Getting to Know Speak for Yourself

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Agenda

- Introduction – Background information
- AAC software considerations
- Organization and Observation-based features of *Speak for Yourself*
- AAC barriers and breakthroughs

AAC Software Considerations

AAC Institute Research

Proficient AAC users report that the 2 most important things to them, relative to communication, are:

- *Saying exactly what they want to say*
- *Saying it as quickly as possible*

How is this accomplished?

- *Saying exactly what they want to say*
  - Giving the student access to appropriate vocabulary
  - *Saying it as quickly as possible*
  - Using motor planning to increase communication rate

Appropriate Vocabulary

- **CORE -- those few hundred words that constitute the vast majority of communication**
- **EXTENDED -- the remaining words that are used infrequently (e.g. nouns specific to situation)**

Toddler Vocabulary Arranged by Frequency

Words	Percentage
I	9.5
No	8.5
Yes/yea	7.6
my	5.8
the	5.2
want	5.0
is	4.9
it	4.9
that	4.9
a	4.6
go	4.4
mine	3.8
you	3.2
what	3.1
on	2.8
in	2.7
here	2.7
more	2.6
out	2.4
off	2.3
some	2.3
help	2.1
all done/finished	1.0
	96.3%

26 core words shown at left comprise 96.3 percent of the total words used by toddlers in this study

Banajee *et al.*

Core vocabulary consists of simple words that make up 80 percent or more of everyday communication.

ASHA

- According to the American Speech and Hearing Association's (ASHA) guidelines regarding AAC device selection, "Success in life can be directly related to the ability to communicate."
- Full interpersonal communication substantially enhances an individual's potential for education, employment, and independence.
- Therefore, it is imperative that the goal of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) use be the most effective interactive communication possible. Anything less represents a compromise of the individual's human potential."
- To achieve this goal, "the most effective approach is SNUG, **spontaneous novel utterance generation**. SNUG allows a person to say anything he or she wants at any time. SNUG is based on access to the individual words, word combinations, and commonly used phrases of our language."

iPad
9:50 AM
100%
Edit
Open/Close
Babble
I
MY
ME
PLEASE
COME
OKAY
ASK
PUT
+S
AND
HELP
THING
OFF
MINE
YES
YOU
YOUR
ARE
IS
AM
CAN
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BUT
WHAT
SAID
OR
THAN
NO
HE
HIS
TIME
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PLAY
TO
HAVE
A
SOME
THE
CALL
SO
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HER
COLOR
TAKE
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READ
NOT
EVERY
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WELL
DOWN
WE
OUR
WORK
FAMILY
THINK
GET
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NOW
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ALL
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OF
WHICH
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MORE
FOR
NEW
LIKE
NEED
GIVE
TURN
DRINK
LITTLE
BIG
STOP
BE
BECAUSE
GOOD
QWERTY
Abc def

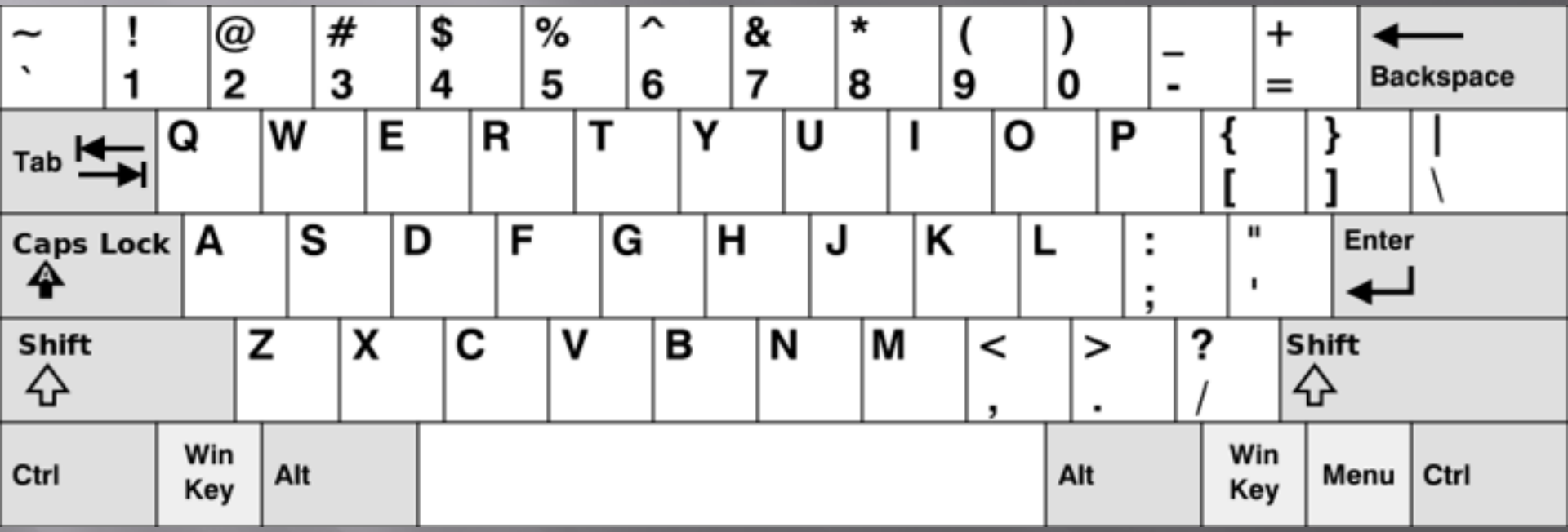
How is this accomplished?

- *Saying exactly what they want to say*
- Giving the student access to appropriate vocabulary
- *Saying it as quickly as possible*
- Using motor planning to increase communication rate

What is motor planning?

Activity-Saying it as quickly as possible

- QWERTY
- ABC
- Dvorak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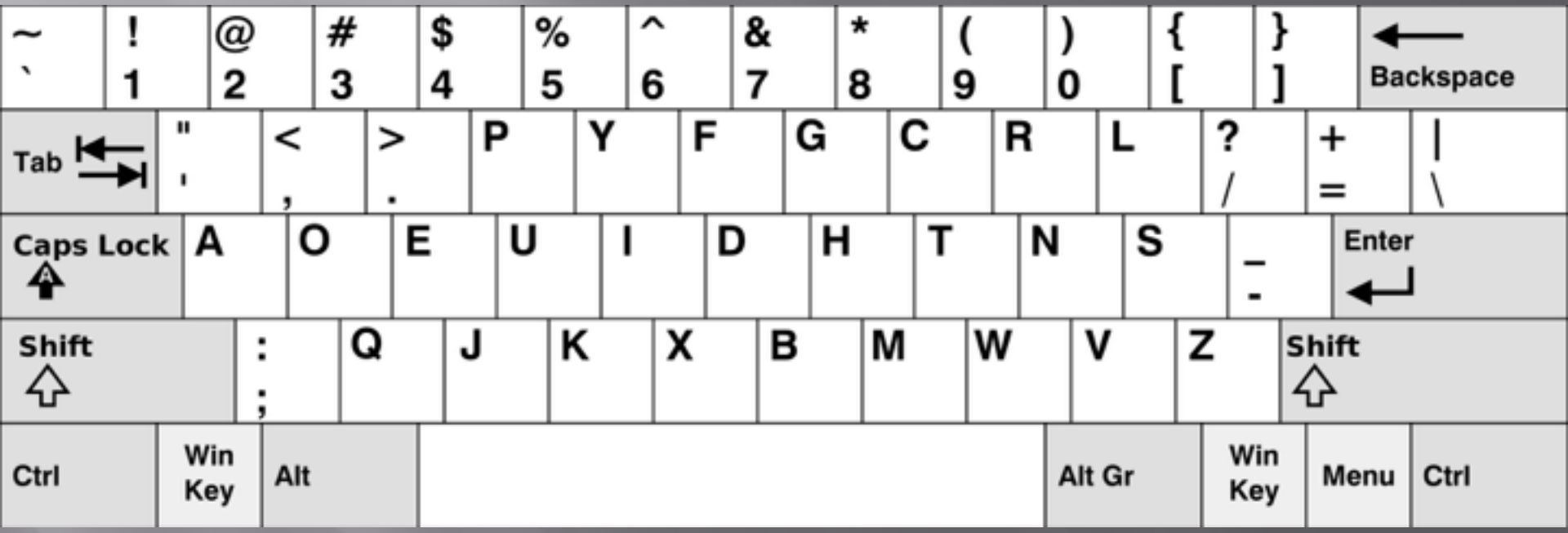
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Clinically-sound AAC

