

EYE GAZE TOPIC SETTER PAGE

(Musselwhite, 2004)

PURPOSE: This light tech strategy is designed for eye gaze users who want to be able to quickly set topics with familiar conversational partners. Once the topic is set, the two can engage in successful 20 Questions. It is ideas for individuals who spend time not in ideal positioning, and therefore might not be able to access high tech devices at all times of the day.

SAMPLE EYE GAZE TOPIC SETTER PAGE:

family PEOPLE friends	travel ALPHABET emotions	medical CARE bathroom
homework CLASSES phone		books/mags MUSIC videos/movies
clothing FOOD shopping	news POLITICS newspaper	sports COMPUTER weather

SAMPLE SITUATIONS: This strategy is designed for the following situations:

- 1) user and communication partner both can read labels on the display
- 2) user and partner know each other well, so partner can follow up on topic set by user
- 3) user has a consistent eye gaze, and can indicate which of the three choices s/he wants

for example:

- eye point + blink = center item;
- eye point + look up = top item
- eye point + look down = bottom item

MINI CASE EXAMPLE:

Penny is a 14 year old girl who uses a Vanguard communication device (Prentke Romich Company). Her skill in device use has grown considerably during the past two years. However, because of hip problems, Penny needs to spend several hours a day in positions other than her power chair. When she is lying on a beanbag chair, in a sidelyer, etc. she is not able to access her device successfully. Her Mom, Aunt Cinda, and occupational therapist, Glenda are all know Penny, her friends, and her activities quite well. They are all successful players at the 20 Questions game . . . but only if they know what topic Penny wants to discuss! Using the eye gaze topic setter is a 'quick and dirty' way for Penny to be able to specify a topic for her partners, who then follow up with questions. For example, today Penny indicated 'videos / movies' to her Mom. Mom followed up with . . . "Want to watch a video?" Penny closed her eyes to signify NO. Mom: "Want to talk about a movie?" Penny: NO. Mom: "Want to go see a movie?" Penny: vocalized to indicate YES. Mom began listing off movies that were currently playing - the fourth selection was it! They negotiated a time to go the next week.

TIPS:

Note the tips for use on the accompanying eye gaze topic setter page. Other tips include:

- 1) Print the page two times, and double-side symbols, so the partner knows the message chosen (that is: the cell with 'family / PEOPLE / friends' should be the same on the front and the back of the display).
- 2) If using a plastic card holder (e.g., one that holds baseball or Pokemon cards), cut out the center section. It's easier to read the eye gaze with the center cell gone.
- 3) Change the messages as needed for the individual user. For example, this was set up for an adult who was interested in politics and the news. That might be irrelevant to a teen!