



# The Communication Matrix



Friday, March 23, 2012

Karen Natoci Florka, M.S., CCC  
Speech & Language Pathologist  
Wing Lake Developmental Center  
Bloomfield Hills Schools District



# ASHA Disclosures

I completed training through level IV with the Design-to-Learn Project with Philip Schweigert in 2005. This goal of this presentation is to review the Communication Matrix Profile so that you may feel comfortable administering it to your pre-symbolic students. I have purchased the copies that you have and received written (email) permission to copy enough for this conference. I am not employed by the Design-to-Learn Project and am not receiving any compensation for this presentation.



# Assumptions:

- ➔ Little or no experience with students with severe and multiple disabilities on your caseload,
- ➔ This is a beginning, early intermediate level course
- ➔ Goal is to help you get started with these kids on your caseload
- ➔ Careful not to over or under-estimate what these kids can do!



# Agenda:

## **Frame Communication Development**

- Focus on Pre-symbolic Communication

## **Complex Students**

- Profiles of complex students in the classroom
- Co-morbidities seen
- Current approaches and IEP goals

## **Communication Matrix on line-FREE!**

## **Look at the Levels (emphasis on presymbolic)**

- Greater depth
- Clinical direction



# Characteristics of our “Complex Students”

















# Where do I start?

What do I do?

Can this child learn?

What IEP objectives are appropriate?

Child not  
interested?

What evaluation tools are  
available?

Overwhelmed

How do I deliver services to this child?

Can this child hear?

Doesn't follow directions







“hit the switch”





# The Communication Matrix

Rowland, 2004



design  
TO LEARN



# Philosophy

Everyone Communicates!



# Everyone Communicates

- ➔ It is our job to figure out how & shape communication so that our students can interact with more people.....



## Philosophy:

- ➔ School is an important base for recognition of developing communication throughout the day, not just during speech time.
- ➔ Parents can assist us in *figuring out* how their child communicates with familiar & unfamiliar partners.



## Philosophy, continued:

- ➔ We need administrative & related services support to establish a building-wide view of communication importance,
- ➔ We're going to think small, not too big, so as not to get overwhelmed,
- ➔ Think of communication as being situation specific,
- ➔ Think of incidental opportunities too, beyond the "I want" activities!
- ➔ Communication Enhancement



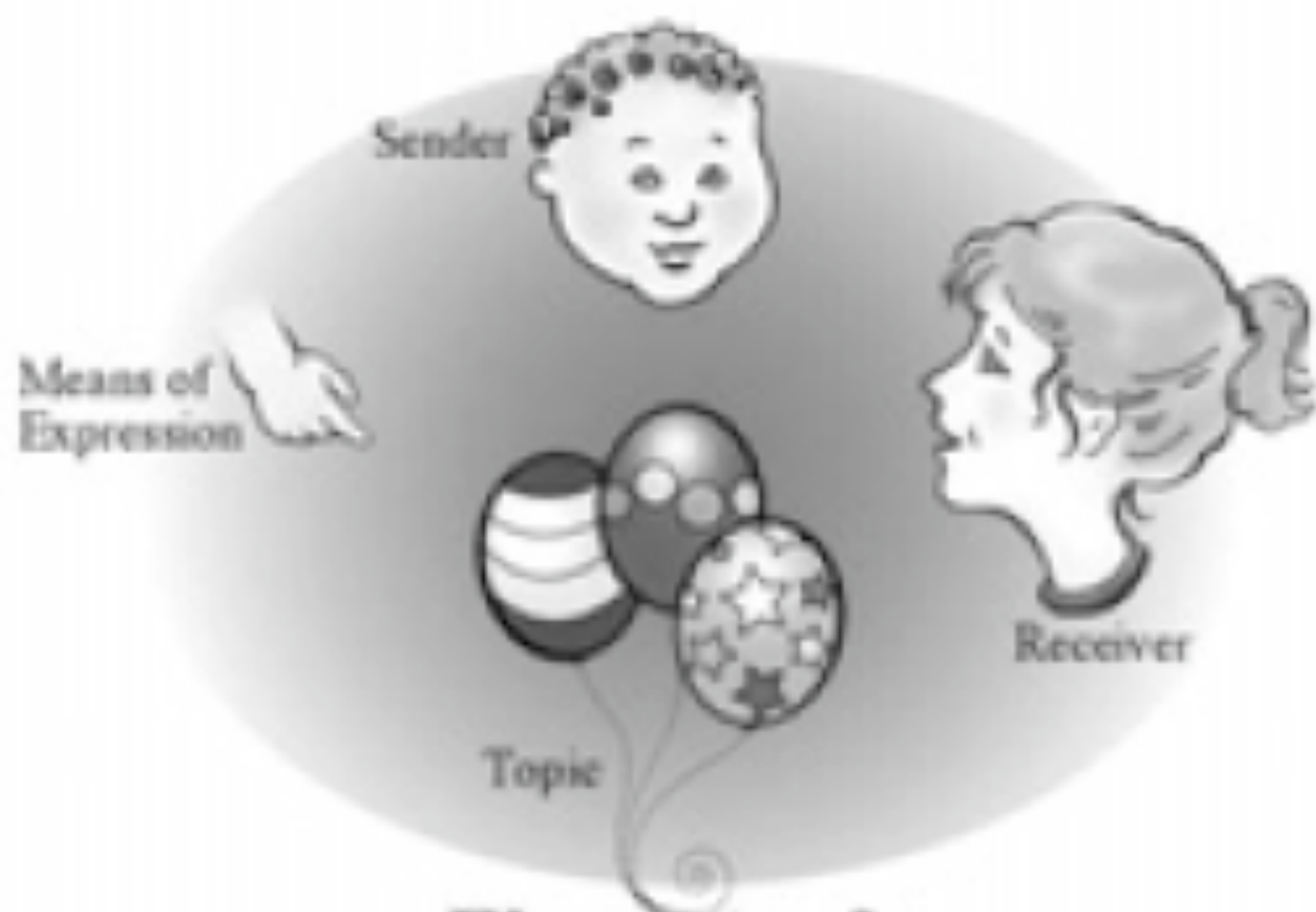
# Analysis of Communication

## ➔ Involves:

- Social (people)
- Cognition,
- Vision,
- Hearing,
- Central and Peripheral Nervous System
- Anatomy

## ➔ Elements of Communication

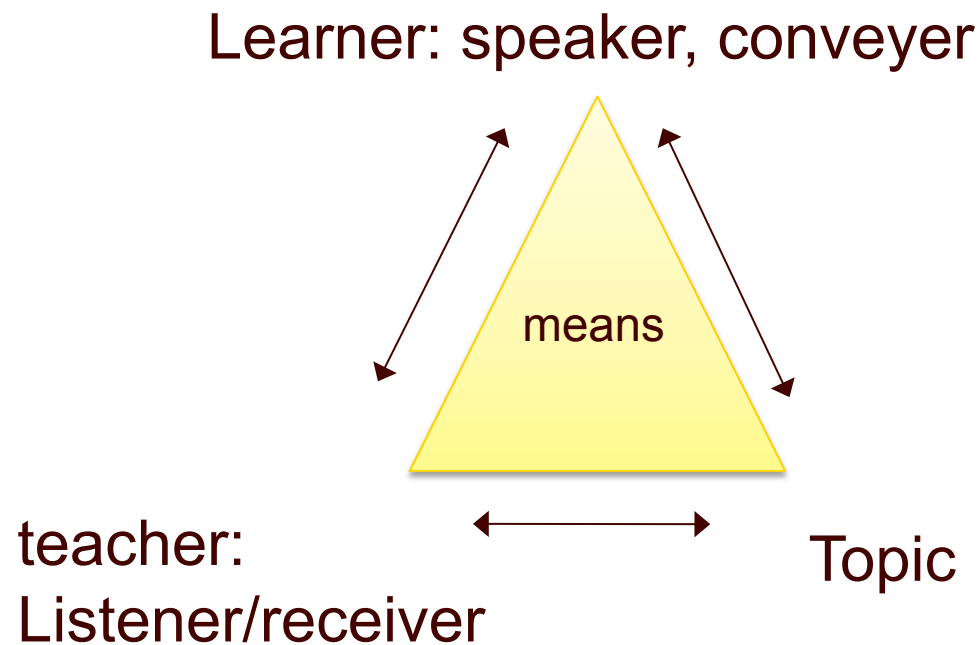
- The SENDER
- The RECEIVER
- The TOPIC
- The Means of EXPRESSION
- INTENT of the speaker



