

Teaching Core Words for AAC

Gestalt Language Processors

When teaching core words, understanding the learner's processing style is crucial. **Gestalt Language Processors** perceive language in whole patterns or chunks. They benefit from holistic, meaningful contexts, such as stories, emotions, or familiar routines, where core words are embedded in rich, engaging narratives or experiences. This approach leverages their strength in understanding language through its use in natural, real-world situations.

Step One

Introduce the core word. Show the individual where on the device they can find it and practice navigating and using the word.

Step Two

Choose an activity that can help implement the use of the core word you are targeting.

Step Three

Review the core word in a variety of contexts and track the progress of using the core word throughout the week.

Core Words

Activities

Week One:

Core Word: Play

Things We Can "Play" within a Natural Environment

- Musical instruments (e.g., drums, xylophones)
- Sports equipment (e.g., balls, frisbees)
- Pretend play sets (e.g., kitchen, doctor's kit)
- Interactive electronic devices (e.g., tablets with educational games)

GLP Activities to Work on the Core Word "Play"

- Model with Play: Use "play" during activities, e.g., "Let's play ball," modeling its use.
- Music: Integrate "play" in songs, using rhythm for easier recall.
- Story and Role-Play: Incorporate "play" in stories and role-playing for rich language exposure.
- Celebrate Communication with immersive, playful learning experiences.

Week Two:

Core Word: Off/On

Things We Can Turn "Off/On" in a Natural Environment

- Lights or lamps.
- Electronic toys.
- Tablets or computers.
- Music players.

GLP Activities to Work on the Core Word "Off/On"

- Integrate "Off/On" into routines: Use phrases like "Turn it off/on" during everyday activities involving lights, electronics, etc.
- Narrative Inclusion: Choose stories or create scenarios where characters turn items off and on, emphasizing these actions within the narrative.
- Musical Repetition: Use or create songs that include "off/on" in their lyrics, enhancing learning through musical and rhythmic repetition.
- Visual Cues: Accompany the verbal use of "off/on" with visual aids or gestures to provide context and reinforce understanding.

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**Week
Three:**

**Core Word:
Now**



Things We Can Do “Now” in a Natural Environment

- Starting or stopping play activities.
- Opening or closing objects immediately.
- Eating snacks or reading books at this moment.



GLP Activities to Work on the core word “Now”

- Immediate Action Games: Use games that require immediate responses, emphasizing “now” to signal action.
- Routine Integration: Embed “now” in daily routines, like “It’s time to eat now,” for contextual learning.
- Musical Cues: Incorporate songs with “now” in the lyrics, using music for natural repetition and learning.
- Visual Timers: Use visual timers for activities, discussing what happens “now” when the timer ends.

**Week
Four:**

**Core Word:
Look**



Things We Can “Look” at in a Natural Environment

- Animals or insects.
- Different types of vehicles.
- Various plants or flowers.
- Cloud shapes in the sky.



GLP Activities to Work on the Core Word “Look”

- Incorporate “look” in daily routines and play, using natural phrases like “Look at this!” to draw attention to objects or actions.
- Use visually stimulating books with repetitive phrases involving “look,” encouraging them to point and identify objects together.
- Engage in observation-based activities, like watching clouds or exploring the environment, emphasizing “look” to focus attention.
- Sing and move to songs or rhymes that include “look,” enhancing engagement through music and movement.