Adapt This...

A picture-book guide for adapting almost anything!

ADAPTIVATION
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Hello from Adaptivation:

Adaptivation's goal has always been to create and share ways to implement AAC through fun, functional and highly valuable applications. The collection of applications in this book spans over 20 years of experience in the field of Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC).

This book is an easy read for those who are novices in the field of AAC, offering many easy-to-use ideas for adapting just about anything. It also offers a great deal to experienced therapists and teachers who would like to add to their existing arsenal of AAC knowledge.

It is our sincere desire that the readers of this book find ideas they can use to create an atmosphere of interaction and learning for individuals with special needs. May it also inspire the readers to develop new and novel adaptive applications for their own professional endeavors.

Best Regards,

Jonathan Eckrich
President

Written by: Lori Dahlquist & Amy Koch

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Anything Goes w/ Pal Pads

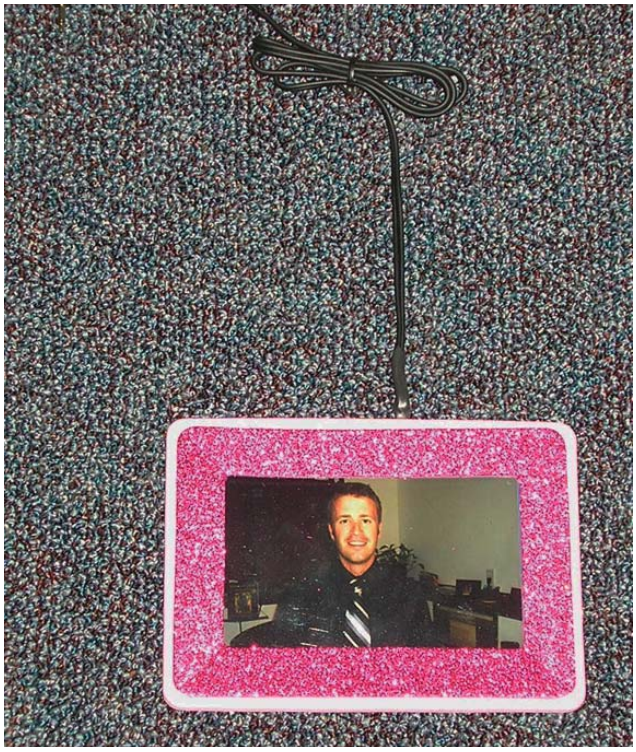
Why we ♥ Pal Pads:

- Durable
- Flat
- Slim
- Reliable
- Light touch
- No click!
- Budget friendly
- Universally compatible
- 5 colors
- 3 sizes

When using assistive technology, the importance of visual cues cannot be stressed enough. Placing objects or other visual cues on a Pal Pad does not change how the Pal Pad functions....simply press! The following examples are only a small collection of possibilities!

Use real photos when appropriate.

There are many commercially available Picture Communication Symbols.



A foam frame can highlight a picture or photo.

TalkingMyWay Cards combine objects and pictures.

A plastic plate placed on a Pal Pad is a sturdy visual cue.

A variety of paper plates can be found at any party store.

Cold packs and hand warmers can be used as tactile switches.

Mouse pads disguise a switch.

Placing a switch behind a poster creates an interactive activity.

Place a Pal Pad behind your favorite character!

Placemats turn into giant switches.

Pocket charts find new purpose when Pal Pads are inserted.

This pop-up card placed on a Pal Pad offers dimension.

Holiday and special-occasion greeting cards come in many sizes.

Make party favors come to life.

Don’t throw away your junk mail....it’s free!

Product logos are visually familiar and can be found anywhere.