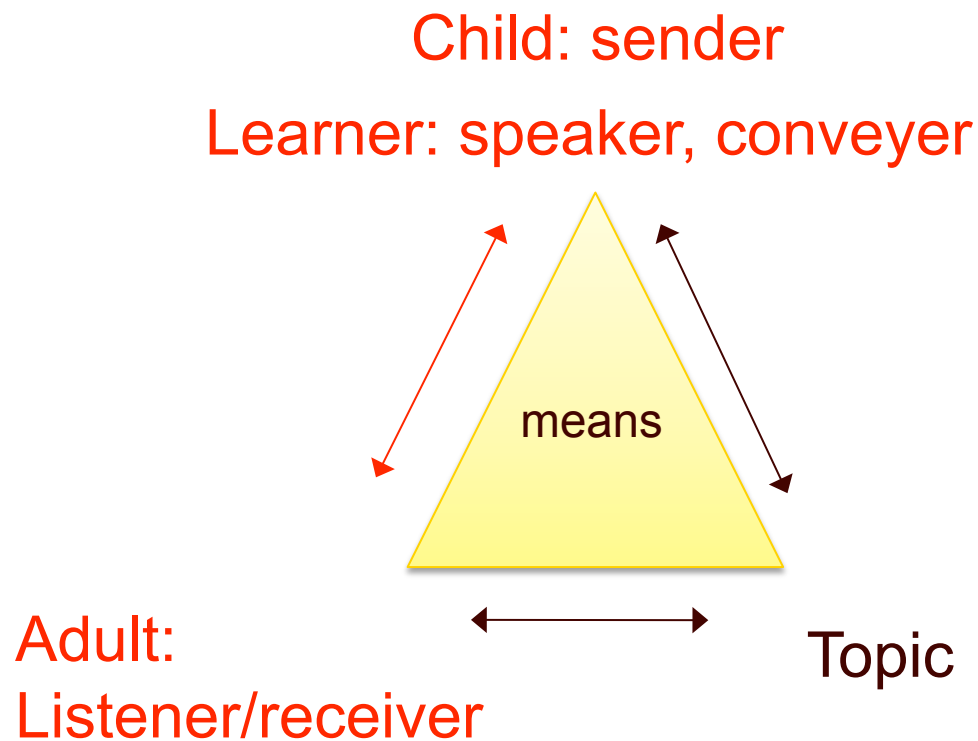
**Elements of a  
Communicative Exchange**



# Triangle of Communication

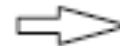
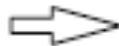
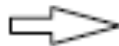


# Development using this model



# How Expressive Communication Develops:

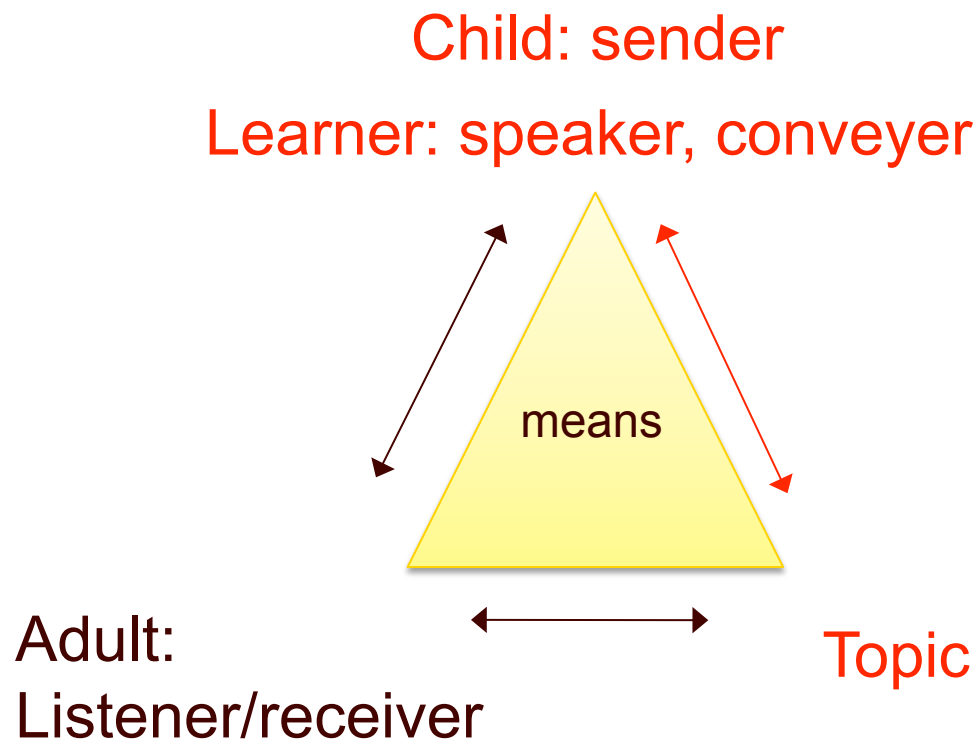
Progressive distancing between sender & receiver:



Pre-symbolic

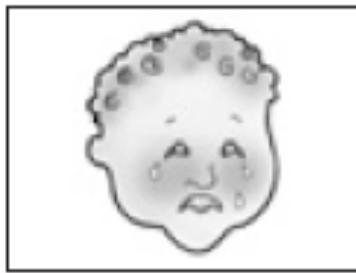
symbolic

# Development using this model



# How Expressive Communication Develops:

Progressive distancing between child & the topic itself:



