# WATI Assistive Technology Decision Making Guide

**Area of Concern:** Communication with others

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<td>No Decision</td>
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Compilation of Testing Materials for Augmentative Communication Assessment

1. Augmentative Communication Parent Questionnaire: Emerging Communicator
2. Augmentative Communication Teacher Questionnaire: Emerging Communicator
3. Augmentative Communication Parent Questionnaire: Advanced Communicator
4. Augmentative Communication Teacher Questionnaire: Advanced Communicator
5. Questions for Advanced Communicator: Student Interview
6. Dynamic Display Assessment
7. Augmentative Communication Device Trial Follow Up Questionnaire
8. Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory: Device Use Form
9. Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory (Separate File, needs to be printed in landscape)
Augmentative Communication Parent Questionnaire

Student: _________________________________

Family Member Responding: _________________________________

Date: __________________

Emerging Communicator

1. How does your child let you know he/she wants something to eat, drink, or play with?
2. How does your child let you know what he/she is feeling (happy/sad/sick …)
3. How does your child let you know he/she likes/doesn’t like something?
4. How does your child interact with other people (family members, adults, peers)?
5. How does your child get your attention?
6. Does your child initiate communication? If so, how?
7. Is your child about to follow 1 step directions? 2-3 step directions?
8. How much of what you say do you think your child is able to understand?
9. Does your child use a computer at home? If so, does he/she use a mouse?
10. What are your child’s likes/interests?
11. Is there anything else about your child’s communication you think it would be helpful to know?
Augmentative Communication Teacher Questionnaire

Student: ________________________________

Teacher: ________________________________

Date: __________________

Emerging Communicator

1. How does your student let you know he/she wants something to eat, drink, or play with?
2. How does your student let you know what he/she is feeling (happy/sad/sick …)
3. How does your student let you know he/she likes/doesn’t like something?
4. How does your student interact with other people (family members, adults, peers)?
5. How does your student get your attention?
6. Does your student initiate communication? If so, how?
7. Is your student about to follow 1 step directions? 2-3 step directions?
8. How much of what you say do you think your student is able to understand?
9. What are your student’s likes/interests?
10. Is there anything else about your student’s communication you think it would be helpful to know?
Augmentative Communication Parent Questionnaire

Student: _____________________________________

Teacher: _______________________________________________

Date: __________________

Advanced Communicator

1. How does your child get the attention of adults? Peers? (Do they use a device, gestures, words?)

2. How well does your child ask questions? Are they able to get the help they need from others?

3. Does your child independently get and use a communication device? Are there instances when they need to be prompted to use a communication device?

4. How does your child communicate about emotional states (happy, angry ….)?

5. How well does your child follow directions? Do you have any concerns related to their receptive communication skills/understanding of others?

6. How well does your child answer questions? What types of questions are they able to answer (Who, What, Where, Why, How, et at)? What communication method do they use?

7. How many turns is your child able to take in a communication exchange? What communication method do they use (device, gestures …)? Are they able to start a conversation and/or end a conversation appropriately? What topics of exchange do they engage in?

8. What are your main concerns about your child’s current communication ability?

9. What are your main goals for your child in the area of communication?

10. What are your child’s likes and interests?

11. Please describe anything else about the way your child communicates that you feel it would be helpful to know
Augmentative Communication Teacher Questionnaire

Student: _______________________________________________

Teacher: _______________________________________________

Date: __________________

Advanced Communicator

1. How does your student get the attention of adults? Peers? (Do they use a device, gestures, words?)

2. How well does your student ask questions? Are they able to get the help they need from others?

3. Does your student independently get and use a communication device? Are there instances when they need to be prompted to use a communication device?

4. How does your student communicate about emotional states (happy, angry …)?

5. How well does your student follow directions? Do you have any concerns related to their receptive communication skills/understanding of others?

6. How well does your student answer questions? What types of questions are they able to answer (Who, What, Where, Why, How, et at)? What communication method do they use?

7. How many turns is your student able to take in a communication exchange? What communication method do they use (device, gestures …)? Are they able to start a conversation and/or end a conversation appropriately? What topics of exchange do they engage in?

8. What are your main concerns about your student’s current communication ability?

9. What are your main goals for your student in the area of communication?

10. What are your student’s likes and interests?

11. Please describe anything else about the way your student communicates that you feel it would be helpful to know
Questions for Advanced Communicator: Student Interview

Student: _____________________________________________________

Communication Device: ________________________________________

Instructor Conducting Interview: ________________________________

1. Who are the people you communication with the most in school? Outside school/at home? (This can be with your device but does not have to be).