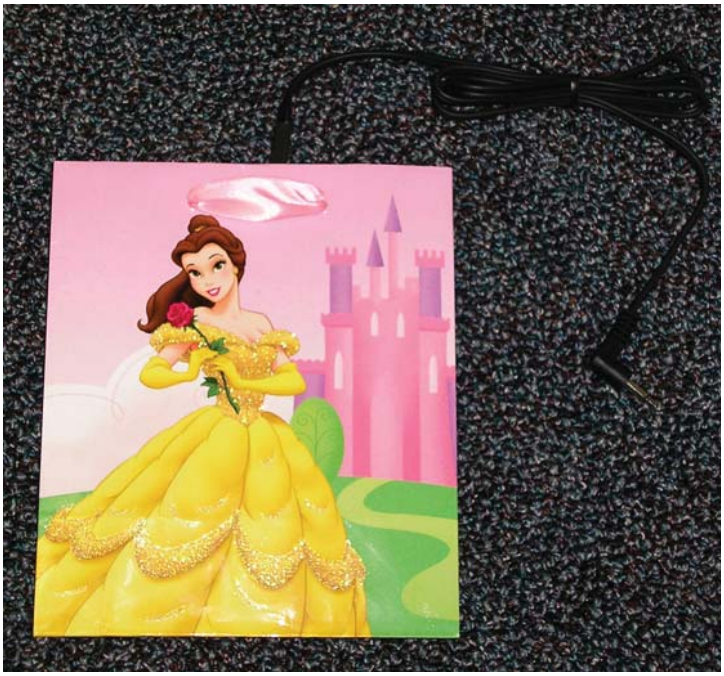
Candy wrappers, food wrappers and other labels are colorful and fun.

Picture menus have real photos.

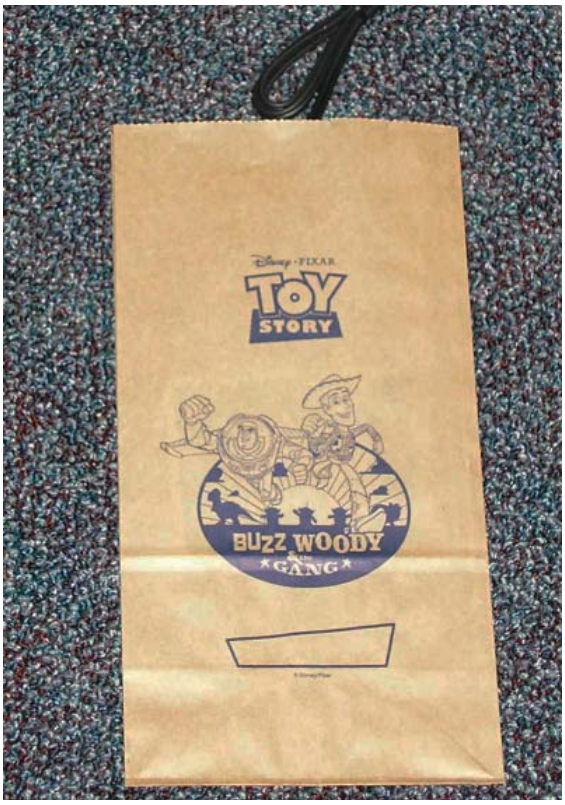
Place a favorite food container on a Pal Pad.

Baseball and other collector cards fit well on Small Pal Pads.

Flip over your deck of playing cards!



Place a Pal Pad inside a gift bag or shopping bag.

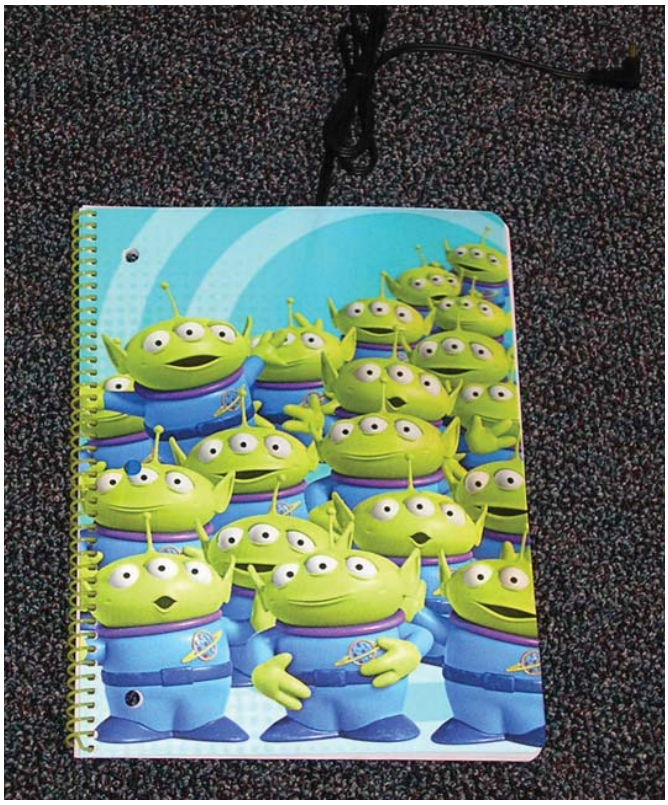


Slip a Pal Pad into a lunch bag and recycle it.