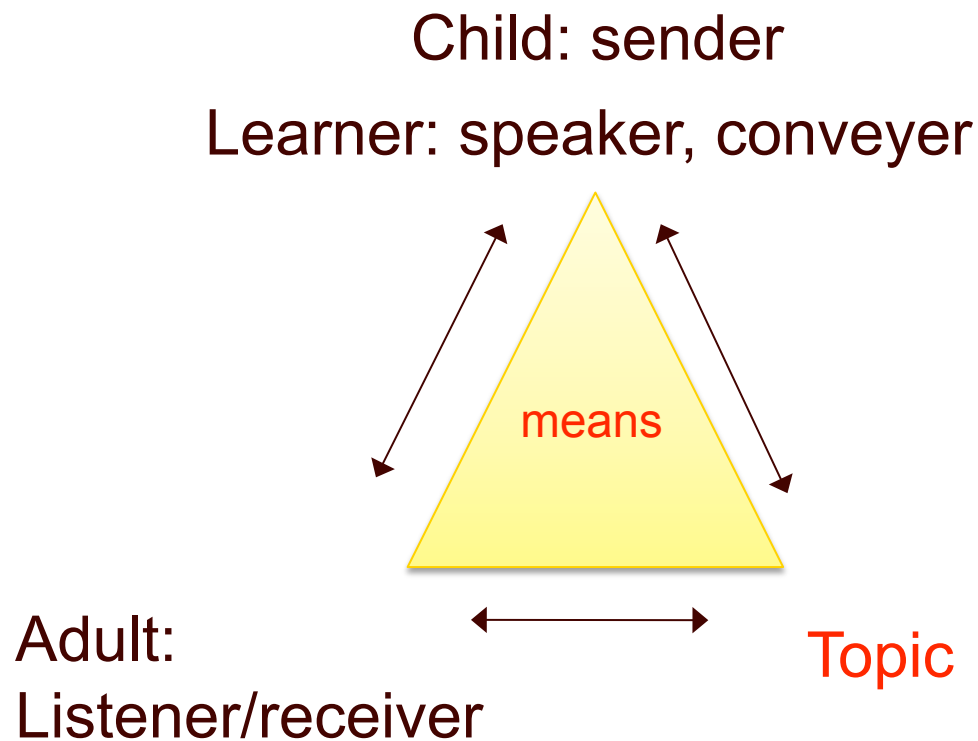
“Self-topics”  
or internal  
states

topics related to  
self

“doggie!”

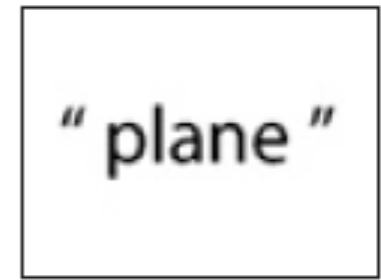
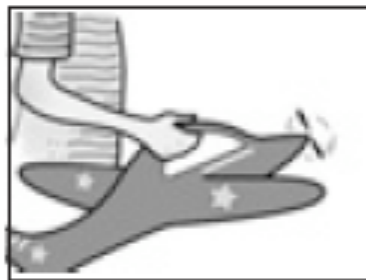
“Daddy at  
work”

# Development using this model



## How Expressive Communication Develops:

Progressive distancing or increase in level of ABSTRACTION between topic of expression and the means of which to express it:



Direct physical  
contact between  
topic & child

Gestures, point  
or vocalize  
sound of plane

Phonologic or  
written  
representation



## Common Characteristics of Individuals who Struggle with Speech

- Rarely initiate interactions,
- Primarily respond to others' initiations, (responders rather than initiators)
- Usually communicate via multiple unconventional modes— use fast, efficient and unusual behaviors only recognizable by those who know them,
- Communication attempts depend on a “knowledgeable other”
- Unintelligible vocalizations are common,
- Rarely interact with peers,
- Vocabulary not available when they really need to communicate.





## Partner Characteristics: Communication Interaction Style or, WHAT DO WE DO?

- We tend to dominate the interactions,
- We preempt the augmented communicator's turn,
- We don't give the AAC user time to formulate messages,
- We often fail to respond to their initiations,
- We often anticipate their needs, making it unnecessary for them to communicate!
- We use rhetorical speech for which answers are not being solicited,
- We use "fills" and "tags" which obscure the meaning of the message (complicate it) and cancel the intended effect,
- We double state their messages and repeat them as if their speech didn't count,
- Here's a big one: We say "good job" in response to any attempt to communicate at all which is inappropriate.
- Overall unbalanced communication.

# Communication Matrix



## A communication skill assessment

- ... for individuals at the earliest stages of communication development
- ... for individuals who use any form of communication, including pre-symbolic or alternative and augmentative forms

Charity Rowland, Ph.D.  
©1990, 1996, 2004



Also available in a  
parent-friendly  
version



# What is The Communication Matrix?



Assessment Tool:

Pinpoint how a person is communicating,

Provide a framework for determining communication goals.

First published in 1990 and then revised in 1996, 2004 by Dr. Charity Rowland of Oregon Health and Science University.



## Parent Version of the Communication Matrix



A new version was developed especially for parents in 2004. This newer version is designed to be more "user friendly". It is available for purchase (in English and Spanish) through [www.designtolearn.com](http://www.designtolearn.com).





# Target Population

- Appropriate for individuals of all ages who are at the earliest stages of communication.
- In a typically developing child: 0-24 months of age.
- Accommodates any type of communicative behavior including augmentative and alternative forms and presymbolic communication (gestures, facial expressions, eye gaze and body movement.)
- Appropriate for individuals who experience any type or degree of disability, including severe and multiple disabilities including intellectual limitations and sensory and/or physical impairment.
- NOT suitable for individuals who already use some form of language meaningfully and fluently.



## Communication Functions: (The Communication Matrix)

- 4 REASONS FOR COMMUNICATING –
- Horizontal -

- ➔ Refuse
- ➔ Obtain
- ➔ Social
- ➔ Share information





# THE COMMUNICATION MATRIX PROFILE

Rowland, 2004

## ➔ Communication Skills Development

- vertical
- Level I: Pre-intentional communication
- Level II & III: Intentional communication
  - Pre-symbolic behaviors
  - Nonconventional behaviors
  - Conventional behaviors
- Level IV, V, VI, VII: Symbolic communication



















# Four Reasons to Communicate

Level	Refuse	Obtain	Social	Information
I	-Expresses discomfort	-Expresses comfort	-Expresses interest in other people	
II	-Protests	-Continues an action -Obtains more of something	-Attracts attention	
III	-Refuses or rejects something	-Requests more of an action -Requests a new action -Requests more of an object -Makes choices -Requests a new object	-Requests attention -Shows affection	
IV		-Requests objects that are absent	-Greet people -Offers things or shares -Directs someone's attention to something -Uses polite social forms	-Answers "Yes" and "No" questions -Asks questions
V				-Names things or people -Makes comments
VI				
VII				



# Nine categories of Communicative Behavior

Level	Behavior Category				
I	 Body Movement	 Early Sounds	 Facial Expression		
II	 Body Movement	 Early Sounds	 Facial Expression	 Visual	
III	 Body Movement	 Early Sounds	 Facial Expression	 Visual	 Simple Gestures
IV					 Conventional Gestures & Vocalizations
V					 Concrete Symbols
VI					 Abstract Symbols
VII					 Language

# Results

- ➔ Two major products:
  - A one page profile
  - Communication Skills List



The screenshot displays the Communication Matrix software interface, specifically the 'Skills List' section. The table lists various communication skills, their categories, behaviors, and mastery status. The table is organized into four columns: Message, Category, Behavior, and Mastery.

Message	Category	Behavior	Mastery
C1. Refuses or Rejects Something	Body Movements	whole body movements (fist, turn away)	Mastered
	Body Movements	arm or hand movements	Mastered
	Body Movements	leg movements (kick, stamp foot)	Mastered
	Early Sounds	screech, whine	Mastered
	Facial Expressions	frown, grimace	Mastered
	Simple Gestures	pushes away object or person	Mastered
	Unintentional Gestures & Vocalizations	gives unwanted item to you	Mastered
	Unintentional Gestures & Vocalizations	shakes head "no"	Mastered
	Unintentional Gestures & Vocalizations	specific vocalizations ("uhuh")	Mastered



# Review of Each Level I-VI

- ➔ Behaviors are:
- ➔ Behaviors are not:
- ➔ Speech:
- ➔ Physiological
- ➔ Motor:
- ➔ Technology/Access:
- ➔ Receptive:
- ➔ Literacy
- ➔ What should we foster and/or train:
- ➔ Considerations:
- ➔ Not appropriate:



# Level I

## Pre-intentional Behaviors

### ➔ Behaviors

- and communication are one and the same
- are reflexive or reactive
- NOT purposeful
- associated with states of being (discomfort, comfort, closeness)

➔ WE do ALL of the interpreting!



