



Things you should know about AAC for _____

Hello! I'm excited for you because you have the opportunity to learn about Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) this year! You're in luck because this student is a wonderful teacher! Even if you've used AAC in the past with other children - or even with this particular student - children are individuals who grow and change. I wanted to take this opportunity to give you the most up to date information about this individual, which also provides you with a baseline as you start the year! 😊



The Facts:

Today's date: _____

Name of current AAC system/app _____ Started using this system _____
(Date or length of time)

of words open: _____
(___an estimate ___data from system)

of words student is currently using _____
(___an estimate ___data from system)



My Observations: Here are some things I've noticed that you might find useful and also give you insight into this student's abilities. Keep in mind that we all have a little more difficulty communicating when we're nervous so even if you don't see it right away, **please believe that this student is capable.**

When this student is stressed, these are some clues: _____


Sometimes this helps: _____


If this student asks for a break or communicates information about sensory needs, please honor those requests. Self-regulation and the ability to advocate for those needs are important skills and we value this individual's willingness to provide that information.

Favorite words: _____

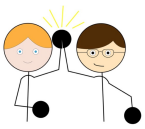
Highest # words I have seen this student combine: _____. On average, student combines _____ words.

My Goals: I know there's an IEP and of course we're all working towards those goals. Here are the things that I think will make the biggest difference for this student. They are broken down into 3 categories...reach (goals that I fully expect this student to achieve), stretch (goals that this student can achieve if we all give a little extra), and leap (goals that would be awesome to achieve this year...I'm dreaming big!)

 Reach: _____

 Stretch: _____

 Leap: _____



How you can help:

- Make sure the device is always within reach of the student. If it's not safe or the student doesn't want to hold it (I.e. playground), a nearby adult should wear it. If other students have their voices, this student should also.
- Respond to everything the student says as if it's intentional...even if you're not sure. Even if it's annoying. Respond as you would to a verbal child saying the same thing. *Do not turn off the volume or take the device away unless it is a life or death situation and you would cover a speaking child's mouth in that same situation.*
- Make an effort to use the AAC system so you begin to learn where the words are. Speak AAC to the student to show that you value and accept the AAC system and that you value communication with the student. When you do this, you're also sending the message that you value and respect your relationship with this student.
- Ask me if you have questions or if you've looked for a word and couldn't find it. It will seriously make my day!
- If you don't know how to handle a situation, consider what you would do if the student was verbal and the same thing happened. It's likely that the situation with the AAC user should be handled that same way.
- Avoid drills and hand over hand prompting. Instead, model language that you use naturally with the activity or that matches the student's nonverbal communication. Have fun and make using AAC a positive experience!
- Some other things that will help or that I'd like you to know about this student: _____
- _____

I'm looking forward to working with you to make this a year of progress!

Sincerely, _____ e-mail: _____

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How can I help you?

Here are some ideas and support I'd be happy to provide if you'd like:



_____ Monthly core vocabulary words to target.

_____ Research about core vocabulary, vocabulary instruction, AAC, presuming competence. (Please circle topics you would like me to provide research/links about and write additional request here _____)

_____ A communication book to send notes, words that were used and added, and quick anecdotes.

_____ Something else that I didn't mention? _____

Your e-mail address: _____

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