- Core vocabulary
- Consistent motor planning principles
- Library of 11,000 Smarty Symbols©
- 10 voice options
- Ability to customize vocabulary, use photos, and change pronunciation within editing functions.

So what's the difference?

Design

- 14,000 words within 2 touches
- Start with one word one touch
- Double tap directly under the main screen word to transition from one to two hits. "Vending machine phenomenon"
- Text contents of message window

Two Touch vocabulary

- Every word in Speak for Yourself is no more than two touches away!
- Secondary screens can be linked and the main screen core word is spoken by tapping the button directly under the main screen button.
- Some children were having difficulty when they had to touch more than two buttons to say a word.

What does it mean to have a "robust vocabulary?"

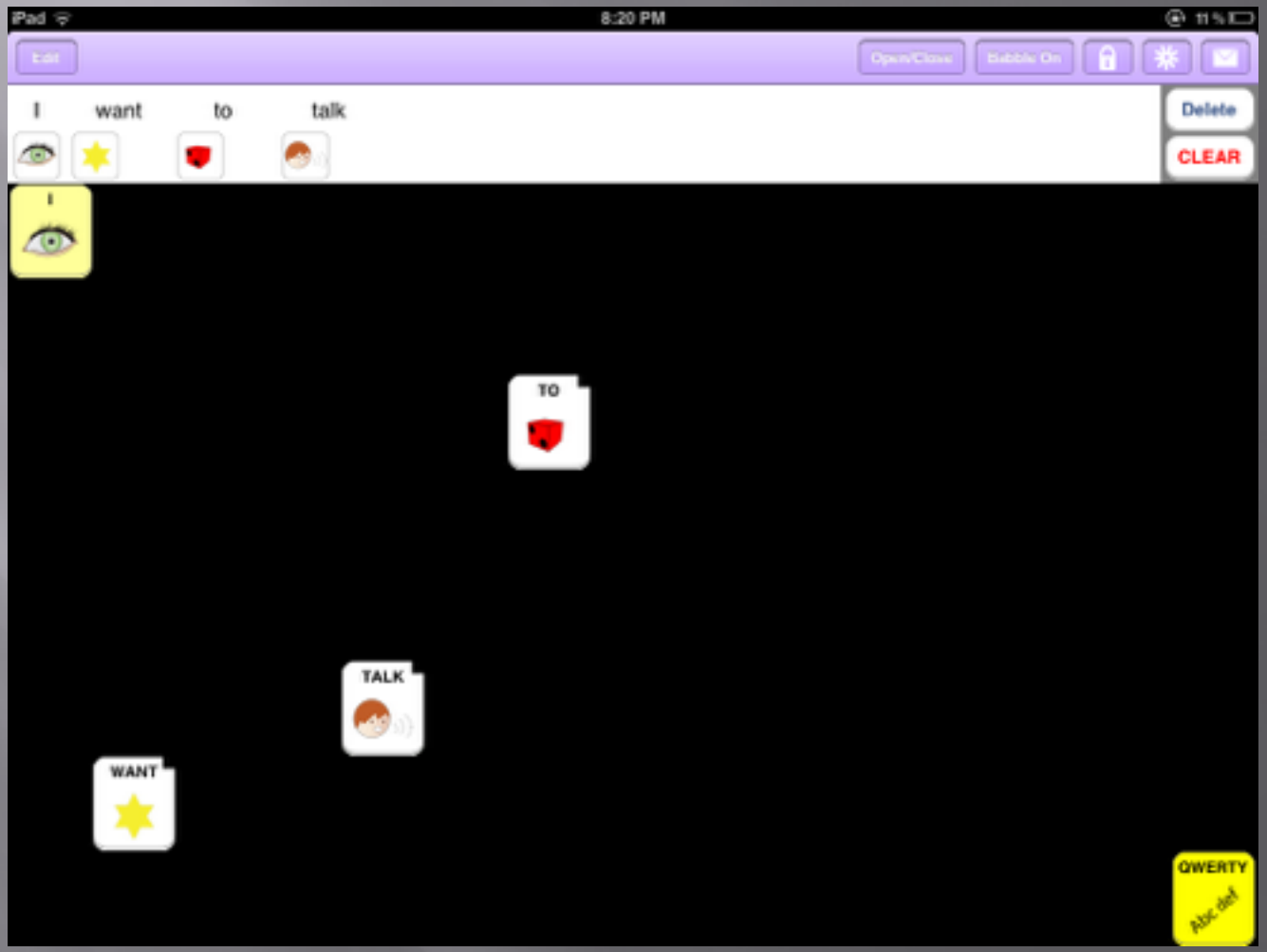
Let's brainstorm words that come to mind when I say "Raisinets"

Did you guess the word that Jess uses?

This screen is a little overwhelming!