# Level I

## ➔ Speech:

- cry,
- gurgle,
- coo,

## ➔ Physiological:

- Breathing rate
- Drooling
- Heart rate



# Level I

## ➔ Motor:

- Head movements,
- Postural movements or change,
- Limb movements,
- Trunk movements,
- Leg movements,
- Change in tone, rate,



# Level I

## ➔ Technology/Access

- Place an access switch near the body part that moves with the least amount of effort by the student
- Go for independence (do not touch the student once set up)
- Activation will be random at this point
- The experience will do the teaching





# Level I

## ➔ Receptive:

### – VISUAL

- Awareness of your face, objects used during an interaction,
- Localization to lights, high contrast objects, pictures, toys,

### – AUDITORY

- Localization to sounds
- Response to rhythms (music, chants)
- Seems to recognize familiar voice, people



# Level I

➔ Literacy? Yes. Focus on Shared Enjoyment!

– VISUAL

- Awareness of books, pictures, video
- Looks toward picture or book

– AUDITORY

- Attention to reader's voice
- Response to inflection or change in reader's voice



# Level I

- ➔ What should we do?
  - Find out what the child **LIKES**
  - and **DOESN'T LIKE**.
- ➔ How do we do that?
  - Preference Assessment
  - Survey how the child responds
  - Keep track with a chart



# Preference Probe

## Daily Performance Data

Student Darla

Function targeted preference probe

Date _____	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	%
	Mickey	-										0
	Pom Pom	+	+	-								2
	Touch Farm	-										0
	Tickle ball	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-			7
	Foil Fabric	+	+	+	-							3
	Parrot	+	-									1

### Protocol

- (1) Partner engages Darla in play with item for 30 sec.
- (2) Partner pauses for 15 sec.  
If Darla vocalizes (+), repeat play. If no response (-), present new item.

### Scoring System

- + = Vocalize
- = No response

**Note:** In this example, the row of data next to each item shows how Darla responded to the item across one or more trials.



# Every Move Counts (Korsten, Dunn, Foss & Franke)

- ➔ Sensory-Response Assessment
- ➔ Goal: Collect objective data on whether the child shows some reaction or response to specific stimuli organized by sensation.
  - **Which material, people, interactions are highly reinforcing (what do they LIKE?)**
  - **Which behaviors appear to be voluntary and might serve as a means of intentional communication.**



# Level I

- Remember that behaviors at this level are probably not purposeful!
- If you think that the child is demonstrating behaviors **ON PURPOSE**, then the child is **NOT** communicating at a level I!!



# Sample IEP goals

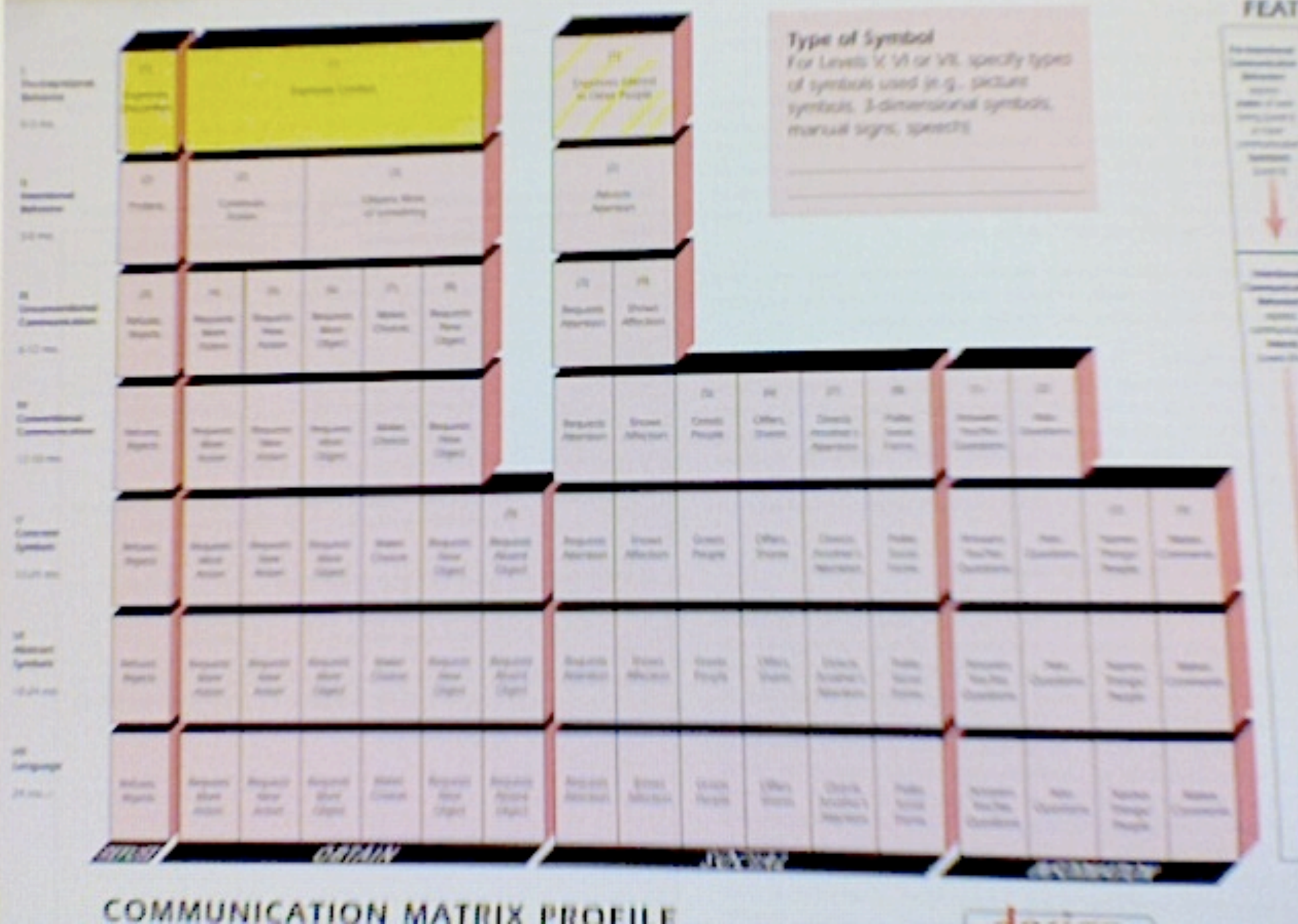
- ➔ Student will develop a repertoire of behaviors (i.e., look, vocalize, smile, movement) in response to visual stimuli, 3/5 presentations given wait time (minimum 10 seconds).
- ➔ Student will develop a repertoire of behaviors (i.e., turn toward, quiet, smile, movements) in response to auditory stimuli, 3/5 presentations given wait time (min 10 seconds).





Never underestimate a student's ability to use some mode of communication.

Consider: heart rate, respiration,  
facial muscles, lower extremity  
movement.





# Video

→ Tre



# Level II

## Intentional Behavior

### ➔ Behaviors

- Appear to be more intentional
- are not intentionally communicative

### ➔ Child does not

- realize that they can control another person by using their behaviors
- typically use their eye contact to their advantage (to engage you)
- know to wait for a response from the adult
- have dual orientation (joint attention) yet!



## Level II

Nevertheless, some of these behaviors serve a communication function...why?

Because teachers and parents interpret them as communicating something!



