marblesoft - Simtech

For over 27 years, Marblesoft - Simtech has produced outstanding special needs software for infants through adults. Stop by booth 261 to see what's NEW!

Mobility 4 Kids

Allow your children to experience freedom and independence while standing. Our equipment is easily positioned. Schools can purchase equipment from the manufacturer. Financing available.

ModularHose.com

Loc-Line Modular Hose is a unique plastic hose system that is flexible but yet self-supporting and re-positionable. Great for holding switches and utensils.

My Coin Chart

My Coin Chart is a new and innovative educational tool that helps students learn how to count coins up to \$1. Paper chart and software.

N2Y Inc.

Channel current events with News-2-You, our weekly Internet newspaper. Acquire a standards-based special education curriculum with Unique Learning System. Communicate with our dynamic symbol set, SymbolStix.

Nasco

Nasco's Special Education Catalog offers a full line of products and resources for the special education teacher and therapist K-12, including software and assistive technology.

Nuance Communications, Inc.

Nuance creates MacSpeech Dictate speech recognition solutions for the Macintosh. Our MacSpeech Dictate products dramatically enhance accessibility and productivity. Find out more at www.nuance.com

Origin Instruments Corporation

Origin Instruments delivers computer access solutions for people with motor and speech disabilities. The HeadMouse Extreme is the company's flagship product.

Parlerai, Inc.

Create a safe and secure online network for your child to collaborate with caregivers, friends and family. Visit booth 268 to see a live demonstration.

Point-and-Read, Inc.

Point-and-Read develops software for e-mail, instant messaging and text messaging for poor-readers, non-readers and AAC users, including people with multiple disabilities.

PointScribe

PointScribe is a multi-sensory, interactive software for teaching students of ALL abilities to handwrite using captivating visual, auditory and tactile stimulation.

Prentke Romich

Easy, yet powerful communication aids by Prentke Romich Company. Come see how easy it is to speak with ECO, ECOpoint, Vantage Lite, SpringBoard Lite and Vanguard.

ProxTalker.com, LLC

The first moveable picture communication system that actually talks. Encoded picture sound tags are used to form sentences and produce voice output when pressed.

Quilted Illusions

Quilted Illusions makes a variety of products for deep-pressure therapy including weighted quilts, weighted vests and weighted teddy bears.

Read Naturally, Inc.

Read Naturally provides reading solutions for struggling readers which focus on fluency, comprehension, phonics, vocabulary and assessment. The flagship program has been used nationwide for nearly 20 years.

RJ Cooper & Assoc., Inc.

RJ Cooper is considered one of the 'pioneers' in Assistive Technology, developing unique software and hardware solutions for special needs. RJ is known for his workshops and personal service.

Satillo Corporation

Manufactures and distributes augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) devices. We specialize in portable speech output devices for ambulatory individuals. Our products include ALT-Chat and ChatPC.

Slater Software, Inc.

Slater Software utilizes the Picture-Assisted Literacy (PAL) approach to teaching literacy. Picture It, PixWriter, Simply Science and Read and Tell lead a full line of PAL products.

SmartEd Services

SmartEd Services' Tap-it, touch accessible interactive learning platform, recognizes intended and unintended touch; adapting to students' needs with developmental disabilities, fine motor or visual challenges.

SoftTouch, Inc.

SoftTouch specializes in software for severe and profound disabilities. SoftTouch offers a wide range of products from basic cause and effect to standards based curriculum.

Switch In Time

Switch In Time offers engaging games and music software for individuals of all ages and abilities.

Talking With Baby

Mom's Choice Award winner February 2010 for Educational Products. Learn ASL and teach signing to babies and toddlers while promoting literacy. Come Sign with Us!

Tel • A • Vision

A Web 2.0 online curriculum and Web site that inspires special education students of all levels to create and share goal oriented vision videos.

Texthelp Systems, Inc.

Texthelp provides literacy software including Read&Write GOLD, reading/writing/research support toolbar that integrates with mainstream applications; and Fluency Tutor, online solution for developing/assessing oral reading fluency.

The BigKeys Company

The BigKeys Company is Greystone Digital Inc. Huntersville, NC. We design and manufacture the best large-key

keyboards in the world, helping people access computers since 1994.

The Conover Company

The Conover Company provides computer software-based assessments and curriculum for transition, social/emotional learning, and independent living skills utilizing the iPod touch.