Insert Pal Pads into photo pockets and a device into the bag.

This setup is compact and easy to carry.

Place a Pal Pad inside a folder.



Utilize spiral-notebook covers as picture alternatives.

Squeeze toys come in all sizes, shapes and forms!

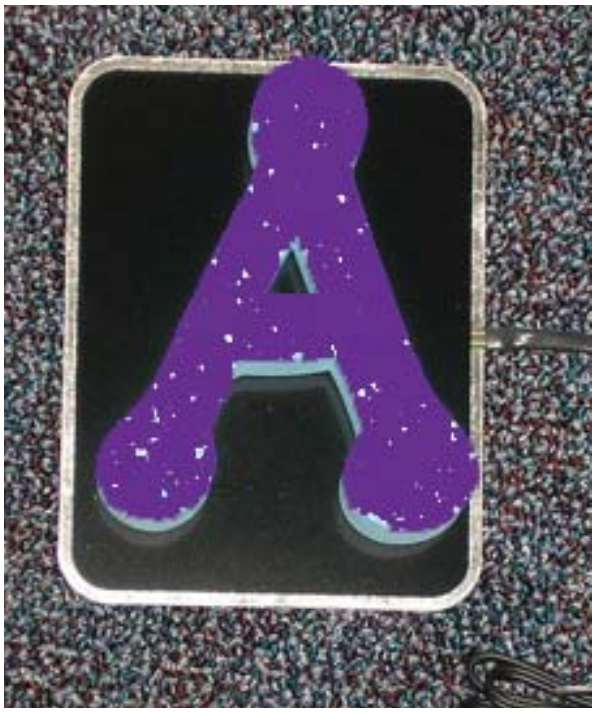
Couple a sponge with your favorite craft items.

Use items found right outside your door such as pinecones, sticks and rocks.

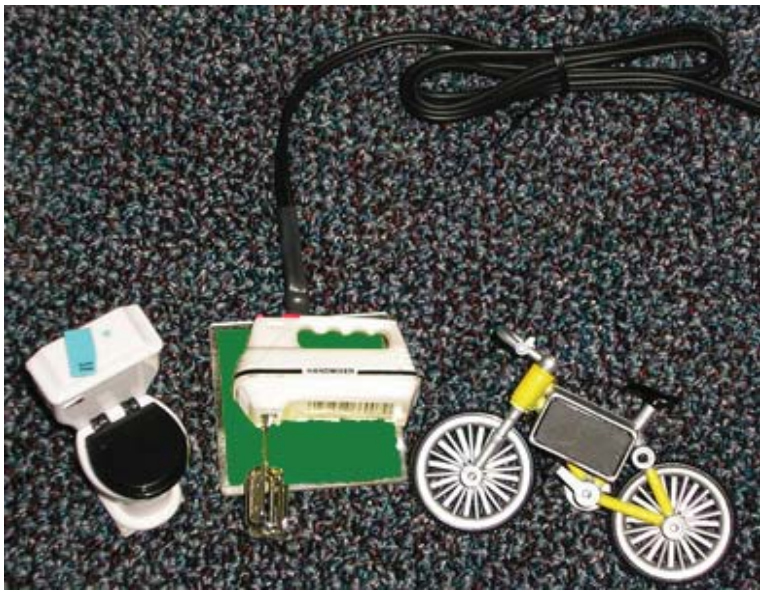
Look for texture alternatives like this slimy hand!

Use textures such as foil, bubble wrap and fur instead of pictures.

Slip a sock over your Pal Pad.