## Level II

- ➔ Children direct their behavior directly on objects (want/reject)
- ➔ Children direct their behavior directly to you (want/reject)
- ➔ But you do not know **what** or **who**!
- ➔ Behaviors should be a bit more differentiated (vary according to the situation or need) and not as difficult to interpret. But you are still doing the guessing!



## Level II

- ➔ Speech
  - Cry,
  - Gurgle,
  - Coo,
  - Fuss,
  - vocalizes





# Level II

## ➔ Movement:

- Head movement toward object
- Head movement toward person
- Lean toward or away
- Approaches object or person
- Pushes away, swipes at reaches toward
- Facial expressions
- Clearer and stronger preferences
- Knows what child likes and doesn't like!



# Level II

## ➔ Technology:

- Contingency awareness (general cause & effect)
- Learning to use an access switch or a big mac!
- May repeatedly “hit the switch” without waiting for a response



## Single switch practice





## Level II

### ➔ Receptive:

- Localizes, more aware of environment,
- Showing more attention, concentration,
- Seems to be listening and showing “interest”
- Showing interest: objects, pictures,



## Early, pre-symbolic communicators: (behaviors to read and perceive)

- ➔ Change in position, posture
- ➔ Limb movement
- ➔ Head movement
- ➔ Facial expression
- ➔ Vocalization
- ➔ Move away from object
- ➔ Push away object or person
- ➔ Approaches person or object
- ➔ Gesture
- ➔ Looks at object or person
- ➔ Takes object
- ➔ Reaches towards object/person
- ➔ Touches object
- ➔ Activates switch



## Level II

- ➔ Place VALUE on symbols!
- ➔ Use them!
- ➔ Augmented INPUT!



## Level II

### ➔ Receptive use of symbols:

- Start pairing objects and situations with symbols
- Pictures
- Words
- Sign language
- Gestures
- Use packaging
- Use parts of objects





## Level II

### ➔ Literacy:

- Access to books
- Access to a “pencil”
- ABCs
- Focus is on enjoyment and interaction around books (emergent)



# Level II

➔ What should we do?

- We should be responding to potentially communicative behaviors so that the child becomes aware of its communicative purpose and through our reactions, can begin to direct behaviors TO US!
- Show the child symbols, narrate events, talk to child, use objects as symbols!



# Level II

➔ What should we do?

- Scripting, use of a VOCA turn-taking
- Assign MEANING to objects/symbols!
- Give our students a PENCIL
- Read (repetition, interactive) books!
- **Use TRANSITION OBJECTS !!**
- **Objects and Symbols can tell the learner what comes next!**

What comes next?





Where am I going next?

bathroom



bus



Go home



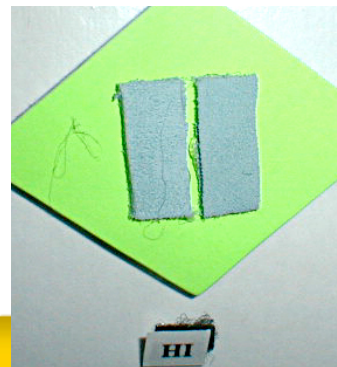
thirst



lunch



## Tactile symbol systems:





# Scripting



Little step by step



sequencer



Big step by step



Kaylan

Bryson

Brandon





# Level II

## Communication Priority:

- What should we do?
  - Be responsive to the child.
  - Establish Intentional Communicative Behavior.
- How do we do that?
- Use DATA from Preference Assessment
  - Readability-is the behavior easy to interpret consistently by others?
  - Do-ability-can the child easily do this behavior or is it difficult motorically for the child to initiate and do?
  - Applicability-is the behavior useable across partners & places?



## Level II

- ➔ Start with: *Preference Assessment / Probe*
  - Work on: Reinstatement (repeat something pleasurable)
  - Add: *gaining attention*



# Preference Assessment

- ➔ Present an object/toy/action one at a time
  - Easy to read behavior
  - Difficult to read behavior
- ➔ Highly structured sensory preference probe
- ➔ Go slow, provide ~15 seconds stimuli, stop, then wait.
- ➔ Be perceptive to all behaviors.
  - Note behaviors exhibited during the activity,
  - Note behaviors child attempts to use to reinstate the activity (may be different)
  - A reactive response is different than an attempt to initiate a purposeful expressive movement.



# Wait & allow the child to initiate

- ➔ All by themselves.
- ➔ Don't even think of touching them.
- ➔ Without your verbal coaxing.
- ➔ Without your applause.
- ➔ Without the need for you to do anything.
- ➔ If you do anything you take away their potential experience of POWER.



# Social reinstatement !

➔ Many students need

» **BIG** behaviors to reinstate!

» Simply program the VOCA to say:

» **Come here ...**

**or, go away!**



# Strategies for Teaching Reinstatement

- ➔ Convey an expectation of a response...
- ➔ Provide wait time... (shhhhhh!)
- ➔ Offer your hand proximally to the child...
- ➔ Offer an VOCA with an access switch near the child's most successful point of control (that means not too easy or too hard)
- ➔ Control your prompting (be aware of it)



# Prompt Hierarchy

## ➔ Most-to-least

- Full physical
- Partial physical
- Modeling
- Gesture
- Verbal
- Independent (natural environment cue)

## ➔ Least-to-Most

- Independent (natural environmental cue)
- Verbal
- Gesture
- Model
- Partial physical
- Full physical



# Sample IEP goal

- ⇒ Student will use their \*repertoire of behaviors to reinstate pleasurable activities 3/5 opportunities given min 30 second wait time and a verbal prompt.
  - \*smile, activate voca, vocalize, eye gaze toward desired object
- ⇒ Student will use a VOCA to gain attention given teacher prompts to do so (i.e., teacher anticipation cues and/or teacher indirect verbal prompt) 3/5 opportunities and adequate wait time.
- ⇒ Student will look at a thematic object used during shared reading time, 3/5 opportunities.
- ⇒ Student will say key vocabulary words 3 times during group reading time.
- ⇒ Student will engage in 3 reciprocal communication exchanges during morning greeting with the teacher given 30 second wait time and verbal repetition of encouragement to continue the interaction.





## Level II

➔ Not Appropriate:

- “Time – out” is still too complex because the child doesn’t have dual orientation or contingency awareness!









# Level III

Nonconventional, Pre-symbolic Communication

- ➔ This is a CRITICAL stage!!
- ➔ Our students communicate intentionally!! 😊
- ➔ But... communication is not conventional:
  - Push pull, movement, eye gaze
- ➔ Child uses these behaviors- and they direct their behaviors to you and are learning to wait!
- ➔ However, still not socially acceptable to all.
- ➔ These behaviors are extremely effective.



# Types of Choices students can make:

## ➔ Within the activity:

- A choice of 2 or more materials that is provided within the context of any activity (l.e., color paint)

## ➔ Between activities:

- A choice of 2 or more different activities is provided (what do you want to do?)

