

Collaborative Books #2

Choosing Images Using AAC

WHAT? Collaborative book writing refers to a shared writing activity in which adults work with students who use AAC and are emergent writers to compose books to be shared with others. These books might be shared:

- In classrooms;
- With family members;
- On public sites, such as Tarheel Reader (<https://tarheelreader.org>).

WHY CREATE COLLABORATIVE BOOKS? See *Collaborative Books 1: Creating Books to Share*. www.aacintervention.com Tip # 4, 2021.

WHO IS THIS FOR? This part of collaborative book writing is for students who are not able to point to select images. They will use their AAC systems to select images. For students who are more beginning device users, partners use partner-assisted scanning to help students select an image from a small set, then model ways that the student could use the language on their systems to indicate the same image. The strategies learned can be used for many other life opportunities, such as directing a partner to choose clothing, directing in the choice of a book, etc.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN: Support students in using their AAC devices to direct partners in choosing images. These examples are related to choosing images using Tar Heel Reader (<https://tarheelreader.org/write>).

Use Describing Words. Often a describing word can help us distinguish between possible images. Use the strategies that are described in the 'Clue Game' in *Guessing Games! AAC Games – Learning Through Laughter* (Musselwhite and Howard, 2021, pp. 19 – 28). Also see *Describe It* (Willis, 2015) and *Expanding Expressions Tool* (Modern Speechie).

Sample categories that can help are:

Size: big, little, tall, short, wide.

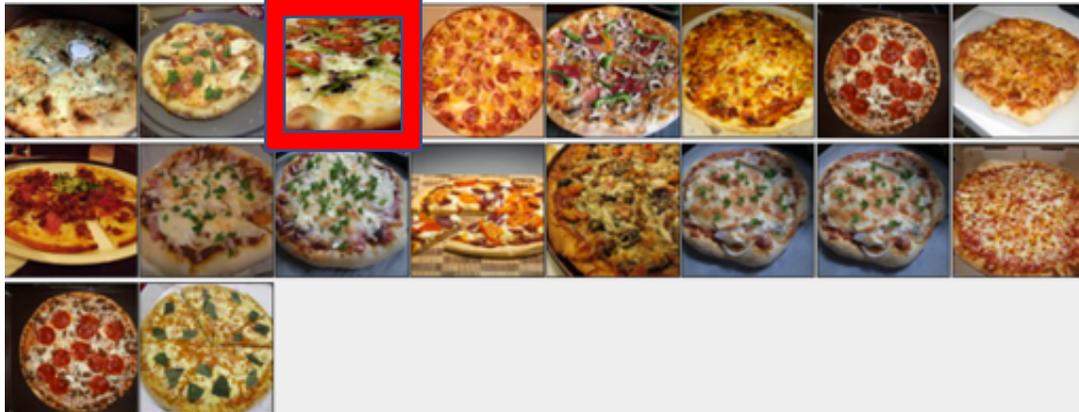
Color: For example, one student used the color PINK to choose the bird he wanted to illustrate his story.

Shape: Eliana used RECTANGLE to indicate the necklace that was the best 'fit' for her story.

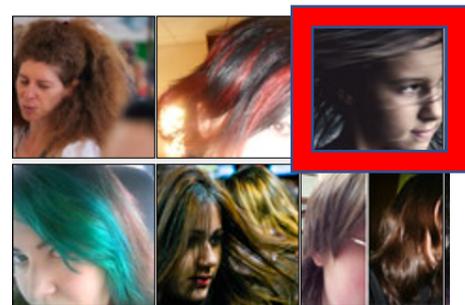


Use Prepositions. Sometimes, directional words are perfect for helping a partner know which image is desired. For example, when shown several ducks to include in a book, one student used the word TOWARD. She then responded YES to the clarifying question "So, you want the duck going TOWARD the water, right?"

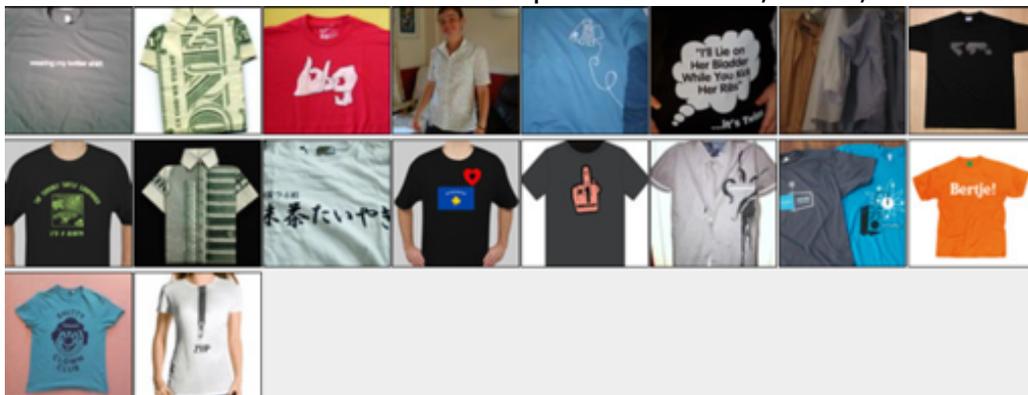
Use Specific Directional Words and/or Numbers. Some students know very specific words on their AAC system, and can quickly nail down the direction. Sample helpful words include: TOP, BOTTOM, RIGHT, LEFT, UP, DOWN, etc. For example, given the pizza selections shown below, the student could say: TOP, 3.



Make a Connection. Sometimes describing words and/or directional words just aren't enough. For example, we were selecting an image for the sentence 'I like my hair.' The student said SISTER and we easily selected a photo that looked a bit like her sister (face and hair). The student confirmed that we had made the correct selection.



Combine Strategies. With time, students can learn to combine these strategies to quickly target the chosen image. For example, using the set below, the partner asked "Which row?". The student responded MIDDLE, DARK, HEART.



References.

Musselwhite, C. & Howard, K. *Guessing Games! AAC Games: Learning through laughter.* <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Caroline-Musselwhite>

The Modern Speechie. Expanding Expressions Tool Visual Organizer and Activity. <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/The-Modern-Speechie>

Willis, S., a.k.a., Speech MaterialGirl. (2015). *Describe It: Visual Prompts.* <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech-Materialgirl>

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