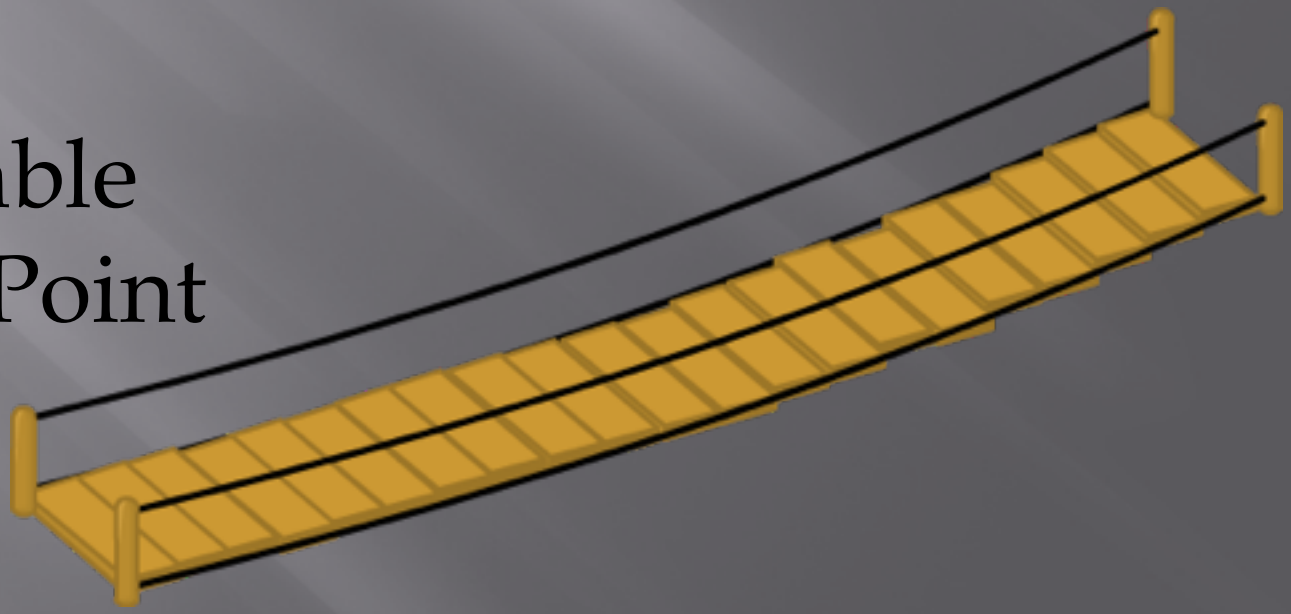
- 119 core words open:

Use *open/close* to begin with as little as one word!



How do you bridge the gap between...

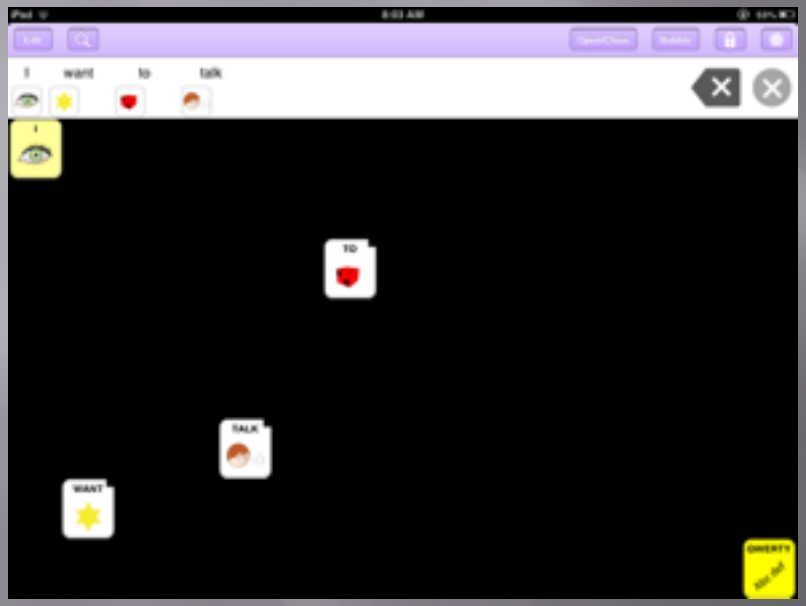
Robust Vocabulary



Manageable Starting Point

Give them a way to explore on a device that…

- Keeps the position of words consistent

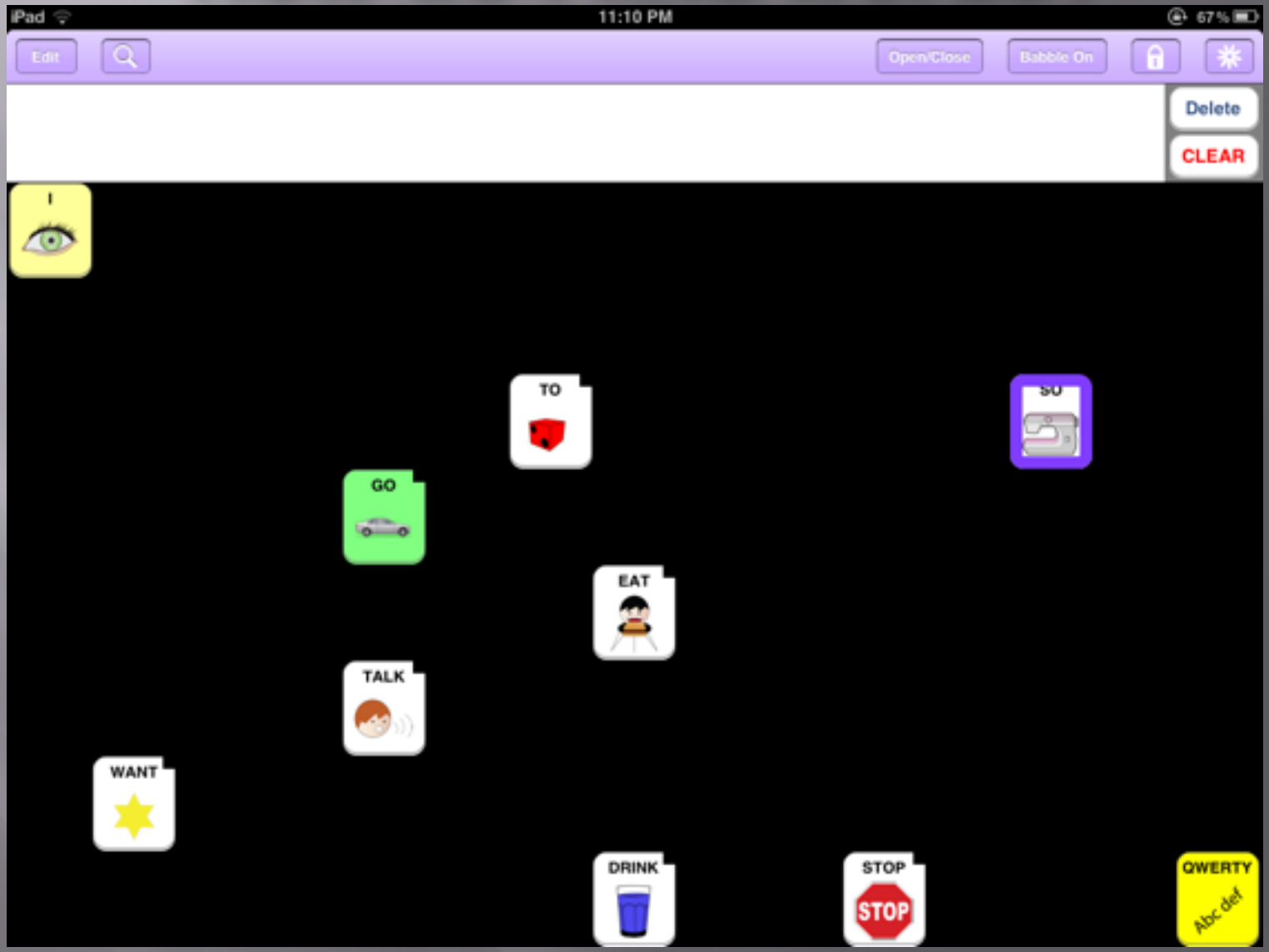


- Allows access to explore a large vocabulary.
  - Speak for Yourself has the capacity to store over 14,000 words. Almost 5,000 are pre-programmed.

