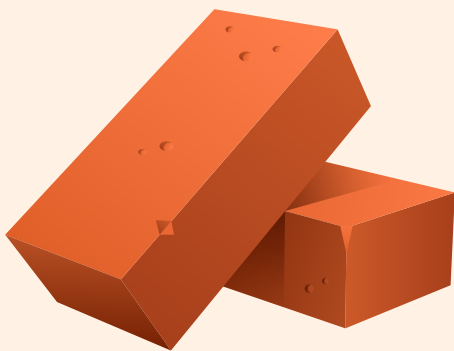


CO-CONSTRUCTION

Helping students using AAC to build their narrative skills

We use narratives every day, in both face-to-face communication and writing. We tell stories (real and not real), we retell events and we expand on ideas.

We can support developing language learners to construct more complex narratives using a range of strategies. These include:



Invitations for more information

Prompts

Positive Praise

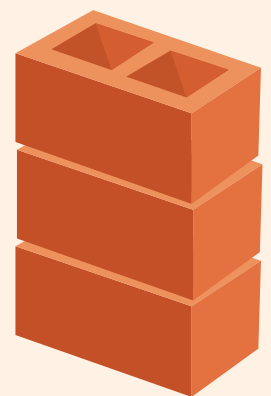
Modelling vocabulary & Grammar

Invitations for More Information

Keep these very general! Try saying "tell me more" - and if that doesn't work, use another invitation. For example, if a child says "dog", you might say "ooh, tell me more" and then wait for more information. If you don't get more, then you can try an invitation such as "hmmmm, maybe you could tell me where you saw the dog, or about when you saw the dog....."

Prompts

You can use prompts in addition to other strategies. Expectant pauses are your best prompt tool. They let the student know that you expect them to take a turn without suggesting what they should say - and they also give the student time to think and communicate. Request more information, then look at them meaningfully and encouragingly - let them know it's their turn!



Please note: these strategies are used when we know an individual has the expressive language to fill in the pause and to participate.

CO-CONSTRUCTION

Helping students using AAC to build their narrative skills

Other Prompts

Back in the section "Invitations for more information", I gave an example that ended with ""hmmmm, maybe you could tell me where you saw the dog, or about when you saw the dog.....". After inviting participation in this way, you would use an expectant pause. If that doesn't support the student to add more, then you might prompt them by gesturing at their AAC system, giving a more concrete prompt that it is their turn. If that doesn't provide enough support, then you might navigate to an appropriate page in their AAC system, e.g. places, and once again gesture at their device or say "tell me more"

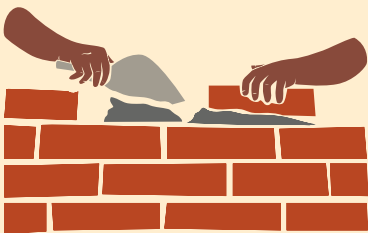
Positive Praise

Keep it positive and tell them what an awesome job they are doing!

Modelling Vocabulary and Grammar

You can also use these interactions as a chance to model vocabulary and grammar - just a step or two ahead of where the student is at. If they didn't tell you more about the dog, you could use this opportunity to model "I saw a **dog** at the **park**." or "I like **dogs**". You would model the words in bold using AAC and speak the whole sentence.

For students who are further along in developing their narrative skills you can use it as an opportunity to model grammar or little words. For example if the student said "play iPad " you could model "You played on the iPad! Wow!", saying a number of the words using AAC.



And keep using these strategies again and again, along with your great communication partner skills to help them to learn to build a narrative!

See <https://praacticalaac.org/strategy/personal-narratives-aac/> for more information

Thanks to Helen Tainsh for her input.