2. When do you use your communication device/(iPad)?

3. What other methods of communication do you use? When do you use these other methods of communication?

4. What types of things keep you from using your device? (For example: it doesn’t work, you don’t want to, it isn’t loud enough …).

5. How do you like to communicate best? (re: with a device, with an iPad, with the phone, email ….)

6. How do you feel about using a communication device?

7. What do you wish other’s knew about your communication?

8. What would you like to be able to do better with your communication device?

9. What do you want to do when you are done with (high) school?

10. How can we best help you improve your communication?

11. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your communication?
Dynamic Display Assessment

Fine Motor (Visual Motor) Component:

1) Range of motion: (mark in a way that makes sense to you)

Display Screen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Right</th>
<th>Top Middle</th>
<th>Top Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Bottom Right | Bottom Middle | Bottom Left |

2) Accuracy:

a) Do they hit the target they are trying to access?

b) Do they hit the target they are trying to access only once?

c) Do their hands/fingers accidently set off other buttons?

3) Hand Preference:

a) Which hands is/are used?

b) If both are used, is one used more than the other?

4) Access:

a) How does the student access the device (which fingers, what hand position?)

b) Does the student use any stabilization techniques (do they need to rest hand somehow)?

c) What # of buttons works best?

d) What size of buttons works best?

e) Does color coding make a difference?
Technique Component: (technical ability to use functions of device):

Can student do the following:

5) Link pages, and if so, how many?
6) Return to home page
7) Combine Icons, and if so, how many?
8) Use message window
9) Use the backspace and clear functions
10) Use the keyboard
11) Use word prediction
12) Switch back and forth between keyboard and icon based page sets

Linguistic Component:

1) Set-up that works best:
   a) Grammatical (Core vocabulary base, designed to allow generation of sentences)
   b) Categorical/Semantic: by category/meaning
   c) Combination of both
2) Combining icons in correct grammatical order; note how many
3) Student spelling level/ability
4) Ability to get message across using limited # of core words

Functional communication component: What language functions can student use device for?

** Use Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory
Augmentative Communication Device Trial Follow Up Questionnaire

Student Name: ____________________________________________________________

Date Trials Started: _______________ Date of Questionnaire: _______________

Device being Trialed: ________________________________________________________

Evaluator(s): _____________________________________________________________

1) Who used the device with the student?

2) Where was the device used (re: speech room, classroom ….)?

3) How was the device used? (re: what was worked on with the student)

4) How often was the device used?

5) Was the student independent in getting the device? In using the device if it was brought to them?

6) Was the student able to do any of the following:

   a) Find vocabulary:

   b) Link to a different page:

   c) Return to the home page:

   d) Combine icons to make a sentence (if so, how many):

   e) Use the message window:

   e) Use the backspace or clear functions:

   f) Use the keyboard:

   g) Use word prediction:

7) Please use the Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory – Device Use form to note what, if any, language functions the student was able to use with the device.

8) What was the student’s attitude towards using the device? What was their motivation level?

9) How would this device be more effective than previous options that have been tried with this student?
Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory: Device Use Form

Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Staff Reporting: __________________________________________________________________

** Please mark all the boxes that apply for each communication skill. If the student communicates in that skill area using more than one method please check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Function</th>
<th>Communication Device: Picture Icons</th>
<th>Communication Device: Typing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Getting Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requesting Item/Action</td>
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<td>Getting help when needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressing Emotions</td>
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<td>Expressing health needs (ex: when sick)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answering basic information questions (name, birthday)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Answering WH questions</td>
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<td>Answering conversational questions</td>
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<td>Participating in conversation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting information about something</td>
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<td>Commenting</td>
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Augmentative Communication Skills Inventory

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<th>Verbally</th>
<th>Communication Device</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Typing</th>
<th>Pointing to Answer Choices</th>
<th>Gesture</th>
<th>Facial Expression</th>
<th>Other:</th>
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Assessing Student's Need for AAC Communication
Jyutika Mehta, PhD/CCC-SLP

Why Team Assessments?
- Intervention decision making requires a broad range of information.
  - Such as:
    - Cognitive
    - Language
    - Sensory
    - Motor
  - As well as communication competences
    - Operational
    - Linguistic
    - Social
    - Strategic

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI)
- SETT process as it relates to identifying appropriate AT for students with difficulty in communicating with others
- S - Student
- E - Environment
- T - Task
- T - Tools
The Student

- Identify the functional area(s) of concern?
- Special needs (related to area of concern)
- Current abilities (related to area of concern)
- What does the student need to communicate that is difficult or impossible to do independently at this time?