Foam cutouts and stamps are lightweight and easily attach to Pal Pads.



Magnets make great miniature objects.

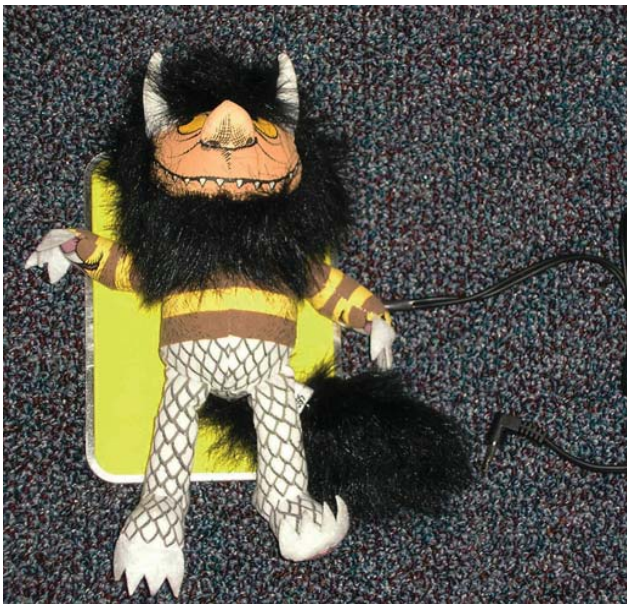
A Pal Pad inserted into a hand puppet becomes a soft, cuddly switch.

Fast food toys are a great source for popular movie and cartoon characters.

Use painted, wooden cutouts from your local craft store.

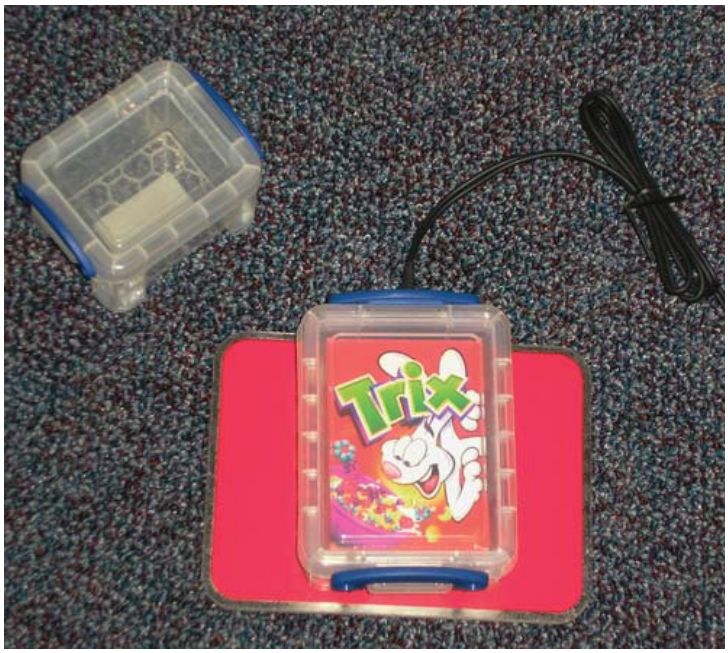
This bubble-bath bottle is inexpensive and lightweight (when empty).

Don’t forget puzzle pieces!



Use stuffed storybook characters.

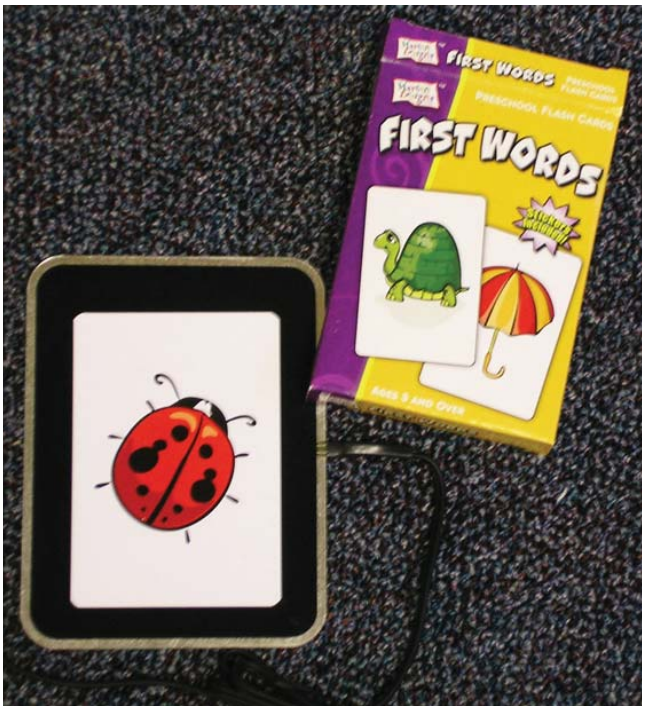
Place sand molds on your favorite color Pal Pad.