The CyberClass, Inc.

Providing a wide variety of illuminating innovations, CyberClass is committed to originating and advancing high technology products for the express purpose to advantage the disadvantaged.

Thinking Moves

Thinking Moves LLC produce innovative multimedia products that transform the mind and body. Our products are used in homes, hospitals, schools and therapy centers around the world.

Tobii ATI

Tobii ATI is a premier developer of speech generating devices, eye tracking technology and AAC software, for people with physical, cognitive and speech disabilities.

Utechzone Co., Ltd.

Applying superior Machine Vision Technology, Utechzone Co., Ltd. has developed an eye tracking system, "Spring," functions such as communication, games, multi-media and Web-surfing are provided.

VizZle by Monarch Teaching Technologies, Inc.

VizZle easy-to-use special education software. Provides individualized, visuals-based interactive instruction for diverse needs, with the lessons and supports you need to be effective!

Words+, Inc.

For over 25 years Words+ has been dedicated to unlocking the person by providing a broad range of augmentative communication devices and associated technology.

Writer Learning Systems

From simple note taking to advanced writing and communication support, the Fusion and Writer are designed to assist a wide range of ages and abilities.

Zot Artz - Arts for All

ZotArtz uses a library of universally designed art tools to allow all individuals an opportunity for greater creative expression. Come make art!

Conference - October 21-23, 2010 Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 20, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Registration Received	On or Before June 30	July 1 - September 9	September 10 - September 30	October 1 - Onsite
Standard Rate Group Discount - 5 or more NEW! Group Discount - 8 or more <i>All group registrations must be received at the same time.</i>	\$395 Groups 5+ Deduct \$30 Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	\$435 Groups 5+ Deduct \$30 Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	\$475 Groups 5+ Deduct \$30 Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	\$505 Groups 5+ Deduct \$30 Groups 8+ Deduct \$50
Parent Rate (<i>A letter describing your child's disability must accompany registration</i>)				\$275
Full-time Student Rate (<i>Proof of full-time student status must accompany registration</i>)				\$275
Presenter Rate				\$305
Exhibitor Rate				\$305

Single-Day and Exhibit Hall Only Registration	Price
Friday Only - October 22	\$250
Saturday Only - October 23	\$125
Exhibit Hall Only - Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 20-23	\$150

Preconference Workshops - October 19-20, 2010 Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 20, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Price
Tuesday, October 19 (<i>Some preconference workshops carry an additional fee for materials.</i>)	\$270
Wednesday, October 20 (<i>Some preconference workshops carry an additional fee for materials.</i>)	\$270
BUNDLED PRICING! Tuesday and Wednesday Bundle (\$60 savings)	\$480

CONFIRMATION

All who register by October 1, 2010 will receive confirmation by mail.

CONFERENCE DIRECTORY

The official Closing The Gap Conference Directory will be given to registrants at the conference site; many of the conference details will be posted on Closing The Gap's Web site.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing by Closing The Gap on or before October 1, 2010. There will be a \$75 cancellation fee for each one-day pre-conference workshop, each one-day conference registration, or each exhibit hall only registration; a \$125 cancellation fee for each three-day conference registration. No refunds after October 1, 2010. Unpaid balances are due in full. Replacements are welcome and must be submitted in writing.

SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of scholarships are available for persons with disabilities or parents/guardians of children with disabilities. These scholarships cover registration fees for the conference only (Thursday - Saturday), and do not cover preconference workshops, food, lodging or travel. Scholarships are awarded on a first come, first served basis and one time only per person. Persons that have previously received a scholarship from Closing The Gap are not eligible.

To apply, complete a conference registration form, indicating your scholarship request. Submit the form and attach a letter describing your/your child's disability and telling us why you would like to attend the conference. Applicants will receive written notification of acceptance or denial.

CONFERENCE HEADQUARTERS

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel and the adjacent Hotel Sofitel are the official hotels of the conference. All conference activities are held at these two hotels located just 10 minutes west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Limo, taxi, and mobility assistance services are available. Hotel-airport shuttles are available for Sheraton Bloomington Hotel.

TRAVEL

Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) has one airfield and two terminal buildings – the Lindbergh Terminal and the Humphrey Terminal. Thirteen commercial passenger airlines service the airport.

Conference goers are encouraged to choose the airline that best meets their needs and budget.

