

## Words to Teach

### Core words

In the LAMP approach, the focus is on teaching core words, the words most frequently used in communication. Core words are versatile and applicable to all environments and topics. Core words can be taught and reinforced in a variety of sensory rich-activities and allow for quick and easy two-word combinations. They allow the individual to express a variety of communicative functions in any environment with a small number of words.

It may be helpful to think about activities that will be motivating to the learner and the core vocabulary that can be taught in those activities. Be willing to use words in different activities or introduce different words to follow the interests of the learner. Some examples of core words for play, self care, and classroom activities are below.

Play Activities	One Word	Two Words
<b>Trains</b>	Go, stop, fast, slow, on, off, colors of box cars, first, last, up, down, take, put, through, over	Go fast, go up, want blue, put on, go through, yellow first, red last, want three, take out
<b>Swinging</b>	Go, stop, fast, slow, up, down, on, off, turn	Go up, go fast, turn more, go more, go slow, want off, want on, get on, my turn, she on, he off
<b>Music</b>	Open, on, off, up, down, play, stop, in, out	Put in, turn on, turn off, play more, turn down, turn up, take out, push play, push stop, open it,
<b>Play Doh</b>	Open, help, big, little, on, off, color words, stop, in, out	Open blue, red on, help please, get more, more in, put in, big one, little one

Daily Living Skills		
<b>Dressing</b>	On, off, help, colors of items, look,	Put on, take off, help me, red on, blue one, feels bad,
<b>Snack</b>	Open, eat, drink, big, little, more, colors of goldfish or M&M's, number of items	Get that, eat/drink more, open please, you eat/drink, me eat/drink, my drink, more please, eat candy, big/little pretzel,
<b>Bath</b>	Hot, cold, more, on, off, in, out,	Turn on, turn off, put in, take out,

When an emergent communicator is in the classroom, it is more important to give them the opportunity to use core words and see a response than be able to answer questions. Adapt or include activities that allow them to elicit responses from the teacher or classmates. They will need

opportunities to learn language in an expressive mode before being able to learn receptively. Example activities include:

- The learner can say “go” or “stop” to direct the class in the pledge, while playing in gym, or walking down the hall.
- The learner can say “slow” or “fast” to have the teacher read accordingly, or the kids dance, or sing a song.
- The learner can say “big” or “little” to have the teacher speak in a big, loud voice or a small, squeaky voice.
- The learner can say “turn” to have the teacher turn the page while reading.
- The learner can say he wants “more” of an activity or wants to “stop.”
- The learner can use verbs or emotion words and the class can act out the word.

Remember to make communication interactive and allow some control over the individuals’ environment. What shirt do you want to wear? What would you like to eat? What would you like to talk about? What did you do last night? Show them how to say things on the device they are trying to communicate less clearly through other means. For example, if they hand you an empty cup, you can ask “All done or more?” Occasionally be silly.....should we put your underwear on your bottom or on your head? Where does this go? Don’t get stuck labeling or asking the child what is going to happen to him next.....”what is this?” or “You need to get\_\_\_ the bath tub.” Be creative! Follow the learner’s lead and help him/her find appropriate vocabulary to request, comment, protest, and direct.

### **Fringe Words**

While core words are the majority of spoken language, it is important to teach nouns as well. Typically you will want to teach a core word before teaching the fringe words. For example, you would want to teach and over-generalize the word “eat” before you add specific foods or “go” before you add “home” or “outside.” There may be some items that a learner is passionate about and those nouns should be available early.

You may want to consider how frequently a fringe word will be used before storing it in the device. Favorite foods, places, and people definitely need to be included. Words that are infrequently used are not as necessary, fill space in the device and can often be described or accessed differently. For example, every item on the McDonald’s menu does not need to be stored in the device. Typically, there is a small number of items we order every time we visit a restaurant. Those favorite items can be stored (i.e. cheeseburger, chicken nuggets). If I decide one day that I’m going to try the fish sandwich, I can say “10” for the meal, “fish,” or “that” and point to the item on the menu. During a science lesson about butterflies, while you may want to store the words “caterpillar” and “butterfly,” the words “cocoon” and “metamorphosis” will probably not get used much in that person’s lifetime. If he needs to demonstrate understanding of these words for a test, reframe the question so that he can use words on his device. “What is metamorphosis?” “Animal changes it’s body.” Vocabulary for developing likes and interests can be stored as the need arises but should be considered a permanent addition.