Small, clear boxes allow the object to be visible but not touched.

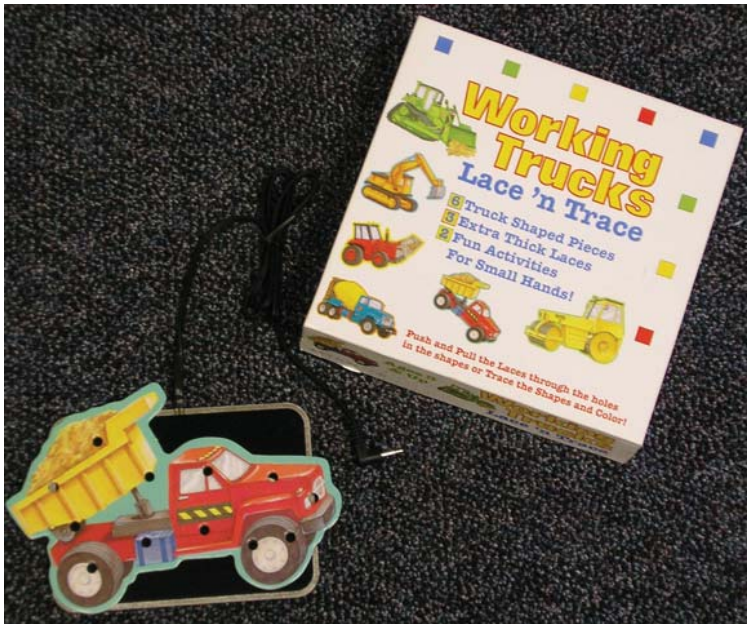
Baby and doll clothes work great as miniature objects.

Cookie cutters are fun and can also serve as a “keyguard” on a Pal Pad.



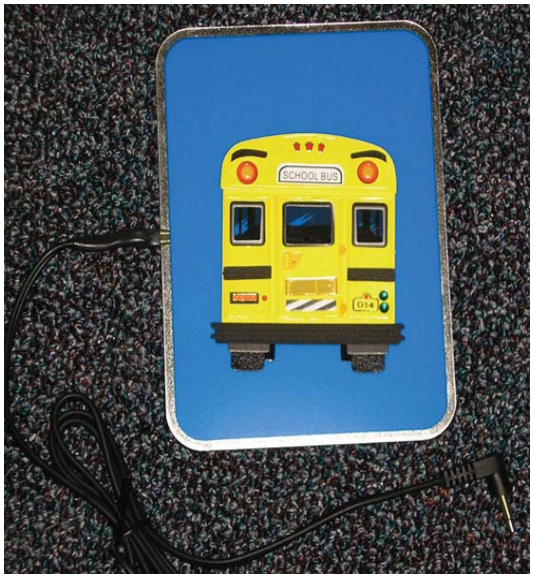
Re-use flash cards as visual cues.

Don’t forget to incorporate items that are used every day!



Activities used in the classroom can serve a dual purpose.

Cut out pictures from your favorite store's advertisements.



Visit the scrapbook aisle for stickers and other realistic-looking items.

Miniatures of your favorite fast foods can be found at discount stores.

Get Organized!