Babble Feature

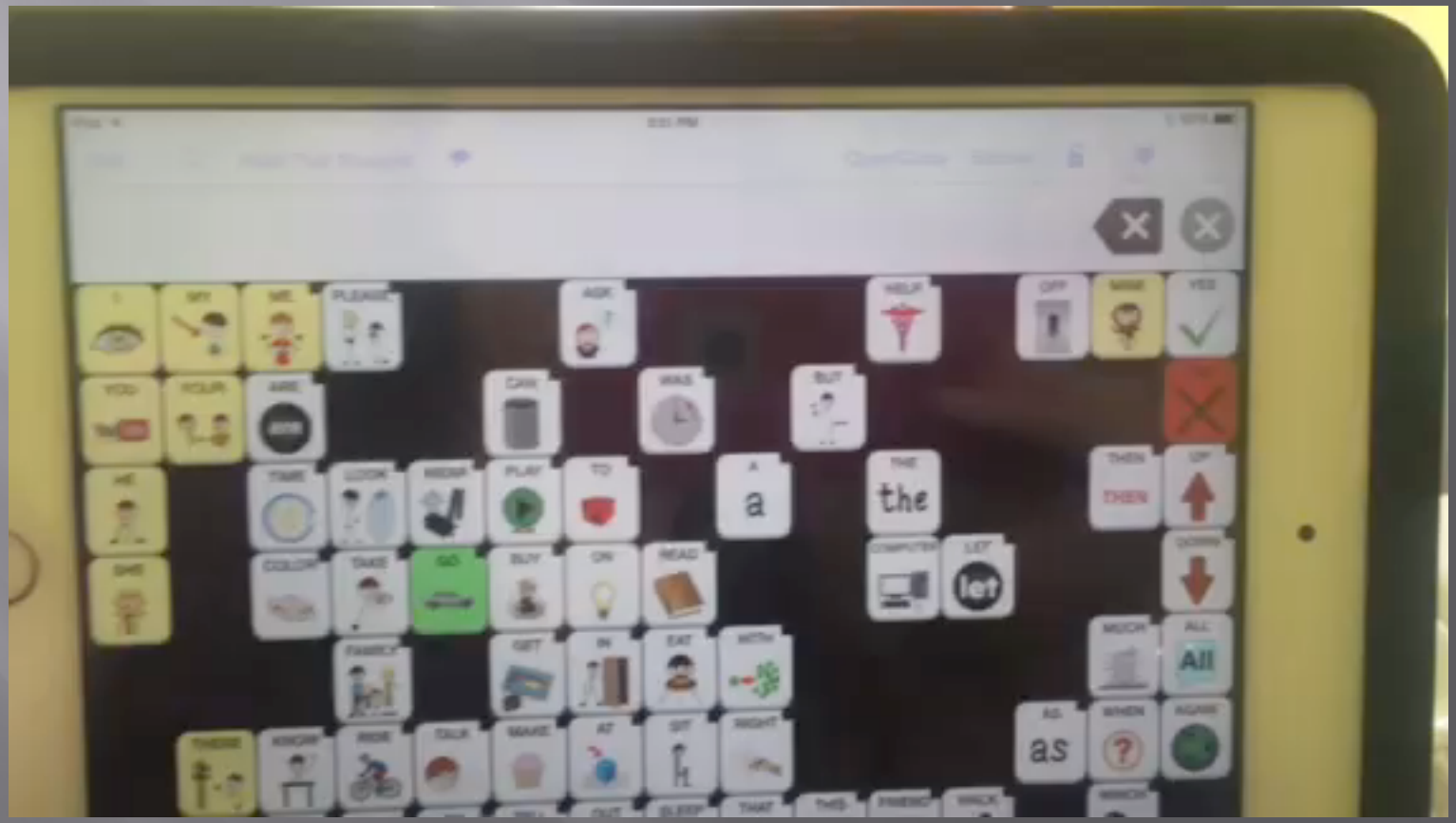
- Open all words in the app with the touch of a button.
- Return to the user's customized setting by touching the same button.
- Ability to allow student independent access to this feature.

How do I find words?



Search Feature

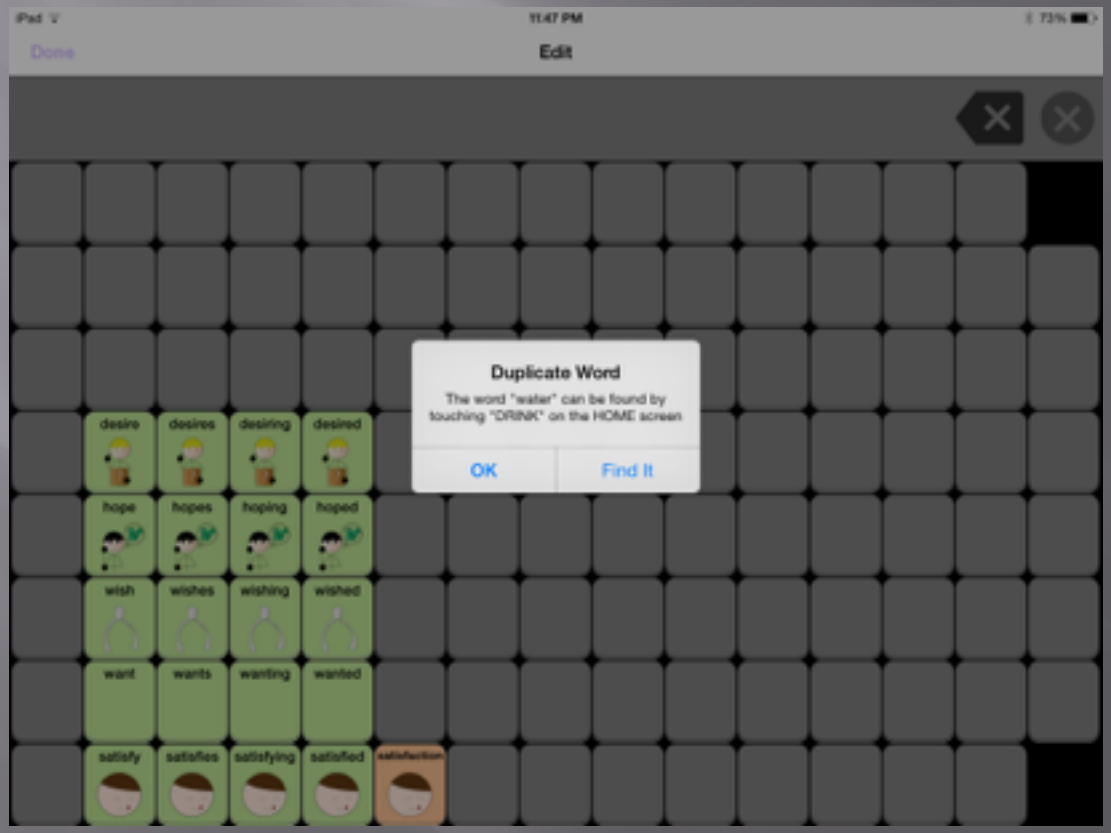
- Multi-sensory search allows for fast modeling and "hands off" prompt
- Version 1.8 introduced "Search accessible words only" option.