## ➔ Refusal:

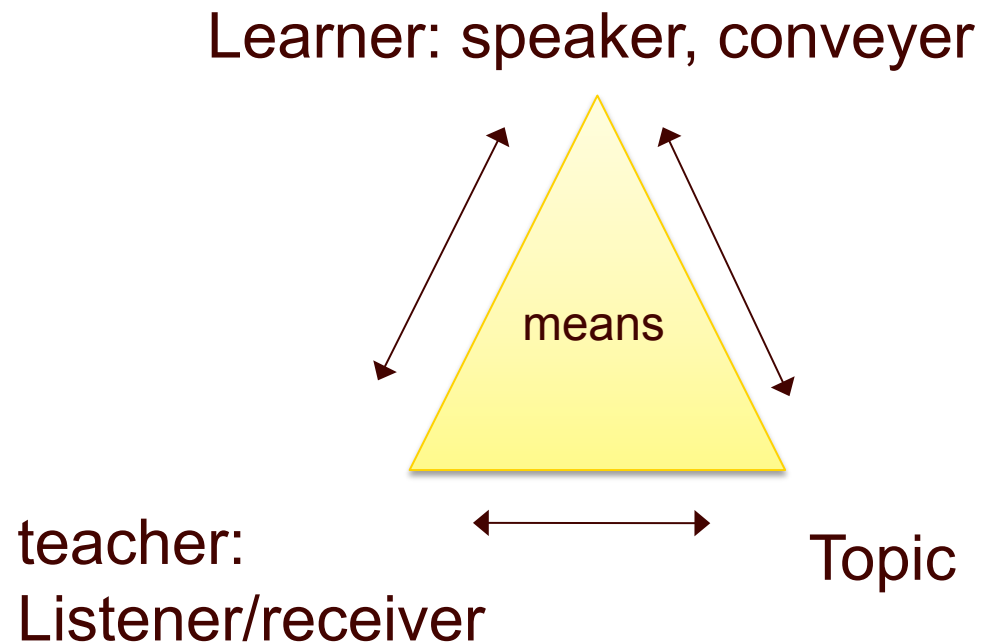
- At the beginning of an activity, provide the choice of whether or not to participate (be ready for a rejection response, though!)



# Consider the following to elicit requests:

- Materials in view but out of reach
- Materials with which need assistance/help to use
- Small amounts
- Inadequate portions
- Sabotage
- Keep it interesting

# Dual Orientation





# Level III

## ➔ Technology/Access:

- Child appears to understand cause and effect!
- Child waits (or is working on waiting) and is learning to operate switches appropriately,





## Level III

➔ Receptive-SAME as Level II...keep it up!

- Appears to anticipate routines,
- Responds to name,
- Understands some directions
- You can direct child to look, listen to something
- Seems aware of symbols (type?)



## Level III

### ➔ Literacy


- Child should handle books as much as possible
- Child should be read to
- Child should have time with his “pencil”
- Child should choose own books to “read”
- Focus on interactive shared reading
- Alphabet & sounds-



# Level III

➔ What should we do?

- Let the child use push/pull!
- Offer our hand (hover) to allow the child to continue to develop this!
- Push symbol use: at least one symbol per interaction! All day!
- Use symbols receptively (to) the child!! Embed during play, transitions, during travel !!
- Okay to start PECS phase I training, other symbol training, simple device / introduce choice making,
- Scripting, use of a VOCA turn-taking



# Symbol Systems can be Receptive or Expressive!

- ➔ Some systems TELL the student about an activity, task or sequence of the day
- ➔ Some systems are used for the student to express themselves during classroom routines



# Level III

➔ What should we do?

- Move toward choice making!
- Start with a space filler/nothing choice
- Add a distractor objects in the array
- Careful about prompting
  - Quickly fade if used
  - Pace the practice sessions fairly
  - Minimize distractions
  - One new thing at a time
  - Proceed thoughtfully



## Level III

### be cautious-

- ➔ Careful not to overload the child,
- ➔ Again, teach one new thing at a time,
- ➔ Child may use level II behaviors at any time (i.e., when sick, stressed, overload)
- ➔ Remember that the auditory system is “the first to go”  
...most transient.



# What to do:

- ➔ Some students will need training in multiple ways of communicating until they exhibit a preferred method
  - Eye gaze systems are a great solution
  - Choose the route that will ultimately get them beyond an array of two,
  - If orthopedic issues are too complex, may need to work on scanning



# Partner Assisted Scanning

➔ Unaided (no symbols, auditory only)

- List choices by naming them
- Show objects one at a time
- Giving time for a self-initiated “indicating response”

➔ Aided (using symbol display with switch to select)

- Name choices by pointing with finger, flashlight, stick, one at a time,
- Point to symbol or object across an array
- Giving time for self-initiated “that’s it” response





# Considerations in Partner Assisted Scanning

1. Motivation
2. Multiple cycles of presentation
3. Consistency of order
4. Include a “way out”
5. Decrease verbal questions/language
6. Use easiest student mode
7. Accept multiple communication modes
8. Attribute communicative meaning to all attempts
9. Support physical movement with PT/OT input (positioning)
10. Pair options presented by augmenting input



# More considerations

- ➔ Consider HOW Choices are Offered:
  - Visual?
  - Auditory?
  - Tactual?
  - Sign?
  - Small sampling?
- ➔ Accept Multiple Communication Modes
- ➔ Attribute Meaning to All Communication Attempts
- ➔ Be careful about facilitation



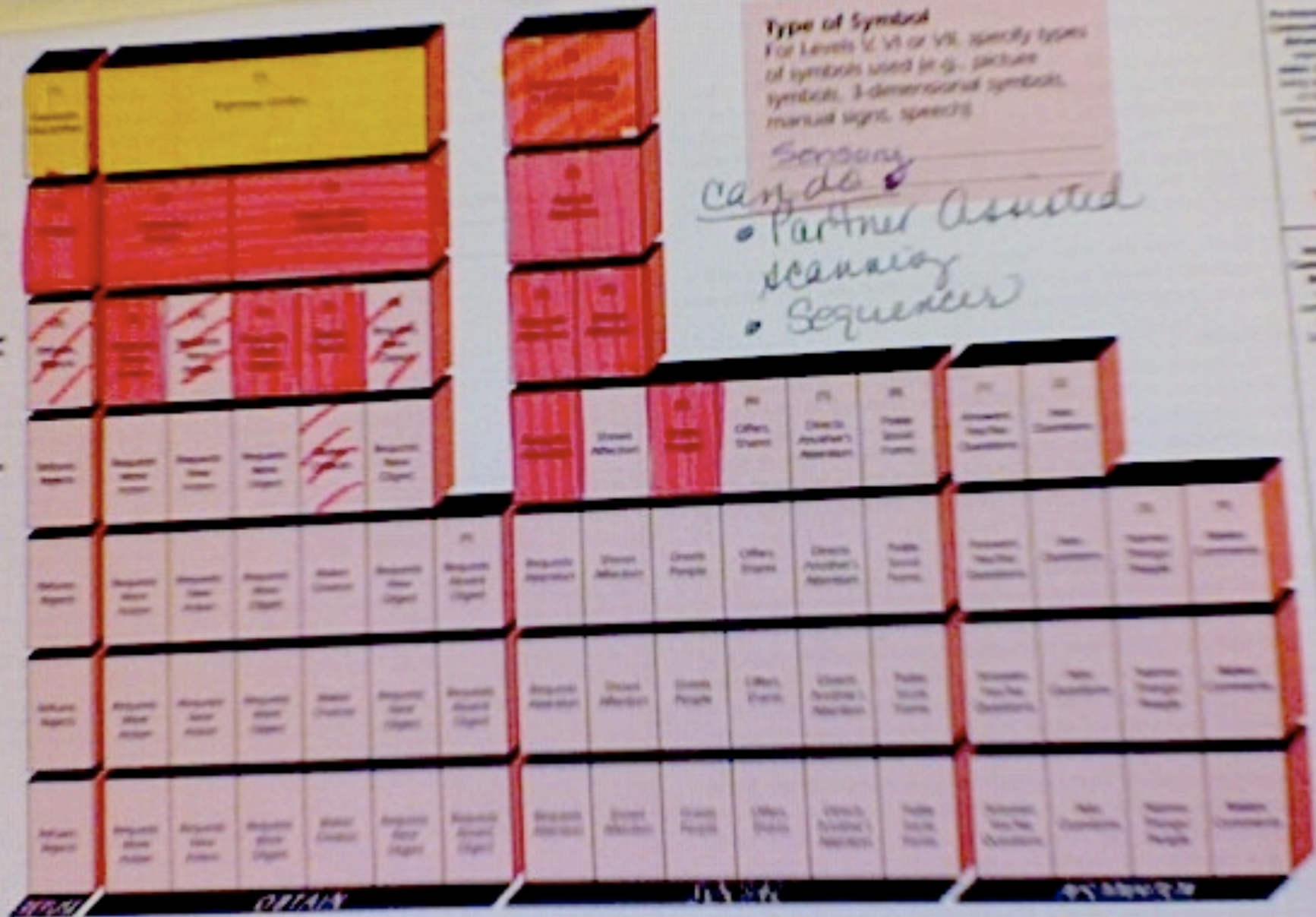
# Early Partner Assisted Scanning-Training