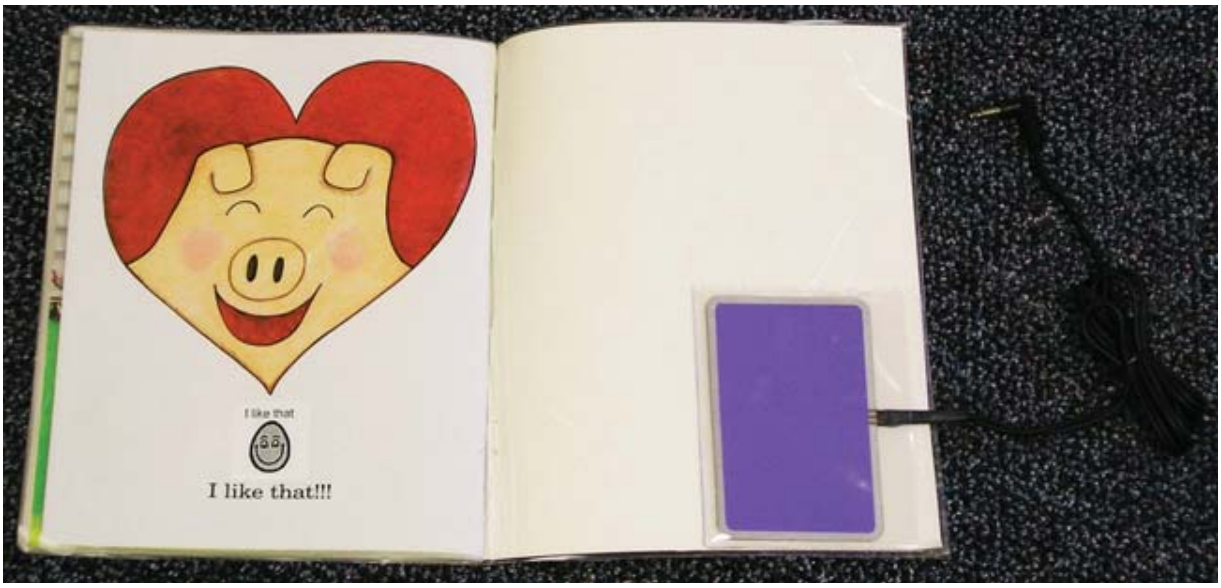
Why we ♥ to be organized:

- Saves time
- Time is $$$
- Activities are readily available
- Lets you see what materials you have
- Items get reused

A cord here, a cord there, cords cords everywhere! A few key organizational setups will make incorporating technology into everyday life more practical. This chapter includes versatile setups that can be used with a variety of activities.

Don't be afraid to experiment. Use different arrangements within your environment, then determine which setups work best work best with individuals you are serving. Look for systems that are functional for multiple users and multiple uses and (if possible) make them permanent.

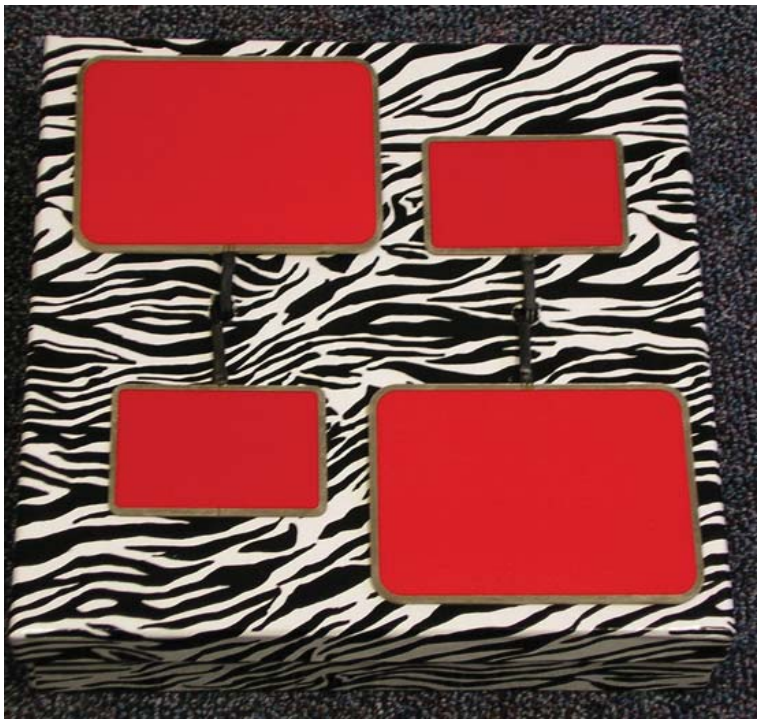
Organizing applications also means preparing necessary visual cues (everything from objects to overlays) and including technology suggestions. Trying to reduplicate each activity is time consuming and not feasible. With a little planning, using technology can be easy, practical and hassle free.