BATHROOM

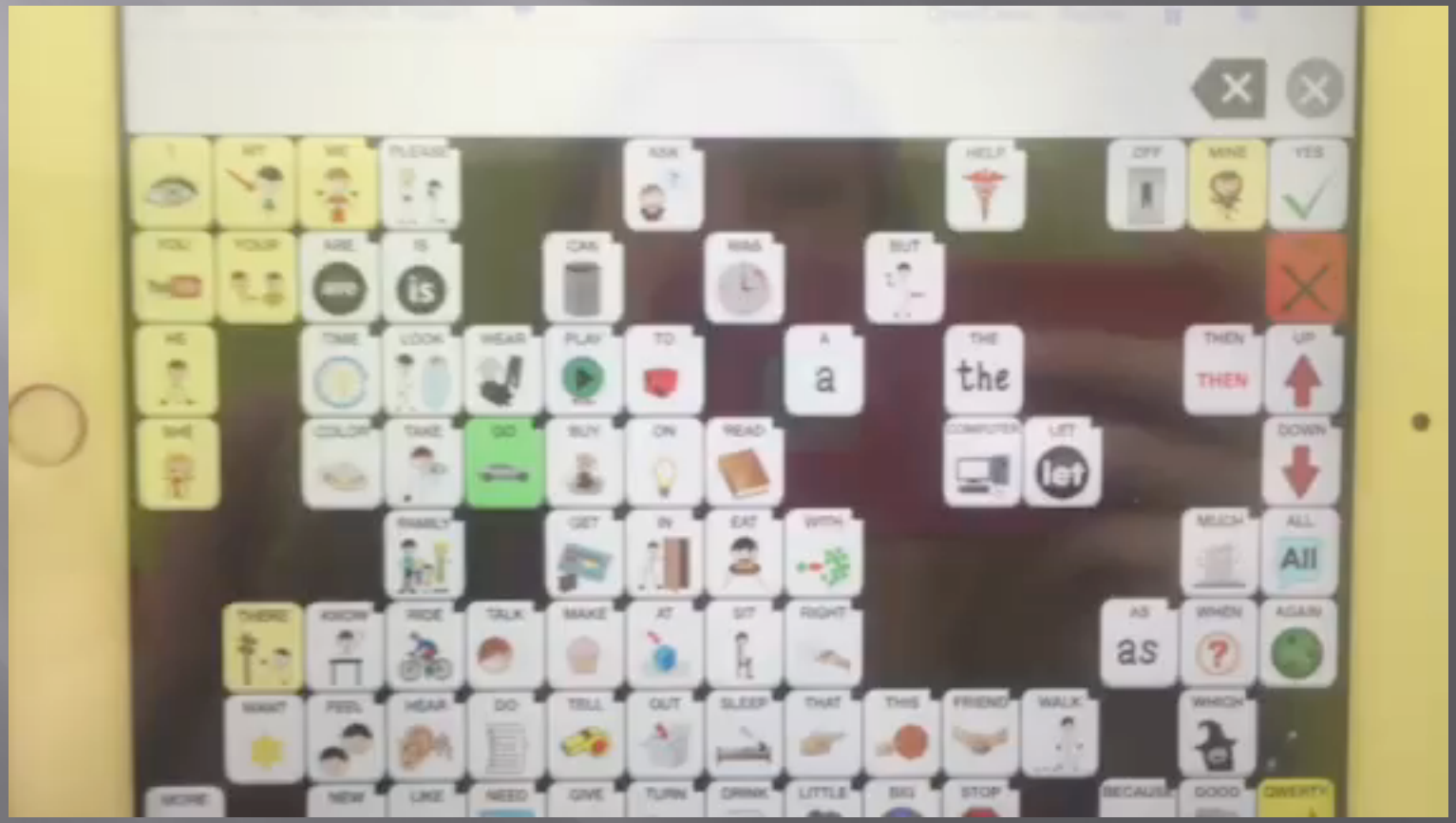
No Duplication Feature

- Once you learn to say a word, you say it the same way for the rest of your life.
- That should be true for people using a device also.



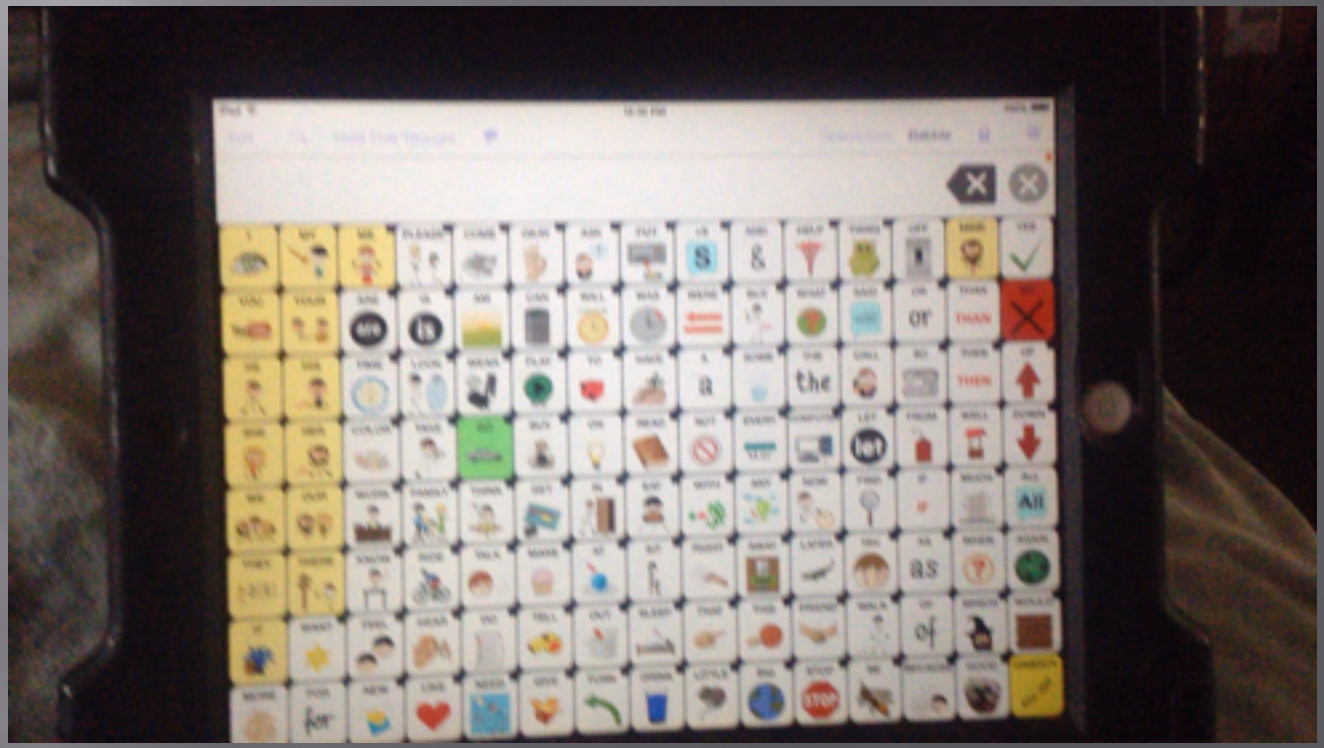
Hold that Thought

- Compose thoughts/stories to use later.
- Don't lose utterances when interrupted



