

**Choose Your Own Switch  
Adventure:  
Oh The Places You'll Go!**

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**Disclosures**

Laura Hayes, MS, CCC-SLP

Financial:  
Honorarium for this presentation

Non Financial:  
Member of the American Speech and Language Hearing Association



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### Learning Objectives

1. Identify at least 2 materials required for switch adaption and modeling language opportunities.
1. Provide at least four examples of adapted switch toys and modeling opportunities.
1. Identify and create 1 resource to identify language models and functions when playing with switch adapted toys.



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As related service providers, teachers, parents and communication partners, it's not our job to get our students to communicate.

It's our job to motivate them to want to communicate.



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### Start Early!

- Switch station for frequent practice, active participation and leisure time
- Find preferences with your students/child's through exploration time
- Other students/children can learn how to plug switches in and out to increase understanding
- Play with peers and share language experiences



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The goal is **NOT** to "HIT THE SWITCH"

It's about what happens as an outcome of hitting the switch:

- Literacy and shared reading
- Turn Taking during a game
- Pretend Play to dress up or cook
- Singing in music class or leading freeze dance
- Feeding a class pet
- Playing at recess
- Creating art

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Assigning **communication**  
and **language** with all **hits**  
offers language building  
within the **context** of  
activities!




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Access VS Language

Access: The way in which a child will control or participate in an activity in their environment. (Examples: hand, head, eyes, mouth, legs, toes, etc.)

Language: The words a child will need to communicate to communication partners within activities across their environment. (Examples: request, direct, protest, ask questions, comment, etc.)

ALTHOUGH WE NEED TO CONSIDER THEM SIMULTANEOUSLY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH COMPLEX BODIES, THEY ARE NOT THE SAME THING

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**And you may not always need a switch**

Can you student activate with their:

- Head
- Toes
- Inside of leg
- Elbow, etc



www.littlelikes.com




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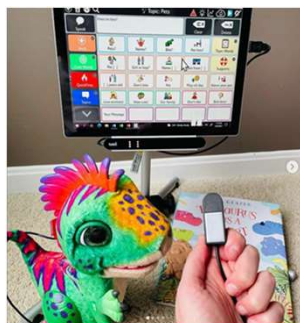
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**Access Method(s)**

- It's not always one or the same access method to communicate AND play
- Could be a combination of:
  - Touch
  - Joystick / Mouse
  - Switch
  - Head Mouse
  - Eye Gaze
  - Partner Assisted scanning




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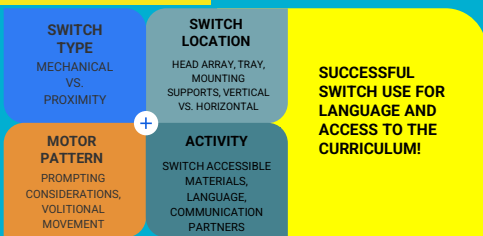
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**"SWITCH EQUATION"**




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Introduction of switches is  
High physical/High  
Cognitive

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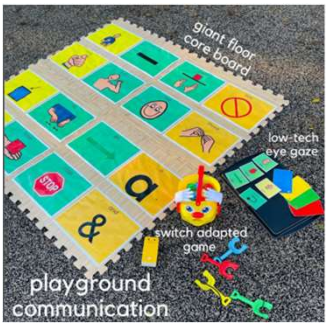
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**Target Goal for Language:**

MultiModal Communication

- More than one way to communicate
- Range of modalities
- Creating a best fit system of communication **taking advantage of skills** and highlighting strengths
- All forms equally valued



playground communication

(Mays, 2017)

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**Target Goal for Access:**

Motor Automaticity

- A movement and location that supports volitional control so that the individual is not REQUIRED to think about moving their body
- Think multiple location sites over one perfect location site
- Access sites may need to change (e.g., across settings, time of day)

*Remember that developing automaticity requires  
**thousands**  
of repetitions with intent,  
purpose and variation.  
(Burkhart, 2018 )*




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### Adapting Toys - The Basics

1. Tools and Items
2. Training
3. How to select toys:
  - Motivation
  - Lights
  - Movement / tactile
  - Sounds



cnaweb.com

amazon.com

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### Switch - What type?

