

Attribute Meaning to AAC

Give Me Bones, and I'll Make Soup!

WHAT: When a typically developing 9-month old says 'bah' parents jump to assign meaning. "You want your: Bottle? Baby? Boppy?" Unfortunately, when students explore their AAC systems, just 'hitting buttons' we often assume that they don't know, rather than recognizing this as exploration and giving helpful feedback. See this video for a great explanation! <http://yourcpf.org/expert-videos/intro-to-aac/>

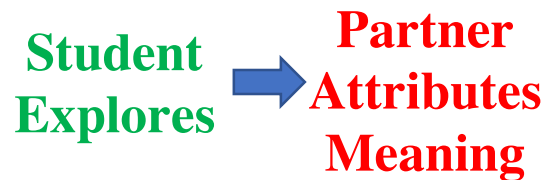
WHY ATTRIBUTE MEANING? We do this naturally with students who are developing speech. If we attribute meaning for people who are learning AAC:

- It sends a message of competence
- We can help students learn what words or phrases mean in that context
- We encourage students to use their AAC systems!

HOW TO SUPPORT BY ATTRIBUTING

MEANING: Just remember back to listening to children babble and trying to think of possible meanings. Have fun with it! If the student says anything that could possibly be meaningful in the situation, go with it. Ex: It's snack time and the student hits WHAT. You say WHAT are we having? Goldfish!

Then expand: YOU LIKE Goldfish!



PLAY 'NAME THAT MEANING'! We have had great fun with this at camp, in classrooms, and at workshops. Here's how to play:

- Set up the context: "We're having snack"; "They're listening to music"; "We're waiting for the bus."
Think of situations that happen in your class or home.
- One or more people use an AAC system and share any message (ex: HELP; MORE; IT; YUCK; WHERE; SILLY)
- Partners have to try to attribute meaning. You'll be amazed how much easier it gets with practice!



Set Context

Student Explores

Partner Attributes
Meaning

Read these samples, then add your own!

Context	Student Says	Partner Attributes Meaning!
Waiting for the bus	WANT GET	I think you WANT to GO home! Did you GET your backpack? Yes!
Doing art	CAN COME EAT	CAN I HELP you? Yes I CAN! We could ask Jacob to COME LOOK! COME LOOK Jacob! NOT quite time to EAT yet. And we can't EAT THAT paint!
Reading a book	PUT DO ALL	Oh, should I PUT THAT in writing? WHAT are they DOing? Let's read MORE. Yep. We have to read ALL of this!
Science Experiment	GO DIFFERENT MAKE	We should GO ahead and PUT it IN? Right. This might be DIFFERENT! Yeah. WHAT are we going to MAKE?

REMEMBER: Models should be short. They should only be 1-2 words more than the student is using. So, if the student uses 1 word, we should attribute meaning with 2-3 words!

Model with 'core' words or words that are personally meaningful.

This blog tells what core words are:

<http://coreword.assistiveware.com/t/resource-list-for-core-words/218>