7 second back up

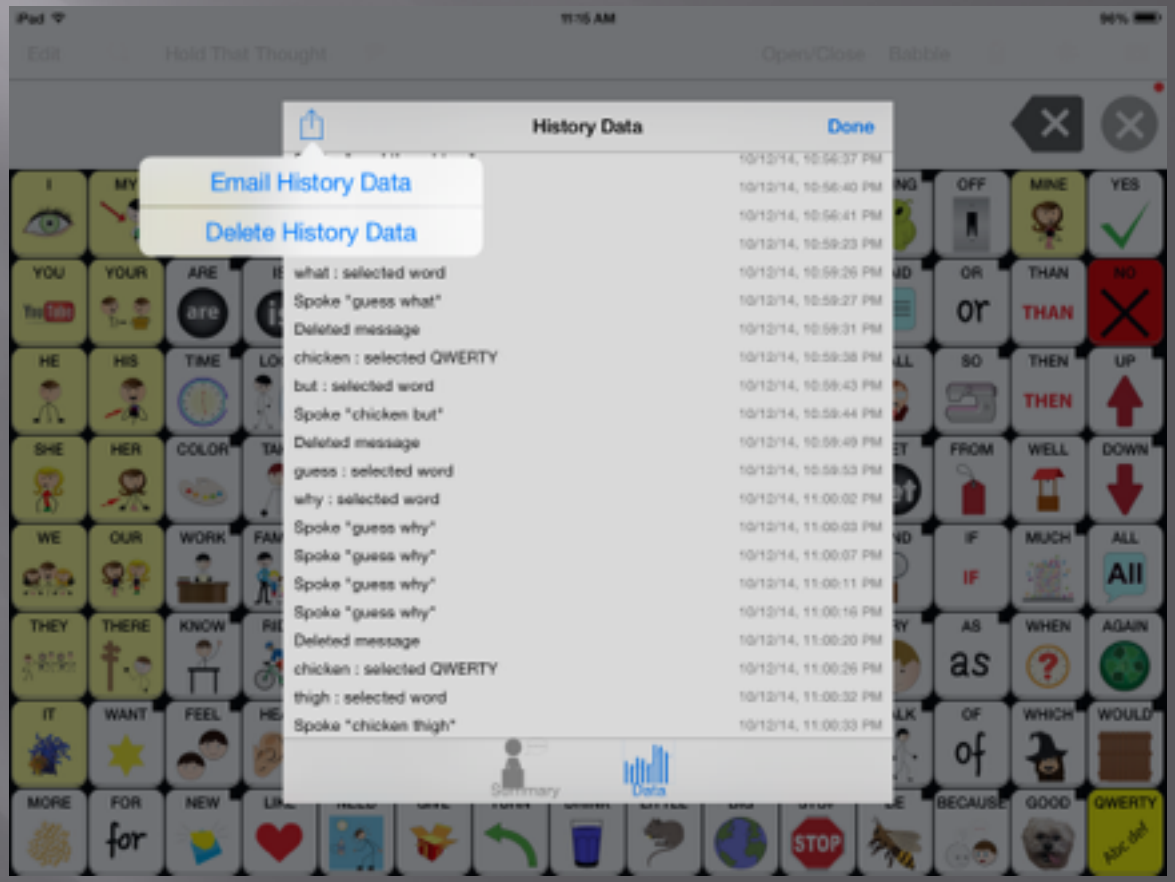
- Back up to iTunes or Dropbox in 7 seconds! (17 seconds if you have to link the Dropbox account).



History feature - part I

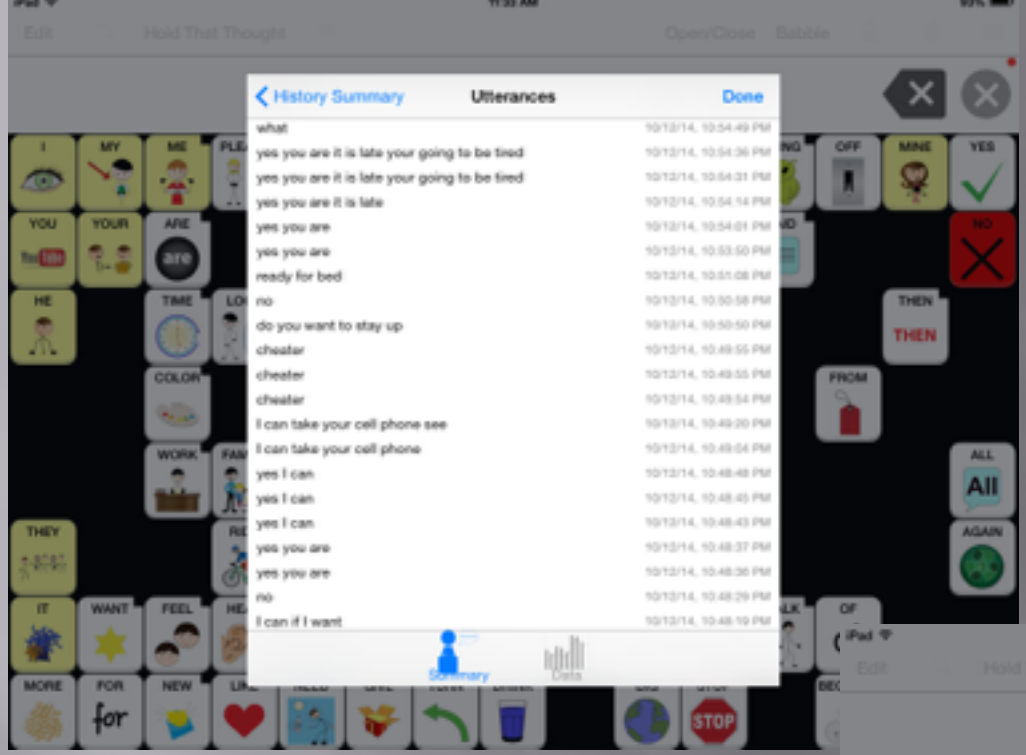
- Email raw data in CSV format - opens in Excel or Numbers

