**Handout 1: AAC Message Selection Examples**

Sample Activity Routine: “Morning Meeting”

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| --- | --- |
| **Messages Types/Examples** | **Possible Communication Use(s)** |
| **Names** * Classmates’ names
* Staff names
* Reference to self/“me”)
 | * Take Attendance
* Call on Peers to report about what happened at home
* Choose a person to sit next to or select a favorite song for the meeting
* Get another person’s attention
* Respond to “Who has [Name of calendar activity] today?”
 |
| **Sequencing Vocabulary*** Right now
* Next/Later
* Finished
 | * Respond to partners about the calendar activities for the day
* Start/End conversation about activities
* Report/Announce activities for the day
 |
| **Comments** * Cool!
* No way
* I LOVE it
 | * Follow-up with peers’ responses
* Comment in response to, “What do you think about it?”
* Interject/Interrupt during the meeting!
 |
| **Actions** * Go/Stop
* Give/Get
* Stand up/Sit down
 | * Lead group morning stretches or sensory routines (request actions)
* Lead a turn-taking therapy ball, massager, bolster, or rocker activity
 |
| **Descriptors** * Smooth/Rough
* Loud/Soft
* Big/Little
 | * “Quiz” peers in opposites (“I say up, you say…”)
* Give directions during functional tasks
* Describe preferred activities
 |
| **Social Phrases*** What’s up?
* Yo!
* See ya
* My/Your turn
 | * Start, continue, or end conversations
* Get attention of a nearby person
* Take turns
 |

**AAC Assessment is Dynamic:**

Communication messages (and the reasons for those messages) can change depending on the environment/context or partner. When considering messages to include in a student’s AAC system, ask yourself:

* ***What are the student’s “verbal” peers able to express within specific environments?***
* ***Are there opportunities where the student misses turns or opportunities to respond because he/she has no way to do so?***
* ***What kinds of messages would increase independence and initiation?***

**AAC assessment is ongoing:**

Once you have selected messages to include in a system, ask yourself:

* ***Is the message something the student is motivated to communicate (will the student be excited to initiate the message)?***
* ***Is the message understandable to the student’s peers?***
* ***Is the message appropriate for the student’s age/gender?***
* ***Does the message have the potential to be used frequently within social interactions?***
* ***Is the student using messages for a variety of reasons, not just requesting?***