Introduction to TELL ME: AAC in the Preschool Classroom

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Acknowledgments

Lori Wise: Co-author
Nova Southeastern University SLP Program
TLC and Other Preschool Staff, Children & Families
ACE Lab Assistants & NSU Graduate Students
Project Leaders & Participants
Gail Van Tatenhove & Bruce Baker/Pixon, Barbara Fernandes/Smarty Symbols, Mayer-Johnson/PCS
Attainment Company
Saltillo Company
It was developed because...

- There are too few SLPs who are comfortable with AAC
- Those SLPs have too little time with the students
- Teachers in preschools serving students with disabilities didn’t get adequate preparation in AAC when in their preservice training programs
- Teachers struggle with how to teach high frequency words to nonverbal and minimally verbal students
- Too many children are entering kindergarten without a foundation of language

What IS the TELL ME program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is</th>
<th>Is Not</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A classroom-based approach to teaching high frequency words (i.e., core vocabulary)</td>
<td>Specific to a certain AAC device, app, communication board, or type of symbol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses repeated reading of story books as a context for AAC instruction</td>
<td>A full curriculum that covers an entire school year</td>
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<td>Designed to be used with any AAC system</td>
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</table>
4 Components of TELL ME

- Shared reading
- Shared writing
- Classroom centers & routines
- Home extension activities

Classroom-based Approach

For whom is TELL ME appropriate?

Preschool children who:

- Are nonverbal or minimally verbal
- Are using or will be using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) tools that include high-frequency (aka core) vocabulary
- Can speak, but rarely do (i.e., reluctant communicators)

Each book has a set of core words & a designated letter.

- 'o' Bad, come, messy, no, now, play
Remember:
Core Words
First Words

4 Components of TELL ME

Shared reading
- Pre-reading activities
  - Music/Song
  - Review all core words
  - Establish a purpose
  - Introduce concepts of print
- Reading
- Post-reading activities
  - Story sequencing
  - Character list
  - Retelling

Classroom centers & routines
- Home extension activities

Classroom-based Approach

Shared Reading as a Context for Core Word Practice
- "like"
- "want"
- "me"
- "see"
- "good"
- "help"

10 days of lessons with a predictable structure
Before Reading: Input & Output

- Preview with Focused Language Stimulation
  - “Get ready to listen and say our special words.”
- Singing the Story Time Song
  - “Let’s sing! I LIKE this song!”
- Warm Up with Choral Responding
  - “Everyone say CAN.”

During Reading: Input & Output

- Listen and Look
  - “Let’s find our special words in the book... Oh! Here’s one of our words! Let’s say IT together... CAN.”
- Focused Language Stimulation (Adult)
  - “I need HELP! WHO CAN turn the page?”
  - “WHO CAN show me the FRONT of the book?”
  - “Let’s read to find WHO was in the book.”
- Frequent Productions (Child)
  - “I CAN.” “I DO IT.” “HELP me.”

Story Song: Sing with Core

[I, see, what]

- I went walking and what did I see?

E-I-E-I-O
I saw ________ looking at me.

E-I-E-I-O
With a __________ here.
And a __________ there.

I went walking and what did I see?

E-I-E-I-O

After Reading: Input & Output

- Focused Language Stimulation
  - Example: Creating a ‘Who’ poster
    - “WHO wants to go first?” “I DO!”
    - “CAN YOU pick one?” “I CAN”
    - “WHO did YOU SEE?” “I SEE __.”
10 Shared Reading Lessons

Shared reading is used to teach language.

Each lesson has a self-rating form.

4 Components of TELL ME

Shared reading
Shared writing
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Classroom-based Approach

Shared Writing as a Context for Core Word Practice

“me” “see” “good” “help”
Shared Writing

- Based on the Structured Language Experience Approach by Patricia Cunningham.
- Predictable Chart Writing
  - Teacher chooses a topic & a structure or predictable pattern for the children to follow
  - Teacher and children compose text together. Teacher supports and writes as children dictate.
  - Once the chart is initially created, they do many other things with it.

Children Who Are First Learning AAC

Dictate responses using:
- Choice boards made specifically for the activity
- Personal SGD
- Shared classroom communication devices
- Communication boards, books, eye gaze boards

**Where We Play**

I like to play in the pool (Carrie)
I like to play at camp (Jane)
I like to play on my bed (Abbie)
I like to play at home. (Robin)
I like to play ______ (Your Name)
Repetition with variety helps us build our own teaching skills. Each lesson has a self-rating form.

4 Components of TELL ME
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Classroom-based Approach

Infusion Activities
Provide for multiple opportunities to practice core words
- “I can do it.”
- “I see that.”

Give teachers the flexibility to select what works for their classrooms.

Circle Time Ideas
- Introduce core words
- Say & Repeat
- Modified songs for core word practice
- Search for Special Letter
Outside Time

- Monkey See/Monkey Do
  - Animal Action with Puppets
  - Blow Bubbles
- Froggie Find (scavenger hunt)

Quick Quack Questions

- During Snack Time
- Questions that give additional practice on core words
- Beyond choice-making & requesting
  - Build conversation skills by noticing and talking about other people/things

Centers

- Pretend Play: Let’s play monsters!
  - Who wants to be ‘it’?
  - What should we tell him?
  - I do!
  - Go away!
Art

App Connections

And more...
- Vocabulary sort
- Bingo, Lotto
- Self-selected reading
- Collage building
- Making an alphabet book
- General conversation (Talk Two-gether)
- Letter-sound correspondence
- Sound blending
- Etc.

Self-check for infusion activities
4 Components of TELL ME

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Classroom-based Approach

Parent Involvement

Weekly SHARE Packets:
1. Tells which book, set of core words, & letter is the focus of the week
2. Provides strategy information
3. Activity suggestions
4. Ideas for apps
5. Symbols
6. Note from teacher
7. Rating scale & note back from family
Cooking Instructions—Orange and Deseed Peels

You will need:

- A sheet of construction paper
- A slice of orange of different size
- A knife or potato chip cutter
- A slice of orange of different size
- A knife or potato chip cutter

1. Take a slice of orange and
   peel the outer skin.
2. Take a slice of orange and
   peel the inner skin.
3. Dip the orange into the paint
   and stamp it on your paper.
4. Do the same with the
   other orange and stamp it on
   your paper.

Resource Material

Symbols for core words in
manual signs, Smarty Symbols,
Pixons, PCS
TELL ME

Framework can be replicated by teams to meet their own needs for core vocabulary instruction with:

- Their own books, set of words, types of AAC, types of learners, age group, etc.
- Ideas for group and individual instruction that is systematic and intensive
- Their preferences for activities
- Flexibility to work within other curricula

http://bit.ly/PrekAACTellMe

Thank you!

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