Display raw data

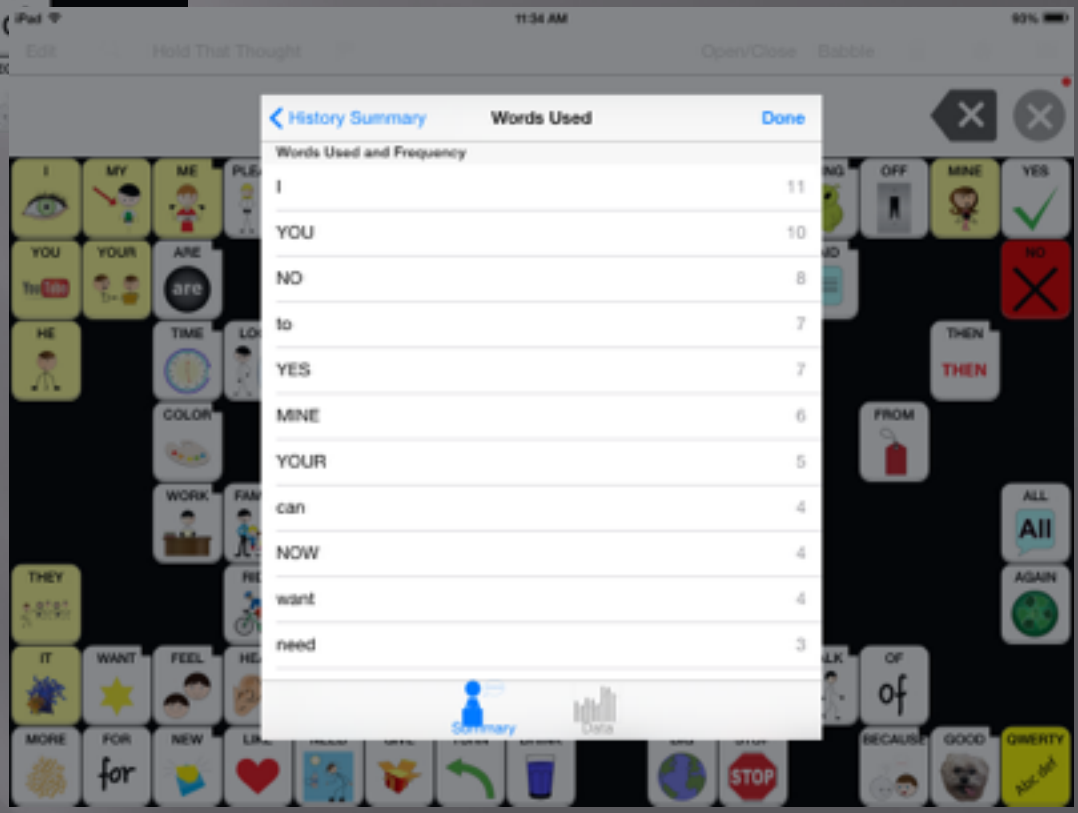


History feature - Part II

- History summary calculates MLU and communication rate
- Tracks words used and utterances...

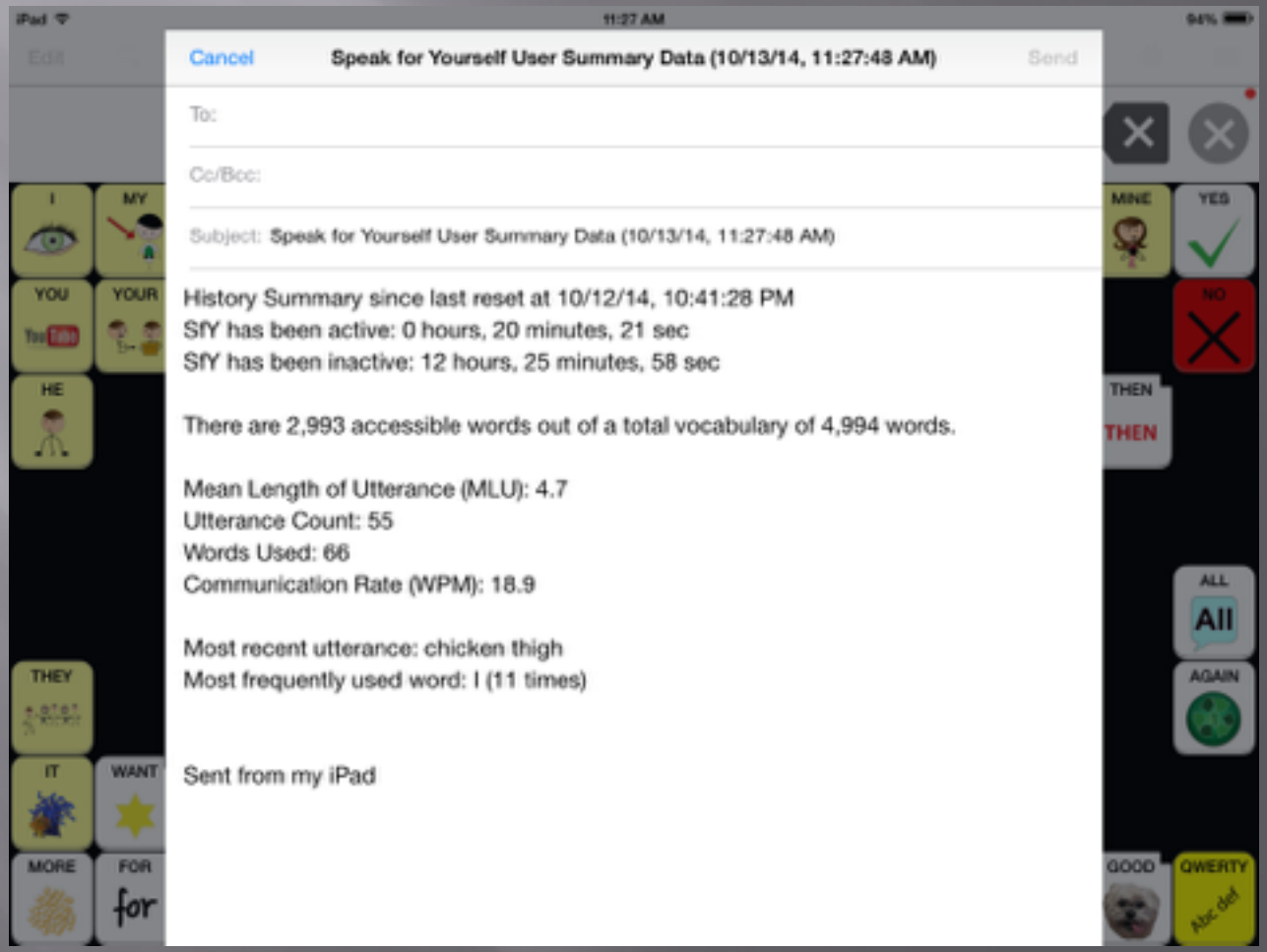


Keeps a log of date and time stamped utterances.



Tracks words used and sorts by frequency.

E-mail History Summary to parent, teacher, therapist, or yourself to track progress.



AAC support

- Join the Speak for Yourself Users Group on Facebook for support, motivation, information, and ideas!

Additional Features

- Edit and add words to personalize secondary pages.

- Voices can be changed and customized. Option to purchase Acapela Group voices through in app purchasing and is currently the only iOS app that will be support VocalID voices.