The Environment(s)

- Arrangement (instructional, physical)
- Support (available to both the student and the staff)
- Materials and Equipment (commonly used by others in the environments)
- Access Issues (technological, physical, instructional)
- Attitudes and Expectations (staff, family, others)

The Tasks

- What SPECIFIC tasks are required for active involvement in identified environments? (related to communication, instruction, participation, productivity, environmental control)
The Tools

- Tools include devices, services and strategies; everything that is needed to help the student succeed.
- Describe what a useful system of assistive technology devices and services for the student would be like.
- Select the most promising Tools for trials in the natural environments.
- Plan the specifics of the trial (expected changes, when/how tools will be used, cues, etc.)
- Collect data on effectiveness. (Zabala 2002)

Using the SETT process Decision Making Guide

WATI's version of the SETT Framework for Communication Guide will be Different for every area of AT assessment

Sensory Assessment Purpose

- Determine what sensory modalities the individual finds pleasant
- Determine how that pleasure (or displeasure) is communicated
- Determine if response is reactive (reflexive) or proactive (purposeful)
- Provide information of student interests and abilities that can be used to develop a communication system
- Determine motor abilities that be used for both communication and environmental control
Sensory Considerations

Sensory Considerations

What sensory challenges does the student have that impacts communication? (i.e., visual, auditory, tactile)

• Does this student have sensory deficits or sensitivities that will impact his/her ability to communicate?

• Do the learning environment(s) impact the sensory issues of the student?

Sensory Considerations

STUDENT

• Visual (glare, color vs. black & white, white space between symbols, etc.)
• Auditory (voice, volume, button click)
• Tactile (velcro, weight)
• Personal space
• Student specific

ENVIRONMENT

• Background noise
• Lighting (full spectrum vs. fluorescent)
• Physical space

Assistive Technology: past and present

• Part of the student’s past & current environment
• Low tech communication systems
• Picture exchange communication systems
• Manual signs
A CONTINUUM OF CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

For Communication

Concrete Representation

Communication System with pictures, symbols, letters and/or words

Simple speech generating device

Speech generating device with levels

Speech generating device with icon sequencing

Speech generating device with dynamic display

Text based device with speech synthesis

Follow the progression of low tech, through mid tech to high tech when selecting assistive technology tools

AT Communication Continuum

Low Tech

Concrete Representations

Real Objects
  • Calendar box
  • Tangible Symbols
  • Miniatures
  • TOBIs (true object based icon)
AT Communication Continuum
Low Tech
Communication system with pictures, symbols, letters &/or words

AT Communication Continuum
Mid Tech
Simple Voice Output Devices
Bigmack
CheapTalk
Hip Talk

AT Communication Continuum
Mid Tech
Speech Generating Device with levels
Leo
Tech series
Bluebird II
Message Mate
7 Level Communication Builder
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<th>AT Communication Continuum</th>
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<td>High Tech</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech Generating Devices with icon sequencing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vantage Plus</td>
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<td>Pathfinder Plus</td>
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<td>SpringBoard Lite</td>
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<td>Speech Generating Devices with a Dynamic Display</td>
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<td>Dynavox V series &amp; V-Max M7</td>
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<td>Eyegaze System</td>
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<td>Tango!</td>
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<td>ChatPC</td>
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<td>Text based device with speech synthesis</td>
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<td>DynaWrite</td>
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<td>LightWriter SL40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom LITE</td>
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<td>PolyTABLET with Persona</td>
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Solution Selection: Tools & Strategies

• Review the list of potential tools
• Now is the time to evaluate for a match with:
  • Student (abilities, difficulties, likes/dislikes)
  • Environment (supports, obstacles)
  • Tasks (what 1-2 things do you want the student to do?)
• Prioritize selections

Implementation Plan

• Who is going to do... (get specific)
• What (ditto)
• When (do I need to say it again?)
• For how long?
• Write down your expectations (objectives) so you know if the AT is working or not!
• Give everyone a job

Components of AAC Assessment

1) Pre-planning and teaming
2) Observation of student in classroom environment(s)
3) Interview family and professionals working with student
4) Formal Assessment/Commercially available assessments
5) Informal Assessment
6) Summarize and Analyze Information
7) Problem Solving/Plan Next Steps
8) Recommendations
9) Follow up
Notes about AAC Assessment

- Different than most types of speech assessment - less reliant on scores and norms; less formal assessment
- Focus on functional communication
- Dynamic in nature: ongoing - not just done when you write the report
- Life Long
- Multi-disciplinary
- Focus is still on communication; equipment is secondary