For detailed airport information, please visit <http://www.mspairport.com/>

For those interested in flying Delta, Closing The Gap has arranged for them to offer discounted conference rates. For the lowest possible air fares, in the United States and Canada, call Delta at 800-328-1111, Monday through Friday, 7:30 am - 7:30 pm Central Daylight Time and reference the **Closing The Gap Conference, I.D. code NM5B5**.

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

To arrange for accessible transportation while visiting the Minneapolis area, have your ADA certifying agency fax your certification information along with the address where you will be staying and dates you plan on being in Minneapolis to 651-602-1660 four weeks prior to your arrival date. Riders must be ADA certified in the state in which they live. For questions regarding certification, call Jim Nieman

at 651-602-1665. If you are not ADA certified, call Airport Taxi at 612-331-8294 (special assistance provided if requested).

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Hotel reservations can be made by contacting the conference-site hotels directly. Please refer to the "Closing The Gap Conference" when making your reservations to receive conference room discounts when and where applicable. Both hotels have a limited number of handicapped accessible rooms. If you require an accessible room, state your needs when making your reservations and reserve your room early to better insure a room that will best accommodate you. A deposit of one night's room rate plus tax is required to reserve a guest room for the Closing The Gap Conference.

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

7800 Normandale Blvd.
Bloomington, MN 55439
Phone: 952-835-7800; **Fax:** 952-893-8419
\$149 - single occupancy
\$159 - double occupancy
(Both are in South Tower.)
(Plus applicable state and local taxes.)

Hotel Sofitel (a one-block walk from the Sheraton)

5601 W. 78th St.
Bloomington, MN 55439
Phone: 952-835-1900 **Fax:** 952-835-0545
\$159 - single, double, triple or quad occupancy
(Plus applicable state and local taxes.)

Cancellation policy for both hotels: Guest rooms may be cancelled up to October 1, 2010, with no cancellation penalty and your total deposit refunded to you. Any guest room cancelled after October 1, 2010, will be subject to forfeiture of the entire deposit.

2010 CLOSING THE GAP CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address (home/work - please circle one) _____

City _____ State / Country _____ Zip Code / Postal Code _____

Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____

Is this your first time attending? Yes No If no, most recent year attended _____ How did you hear about the conference? _____

*SPECIAL SERVICES MS DOS text file Macintosh text file (Text file will be e-mailed.) Sign interpreter

*For persons with disabilities only - must be requested by September 1, 2010.

Conference - October 21-23, 2010 Includes Preview of Exhibits - Wednesday, October 20, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm				
Registration Received	On or Before June 30	July 1 - September 9	September 10 - September 30	October 1 - Onsite
<input type="checkbox"/> Standard Rate	\$395	\$435	\$475	\$505
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Discount - 5 or more	Groups 5+ Deduct \$30	Groups 5+ Deduct \$30	Groups 5+ Deduct \$30	Groups 5+ Deduct \$30
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Discount - 8 or more <small>All group registrations must be received at the same time.</small>	Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	Groups 8+ Deduct \$50	Groups 8+ Deduct \$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Rate (A letter describing your child's disability must accompany registration)				\$275
<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Student Rate (Proof of full-time student status must accompany registration)				\$275
<input type="checkbox"/> Presenter Rate (Presentation title: _____)				\$305
<input type="checkbox"/> Exhibitor Rate (Company name and booth number: _____)				\$305

\$ _____

Single-Day and Exhibit Hall Only Registration	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Only - October 22	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Only - October 23	\$125
<input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Hall Only - Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 20-23	\$150

\$ _____

CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP (See page 45 for complete information.)
 I am applying for a conference scholarship. A letter describing your/your child's disability and telling us why you would like to attend the conference must be included.

\$ \$0.00

Preconference Workshops - October 19-20, 2010 (Includes Preview of Exhibits - Wednesday, October 20, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm)	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> PC-1 Two-day PODD Workshop, Tuesday and Wednesday, October 19-20	\$480
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday, October 19 1 st Choice PC-_____ 2 nd Choice PC-_____	\$270
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday, October 20 1 st Choice PC-_____ 2 nd Choice PC-_____	\$270
<input type="checkbox"/> BUNDLED PRICING! Tuesday and Wednesday Bundle (\$60 savings)	\$480
I will bring my own computer for: <input type="checkbox"/> PC-23 <input type="checkbox"/> I will use Closing The Gap's computer. Participants in PC-3 and PC-19 MUST bring their own computer.	
<input type="checkbox"/> MATERIAL FEE(S), IF APPLICABLE (The materials fee equals the cost of the materials provided.)	
PC-1 - \$15 materials fee PC-9 - \$30 materials fee	PC-20 - \$35 materials fee PC-21 - \$30 materials fee
PC-22 - \$15 materials fee PC-24 - \$20 materials fee	