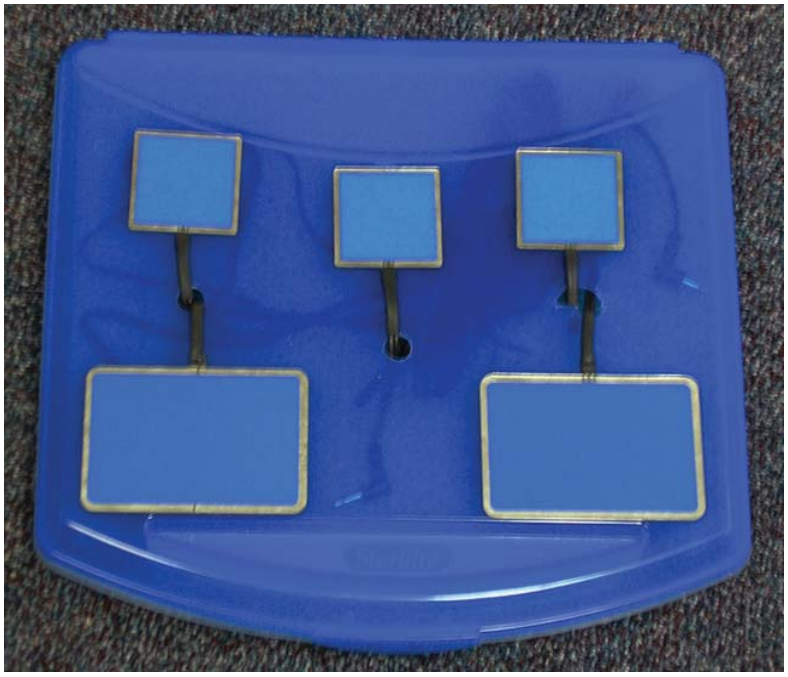
Place a Pal Pad on the back cover of a book by using an Overlay Pocket. Pockets are available for all Pal Pad sizes.

Use Overlay Pockets and Pal Pads on the underside of placemats, posters or other flat visuals to create “hot spots”.

Pal Pads fit inside photo pockets. With photo bags, you can easily carry the voice output device.

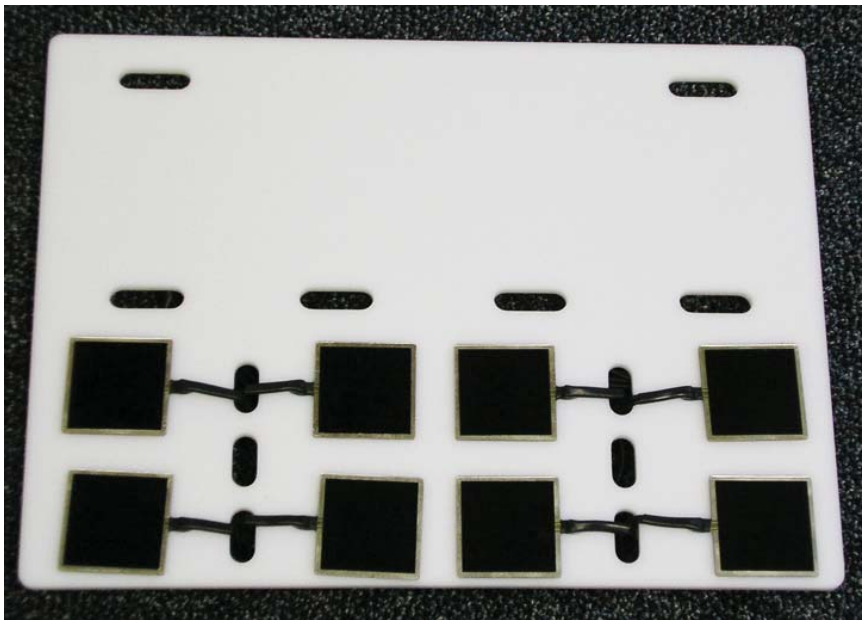


Add Pal Pads to colored boxes by cutting holes for the cords and pulling them to the inside. Photo and scrap-book boxes work well.