➔ Joseph

Date 10/2007 10/2010  
 Completed by [unclear] classroom

**Type of Symbol**  
 For Levels I, VI or VII, specify types of symbols used (e.g., picture symbols, 3-dimensional symbols, manual sign, speech)

*Sensory*  
*Can do*  
 • Partner Assisted scanning  
 • Sequencer



**FEATURES**

Associated Communication Manual Sign Picture Symbols 3-Dimensional Symbols Manual Sign Picture Symbols 3-Dimensional Symbols	Associated Communication Manual Sign Picture Symbols 3-Dimensional Symbols Manual Sign Picture Symbols 3-Dimensional Symbols
↓	↓
Request with object Request with picture Request with symbol Request with sign Request with text	Respond with object Respond with picture Respond with symbol Respond with sign Respond with text
↓	↓
Interact with object Interact with picture Interact with symbol Interact with sign Interact with text	Interact with object Interact with picture Interact with symbol Interact with sign Interact with text
↓	↓

**COMMUNICATION MATRIX PROFILE**



Design: Health & Technology  
 2002, 1998, 1995, 1990  
 www.designmatrix.com



# Level IV

## Conventional, Pre-symbolic Communication

- ➔ Our students communicate intentionally!! 😊
- ➔ Communication IS conventional!
  - Socially acceptable,
  - Understood by anyone, universal.
- ➔ Child has dual orientation / cause-effect
  - Child can act on BOTH a person & a symbol
  - May be multi-modal or
  - Cross modal
  - Difficult to establish these abilities without vision-
  - Difficult to establish if too overwhelmed sensory system



## Level IV

### ➔ Speech:

- Intonated sound patterns
- Vocalizations accompany gestures
- WAITS for a response,
- Alters sounds or inflection if not successful



# Level IV

## ➔ Receptive:

- Appears to anticipate routines,
- Responds to name,
- Understands more directions
- You can direct child to look, listen to something
- Seems aware of symbols (type?)
- You can direct child to look, listen to something
- YES / NO start using it!





# Level IV

## ➔ Technology/ AAC

- Moving to two-choice or more options
- Yes and no (watch for difficulty of question!)
- Partner assisted scanning
- Eye gaze board
- Symbols are
  - Valuable!
  - Powerful!
  - Consider easiest symbol to understand!





# Level IV

## ➔ Gestures / Universal signs:

- Waves,
- Points,
- Distance pointing
- May be beginning to nod head for yes/no
- Other simple gestures emerging (come, bye, hi, me)



# Level IV

## ➔ Literacy:

- Self-Selected Reading
  - Child in control
  - Practice handling a book (indiv access method)
- Guided Reading
  - Full of interaction & talking (balance talking)
  - Child regulates reader.
  - Reader can offer thoughts-i.e., “that’s funny!”
  - Connect new with known information
- Write
  - Name, anything (pick topic by choosing picture)
  - Lots of practice with pencil...takes years!



# Level IV

➔ What should we do?

- Teach 1:1 correspondence between symbols and what they represent
- PECS
- Other choice-making systems
- Technology
- Embed communication devices within activities to give the child a feeling of control



# Level IV

➔ Consider:

- To expect maximal communication abilities across all situations
- Do not pressure student to communicate symbolically all of the time!
- Expect lots of errors
- Be aware of your cueing
- Technology
- Be ready for change

5/4/03

3/21/2011

Completed by AS & HP

Type of Symbol

**Type of symbols**  
For Levels V, VI or VII, specify types of symbols used (e.g., picture symbols, 3-dimensional symbols, manual signs, speech)



# Level V

## Concrete Communication

- ➔ Our students are using concrete symbols
- ➔ Symbols represent specific objects or people!
  - Bear a 1:1 relationship to a specific referent
  - Clear perceptual relationship to the referent (easy to understand)
  - Symbols physically are similar to its referent
  - Access may vary





# Level V





# Level V

## ➔ Speech:

- Mimic sounds
- Echolalia
- Limited repertoire

## ➔ Gestural:

- Depictive gestures
- Multi-modal expression

## ➔ Single icons/symbol use

## ➔ Core Vocabulary





# Level V

## ➔ Literacy:

- Expressively beginning to use symbols to:
  - Talk about the story
  - Regulate a reader
  - Request books
- Child regularly uses the alphabet and is learning to write with their “pencil”



## Level V

- Consideration to expand to sequencing icons or large single icon usage

# Expressive and Receptive Symbol Use:

## Symbol System Examples:



Object schedule board



PECS book



Eye Gaze Board

## More symbol system examples:

praten



luisteren



pictogrammen



Print on legal paper in landscape mode.

Cooking Display - [adaptedstories.com](http://adaptedstories.com)

Level

Made with Boardmaker and the Picture Communication Symbols  
Mayer-Johnson Co. - P.O. Box 1878 Solana Beach, CA 92075 USA  
909.434.0244