\$ _____

\$ _____

ACADEMIC CREDIT (See page 37 for complete information and requirements.)
 One Semester Credit **\$123** Two Semester Credits **\$246** Three Semester Credits **\$369**

\$ _____

SUBSCRIPTION - AN ADDITIONAL NON-CONFERENCE OPTION (See Web site or page 47 for more information.)
 One-year ONLINE subscription - **\$50** One-year PRINT subscription - **\$36** (In the US); **\$52** (To Canada) Combination Subscription
 One-year ONLINE student subscription - **\$40** Two-year PRINT subscription - **\$64** (In the US); **\$92** (To Canada) One-year PRINT and ONLINE subscription - **\$75**

\$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT (Payment or purchase order must accompany registration.)

\$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION My check # _____ for \$ _____ is enclosed.
 Please Charge to my Visa MasterCard Card Number _____
 Exp Date: _____ Cardholder Address: _____
 Please bill my agency or school district PO # _____ (Purchase order must accompany registration.)

Mail or fax form with payment or purchase order to: Closing The Gap, P.O. Box 68, Henderson, MN 56044; Fax 507-248-3810. **Or register online at:** <www.closingthegap.com>. All who register by October 1, 2010 will receive confirmation by mail. The official Closing The Gap Conference Directory will be given to registrants at the conference site; many of the conference details will be posted on Closing The Gap's Web site. For additional information call 507-248-3294 or e-mail <info@closingthegap.com>.

Cancellations must be received in writing by Closing The Gap on or before October 1, 2010. \$75 cancellation fee for each one-day preconference workshop, each one-day conference registration, or each exhibit hall only registration; \$125 cancellation fee for each three-day conference registration. No refunds after October 1, 2010. Unpaid balances are due in full. Replacements are welcome and must be submitted in writing.



Start your Solutions subscription today!

Receive 6 issues, including the acclaimed **Closing The Gap Resource Directory**

A guide to over 2,000 of the latest assistive technology products available for children and adults with disabilities

Choose from PRINT, ONLINE* or the valued-priced COMBINATION* subscription.

PRINT SUBSCRIPTION:

In the United States

One year (six issues) \$39

Canada – Airmail

One year (six issues) \$55 (U.S. Funds)

* ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION:

Single subscription:

One-year Subscription \$50

One-year Student Subscription \$40 (Proof of current enrollment must accompany order. E-mail or mail statement to Closing The Gap.)

Site License (Groups of 10 or more can save from 25-70 percent with site license pricing. Visit www.closingthegap.com to learn more!)

* COMBINATION SUBSCRIPTION:

Combination, One-year Print and Online Subscription \$80 (U.S. and Canada)

***SPECIAL OFFER**, order an online subscription or combination subscription on or before December 31, 2010 and receive a complimentary 2010 Closing The Gap Resource Directory, a \$16.95 value. (If ordering online, enter coupon code RD2010 upon checkout to receive this special offer.)

YES, I WANT TO ORDER!

Please complete the following:

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State / Country: _____ Zip / Postal code: _____

* Phone: _____ Fax: _____

* E-mail: _____

* Required for Online Subscription and/or credit card orders

Occupation: _____

Where did you hear about Closing The Gap? _____

Check is enclosed \$ _____

Please charge \$ _____ to Visa MasterCard

Credit card account number: _____

_____ Exp. date _____

Cardholder signature: _____

Cardholder address: _____

Purchase order attached #: _____

(Allow 8 - 10 weeks for delivery of your first issue.)

ORDER RESOURCE DIRECTORIES SEPARATELY:

Resource Directories _____
\$16.95 plus postage and handling
(\$7 in the United States; \$7 to Canada)

Quantity Discounts:

1-9	\$16.95
10-24	\$14.50
25-49	\$12.25
50-99	\$10.50
100 or more	\$9.50

***Free shipping and handling** if check in full payment accompanies an order for 10 or more directories (shipped within the United States only).

Shipping and handling charges will be added to all invoices and credit card payments.

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