Some types to consider :

1. Mechanical
2. Electrical

\*Typically not about the switch type but rather the switch placement



Ablenetinc.com and ASL-inc.com

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### Communication - Language

What does this look like?

- visuals on the switch itself ✓
- light tech (core board, activity board) ✓
- mid tech (step by step, randomizer) ✓
- high tech (speech generating device) ✓




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### Communication - Language

- When presenting new information it is essential to model language using the switches and/or system prior to placing demands on student for increased input
- Pair with verbal speech and aided language input
- Use in conjunction with prompting hierarchy **BUT USE CAUTION**
- Think beyond "go/stop" and "on/off"




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### Engineering the Vocabulary

- Directing: "My turn", "you go", "change the song", "turn it on/off"
- Requesting: "I want (choice item)", "I need help"
- Protesting/Terminating: "I don't like that", "stop"
- Commenting: "Awesome", "look at that", "great outfit"
- Asking Questions: "What's that", "where'd it go"

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### Consider Opportunities for Co-construction

#### Language:

- Songs with a chosen word/line/verse
- Predictable chart writing
- Polls/Surveys
- Sentence Completion




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### Time for "Switch" Activity Improv

1. Pick the toy/activity (based on interests/motivation)
2. Determine access (switch site(s), switch type(s))
3. Determine communication method(s) for activity
4. Think about communication functions and how to model




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### Communication - Language




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### Choose your Own Adopted Play Adventure:

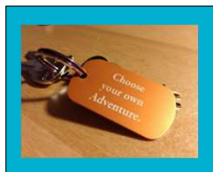
Class Pet - Elephant or Minion

Art Class - Fan or Spin Art

Recess - Mr. Bucket or Bowling

Literacy - Moose a Muffin or Harry Potter

Imaginative Play/Activity- Cooking or Dress up




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Choose your Own Adapted Play Adventure:

Class Pet - [Elephant](#) or [Minion](#)

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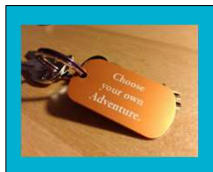
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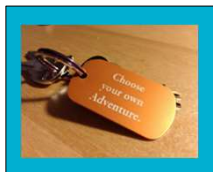
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### Full Circle

Once you choose your interest/motivation-how can we imbed that interest across the day? (Reading/English, Math, Science/Social Studies, Art, Social/Recess). Tools that can help:

- Tarheel Gameplay
- Tarheel Reader
- Boardmaker Student Center
- Robust AAC systems
- Planning Sheet for Team




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### High Activity Interest Ideas for All Age Levels

- SOLVING A PROBLEM/HELPING OTHERS
- READING
- COOKING
- ARTS/CRAFTING
- CONTROLLING TECHNOLOGY
- AUGMENTED REALITY
- FIRST PERSON INTEGRATION




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### SWITCH ACTIVITY "DON'TS"

- "HIT THE SWITCH"
- SIMPLE CAUSE AND EFFECT TOY OUT OF THE BOX\*
- DISCUSS TRIALS OF 100% ACCURACY
- NOT MOVING ON
- IMPROPER TOY FEATURE MATCHING
- ONLY HAVING THE SWITCHES AVAILABLE AT SPECIAL TIMES (E.G., SPEECH, OT)




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### Takeaways

- Always be thinking about what language opportunities could be paired during switch play.
- Find ways to incorporate access to switch use through the entire day
- Follow your client's lead to find motivating items prior to adapting and modifying toys/materials.

*Providing access to assistive technology and communication systems affords individuals with complex physical and communication needs the ability to connect with others and experience a more active, independent and fulfilled life. (Burkhart, 2018)*

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### Questions?



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### Resource & Resource Links



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 Instagram: [aac\\_innovations](https://www.instagram.com/aac_innovations)

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