let me



put in



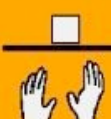
more



great



we need



help



stir



gross



cut out

Color coded







ipad



Ipod touch



Voice Pal



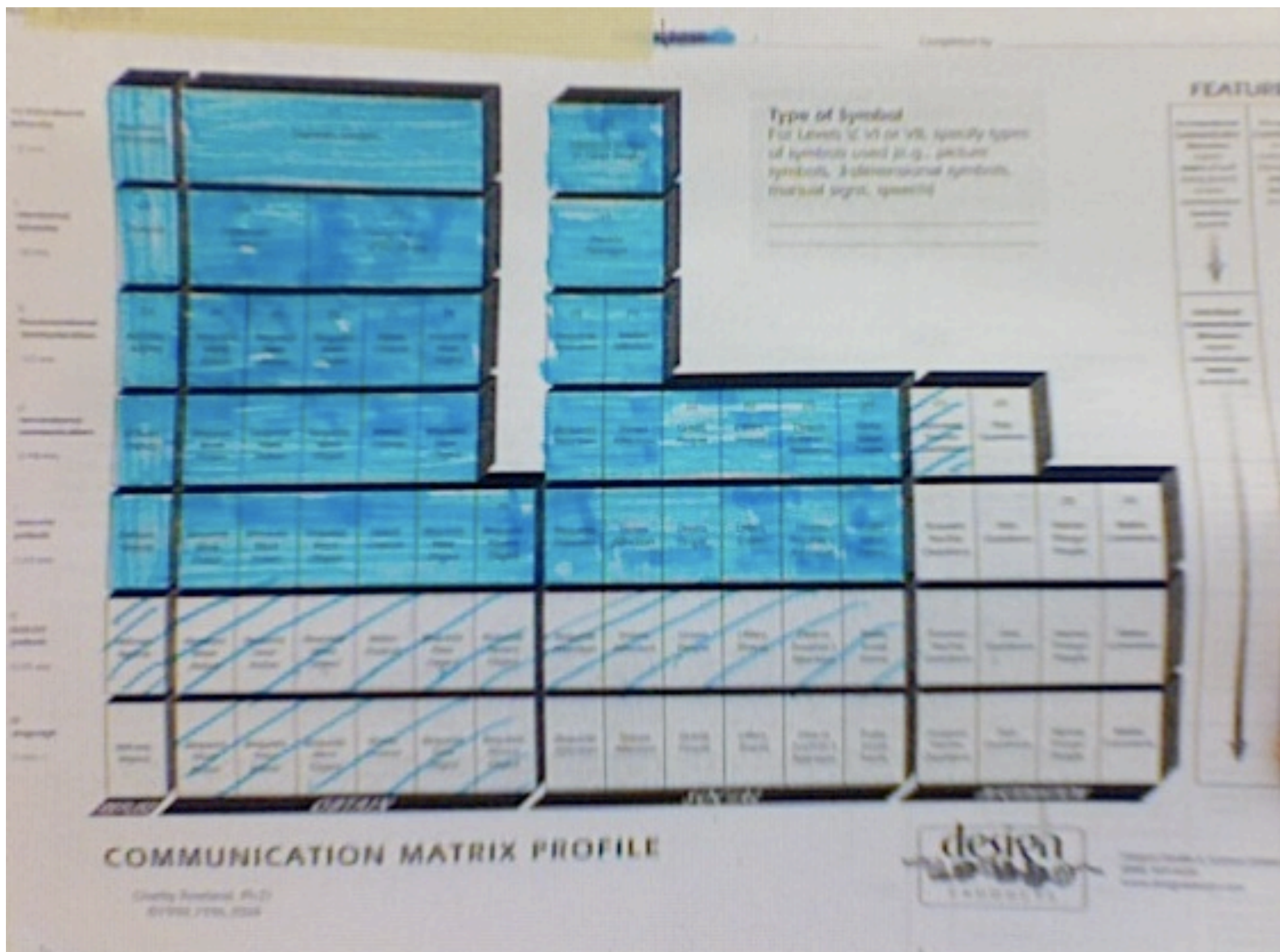
Mighty Mo



Go Talk



Vanguard





# Level VI

## Abstract Symbolic Communication

- ➔ Students are using single icons with gestures or objects available to them!
- ➔ Keep students moving and their core vocabulary should be with them at all times!

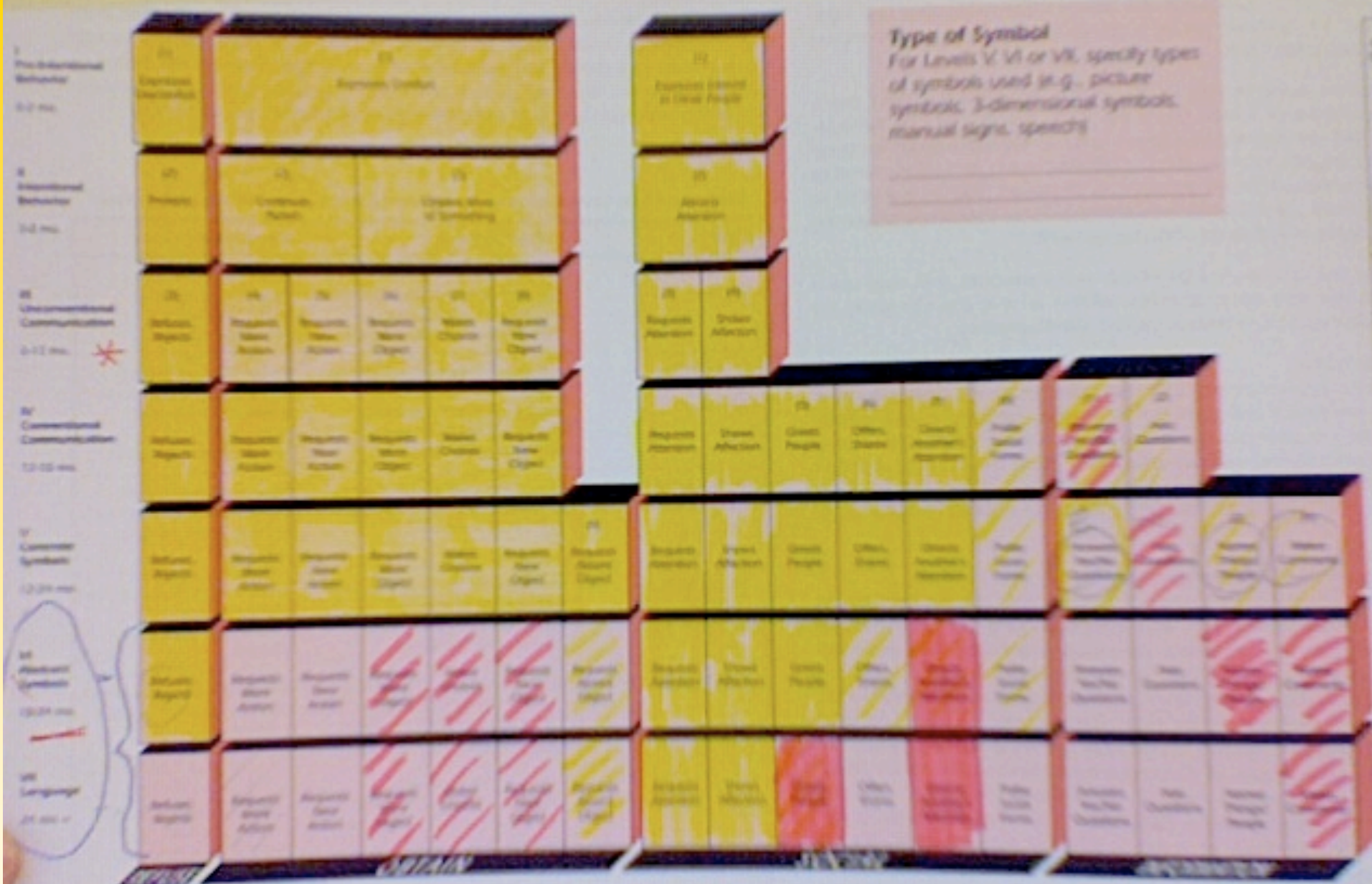


# Level VII

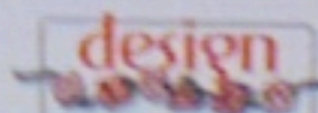
## Abstract Symbolic Communication

- ➔ Our students are using concrete symbols and beginning to sequence them and combine with their gestures or objects available to them!
- ➔ Access may vary
- ➔ Understandable by strangers
- ➔ May be starting to use a more sophisticated AAC device to house so much vocabulary!





# COMMUNICATION MATRIX PROFILE





# Where on the Matrix?

- ➔ Grimacing due to not feeling well
- ➔ Pulling teacher to the door
- ➔ Bring an empty cup to a staff person
- ➔ Taking your hand and putting it on the refrigerator door
- ➔ Handing an icon to you with a picture of a toy
- ➔ Standing by the door



**Let's jump right in!**

The Communication Matrix Online: [www.communicationmatrix.org](http://www.communicationmatrix.org)



➔ Questions?

➔ Comments?