Interview: Family

- Preferably by phone, occasionally in person
- Send survey home if can’t contact family by phone
- Basic Questions: emerging communicator or unknown level of communicator
- Basic Questions: advanced communicator
- Make sure to find out what motivates the student and what their interests are
- Determine what the family’s goals are in the area of communication to make sure this is incorporated in the assessment

Interview: Beginning Communicator

1. How does your child let you know he/she wants something to eat, drink, or play with?
2. How does your child let you know what he/she is feeling (happy/sad/sick ...)?
3. How does your child let you know he/she likes/doesn’t like something?
4. How does your child interact with other people (family members, adults, peers)?
5. How does your child get your attention?
6. Does your child initiate communication? If so, how?
7. Is your child about to follow 1 step directions? 2-3 step directions?
8. How much of what you say do you think your child is able to understand?
9. Does your child use a computer at home? If so, does he/she use a mouse?
10. What are your child’s likes/interests?
11. Is there anything else about your child’s communication you think it would be helpful to know?
Interview: Advanced Communicator

1) How does your child get the attention of adults? Peers? (Do they use a device, gestures, words?)
2) How well does your child ask questions? Are they able to get the help they need from others?
3) Does your child independently get and use a communication device? Are there instances when they need to be prompted to use a communication device?
4) How does your child communicate about emotional states (happy, angry ...)?
5) How well does your child follow directions? Do you have any concerns related to their receptive communication skills/understanding of others?
6) How well does your child answer questions? What types of questions are they able to answer (Who, What, Where, Why, How, etc)? What communication method do they use?
7) How many turns is your child able to take in a communication exchange? What communication method do they use (device, gestures ...)? Are they able to start a conversation and/or end a conversation appropriately? What topics of exchange do they engage in?
8) What are your main concerns about your child’s current communication ability?
9) What are your main goals for your child in the area of communication?
10) What are your child’s likes and interests?
11) Please describe anything else about the way your child communicates that you feel it would be helpful to know

The Beginning Communicator

- Currently communicating in non-symbolic modes: facial expression, vocalizations, body language, gesture
- Little to no exposure to AAC
- Communication partners often unsure about any aspect of their expressive communication
- May have difficulty determining what the student is interested in or motivated by
Assessing the Beginning Communicator

Goals:
1) Identify mode(s) that are being used for communication
2) Identify mode(s) that could be used for communication
3) Identify physical and sensory abilities of the student
4) Identify what functional situations the student will be communicating in
5) Identify starting place for symbol use
6) Identify starting place for voice output use

Assessing the Beginning Communicator

Recommended Assessment Protocols:
- Every Move Counts Clicks and Chats
- Communication Matrix
- Rossetti Infant Toddler Language Scale

Communication Modes: Beginning Communicator

- Eye Gaze
- Facial Expression
- Face movement (purses lips, narrows eyes, lifts eyebrow)
- Vocalizations
- Changes in head movement (could be head turning)
- Movement of Extremity (finger, hand, arm, foot)
- Gestures:
  - atypical
  - typical
- Body movement
Equipment for Beginning Communicator

- Sensory Based - varying types of sensory items
- Varying switches
- Varying switch toys and cause and effect toys
- Other age appropriate items that might be of interest
- Typically not voice output based
- Might have a couple of types of single cell devices to attempt for access purposes and to see if it holds student interest

Assessing the Developing Communicator

- Consistent mode(s) of communication likely established (may not be symbolic)
- Student may exhibit behavior difficulty from communication frustration
- Team wants to know where to go next
- Team wants to know how to move student toward symbolic communication
- Student may have significant fine and gross motor access issues that make looking at communication systems challenging

Assessing the Developing Communicator

Goals:

1) Identify when student uses current mode of communication and/or communication system
2) Identify how well student uses current mode of communication and/or communication system
3) Assess current ability to understand and use symbols
4) Assess current ability to understand and use simple voice output
5) Assess student’s ability to initiate communication
6) Look at functional communication environment for student
The Developing Communicator

Recommended Assessment Protocols:

- The Communication Matrix
- The Functional Communication Protocol
- The Rossetti Infant Toddler Language Scale

Developing Communicator: Symbol Assessment

Symbol Types:

1) Tangible Symbols
2) Photographs
   A) Whole picture
   B) Tobii (object only, background cut out)
3) Abstract Symbols (Boardmaker)
   A) Black and white versus color
   B) Size: 2", 3", 4" possibly larger
   C) Color: background or on color background - typically red or yellow

Developing Communicator: Voice Output Assessment

Considerations:

- Physical Ability
- Current voice output use
- # of symbols at one time
- Arrangement of symbols
- Function for voice output use
Equipment for Developing Communicator