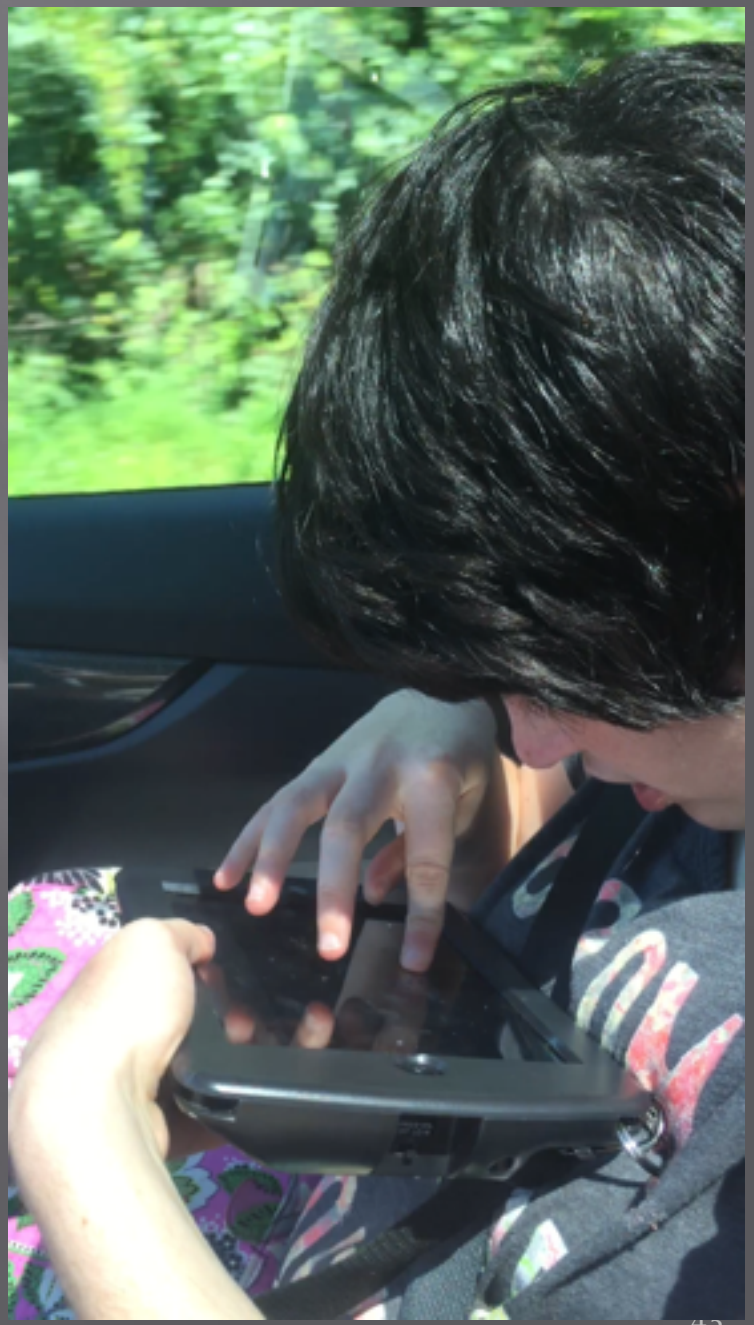
Barriers to AAC

This is great, but this child doesn't have the cognitive skills to learn such a complex system.

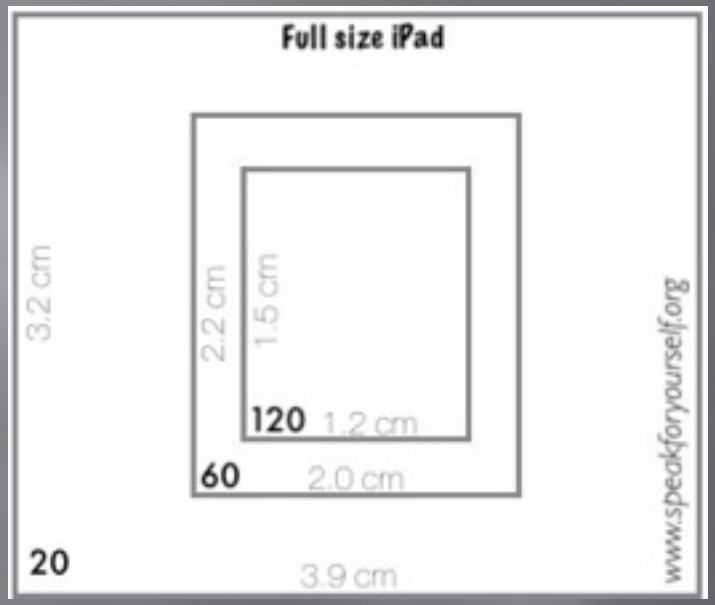
Language gives us the ability to express cognition

More words =
More likeliness that the words a child wants to say will be there.

Can you make these buttons any bigger?



Fine motor and visual issues



The Language Cost of Bigger Buttons

Number of buttons per screen*	Total potential vocabulary with one additional linked page
120	120 x 120 = 14,400
60	60 x 60 = 3,600
20	20 x 20 = 400

www.speakforyourself.org

Breaking through the barriers:
AAC Intervention Strategies

- Aided Language Input
- ReAACtion therapy
- Prompt with the LEAST intrusive, MOST effective prompt
- Accept gestures and model language on device
- Build language around the child's LOVES

Users can request...

http://youtu.be/rZAPrJu89VU

AND SOMETIMES DEVELOP VERBAL SPEECH

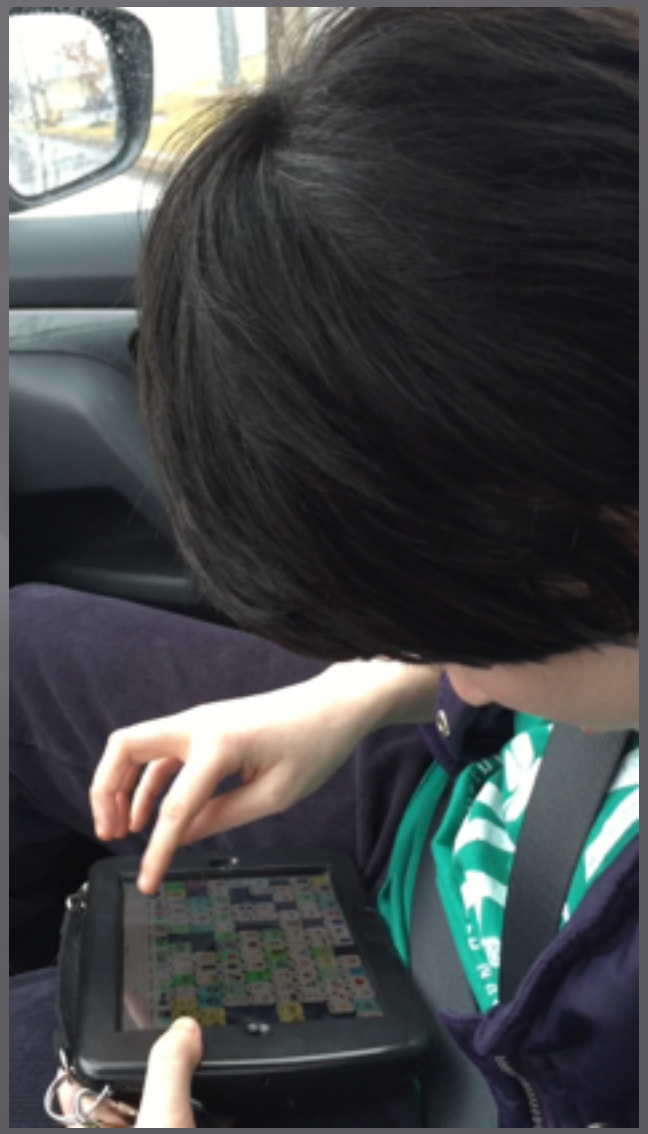
8 months later...

http://youtu.be/GeQH374Ex-4

But even if they aren't able to develop speech...

Breaking Free from the Trap

Presume Competence
Provide robust, comprehensive communication
Treat everything the student says as if it was said with intent.



If a child is not able to effectively communicate wants, needs, thoughts, ideas, feelings, knowledge, fears…

The child is a candidate for AAC.

Thank you!

Also, check out the following blogs to follow the children in the presentation:

You Don't Say AAC
Uncommon Sense Blog

Follow, Like, and Contact us!

- Like us on Facebook
- Follow us on Twitter @speak4AAC
- Contact us through our website (www.speakforyourself.org) or e-mail us at speakforyourselfaac@yahoo.com