- Symbol Assessment
- Items/activities that motivate student
- Current voice output devices being used
- Varying multi-level devices:
  1) Pressure to activate (ease of access)
  2) # of symbols
  3) Size of symbols
- Core Vocabulary Notebook with simple layout
- Boards to use for eye gaze assessment: clear, red folder, yellow folder, black folder

Assessing the Advanced Communicator

- Symbolic communicator
- Currently using multi-icon device - either static or dynamic
- Able to express themselves across multiple communication functions that could include:
  - Requesting Item or Action
  - Expressing Need
  - Refusing
  - Answering Question
  - Asking Question
  - Getting Attention
  - Taking turns in a conversation
  - Greetings
  - Making comments

Assessing the Advanced Communicator

Goals:

1) Determine how current communication system is meeting student’s needs
2) Determine what could be changed to allow current communication system to better meet student’s needs
   A) Device changes
   B) Language Skill Changes
   C) Environmental Changes
The Advanced Communicator

Recommended Assessment Protocols

- The Functional Communication Profile
- The Test of Aided Symbol Performance
- (Varied standard SLP Assessments)

Assessing the Advanced Communicator

Communication Competence Skills (Judith Light):

1) Operational (technical) skills
2) Linguistic Skills
3) Social Skills **
4) Strategic Skills **

** The focus of intervention with this type of communicator is often the latter

Operational Skills

The ability of the student to physically use the communication system/device being assessed

- Turning device on/off
- Linking pages
- Returning to home page
- Combining Icons
- Using message window
- Using backspace, clear, other function keys
- Using keyboard
- Using word prediction
REPORT

• Many different formats of AT reports:
  • Section one: Background
    • Current programming
    • Grade level
    • Coding and service
    • Current communication status and systems
  • Section Two: Observation/Assessment
    • List types of assessments used
    • include paragraphs on info from assessment,
      • reading/pre-reading skills
    • switch use/access assessment
    • device update

REPORT

• Section Three: Summary
  • Summarize info from above
  • Indicate if the student appears to need additional assistive technology
  • supports that are not readily available in his/her classroom setting
  • Can include more in-depth information about communication needs if desired

• Section Four: Recommendations (can include)
  • Include symbol recommendation
  • Communication Systems
  • Curricular connections
  • Leisure and social
  • Behavior supports related to AT
  • Home/School connection

Sample IEP objectives

• Using a speech generating device, Johnny will combine 2 symbols to initiate a desired item during snack 3 out of 5 opportunities.
  • Kelly will activate a single message looped device to tell a joke to peers and adults 4 out of 5 opportunities.
  • Justin will ask and answer curriculum based questions in 4th grade social studies using a speech generating device 3 times during each class period 4 out of 5 days.
Assessment Resources

- Social Networks
  http://www.augcominc.com/index.cfm/snfaq.htm
- Communication
- Pragmatics Profile of Everyday Communication Skills
- WATI ASNAT (Chapter 3) – http://www.wati.org (freepublications)
- Bloom and Lahey
- Cobb County Pragmatic checklist
  http://www.nesc.k12.mn.us/files/Pragmatic%20Language%20Checklist.pdf

Assessment Resources

- Triple C: Checklist of Communication Competencies
- Every Move Counts
- Test of Aided-Communication Symbol Performance
- AAC Evaluation Genie
- Some AAC devices have cognitive, linguistic and access assessment tools built into the software

Literacy and AAC resources

- Dr. Janice Light http://aasliteracy.psu.edu
- Center for Literacy and Disability Studies https://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/
- Alternate Pencil
- Reading Assessment and AT
- Route 66
- Bridge Assessment
- Tarheel Reader
- Visual approach to literacy instruction
  http://www.amazon.com/Right-
  https://www.bookshare.org/
- Learning Ally http://www.learningally.org/
Core vocabulary resources

- http://aac.unl.edu
- http://www.aacinstitute.org
  (Papers and Resources > Language Intervention Strategies)
- ISAAC's AAC professional journal
- ASHA professional journals and SIG 12/listserv
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vib2__BDCXc

Implementation resources

- AAC Kids
- Gail VanTatenhove http://www.vantatenhove.com
- Linda Burkhart http://www.lburkhart.com
- AAC Intervention http://www.aacintervention.com
- USAAC Scoop It http://www.scoop.it/t/speak-up-1
- Practical AAC http://practicalaac.org
- YAACK http://aac.unl.edu/yaack/
- SET BC http://www.setbc.org/
- Communication Supports Inventory http://icfcy.org/aac

Implementation resources

- Every Move Counts
- Tangible Symbol System
- Picture Exchange Communication Systems
- Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP)
- PODD - Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display
- ACN Communication Partners
Good Books to Have