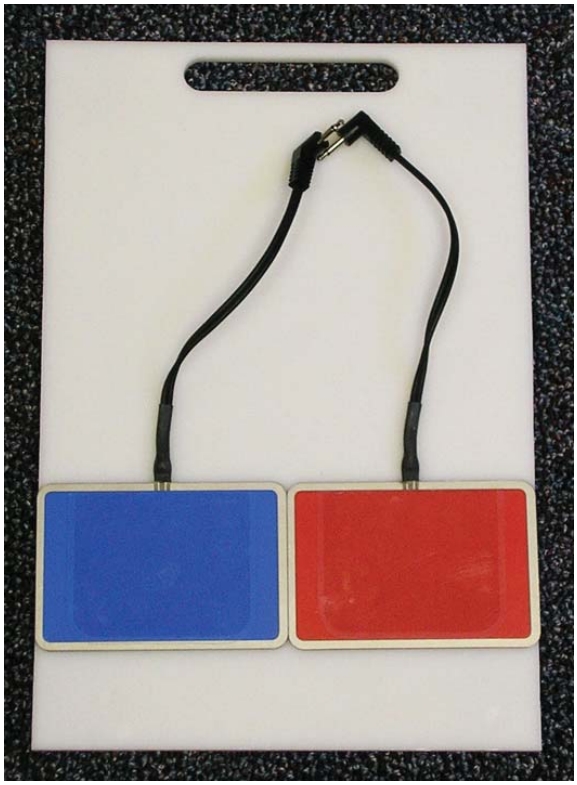


Plastic cases can be drilled to accommodate switch cords. Cords and a device can be placed inside.

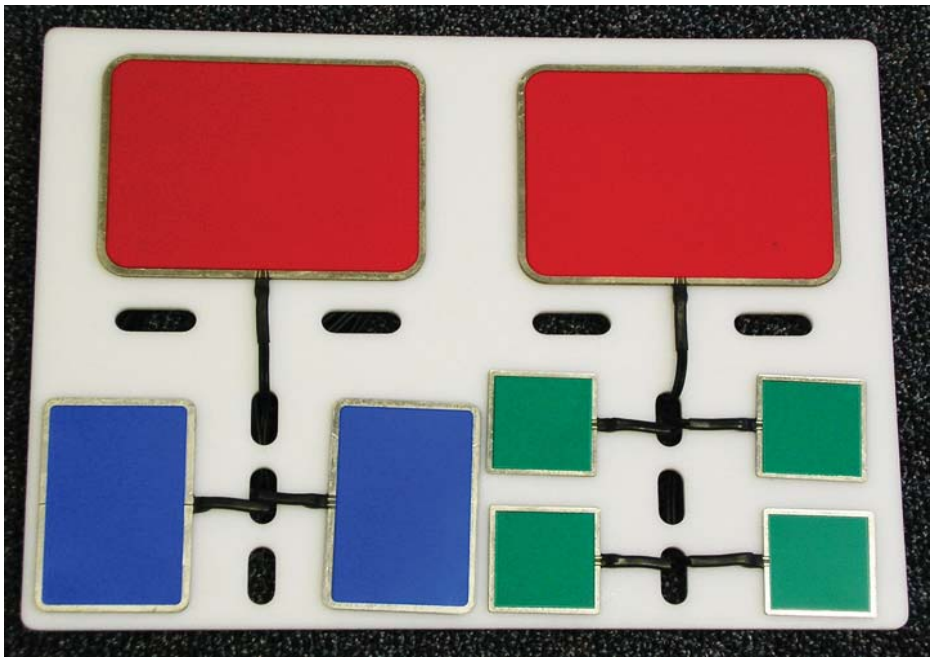
Store visual cues for activities in the same container you modified.



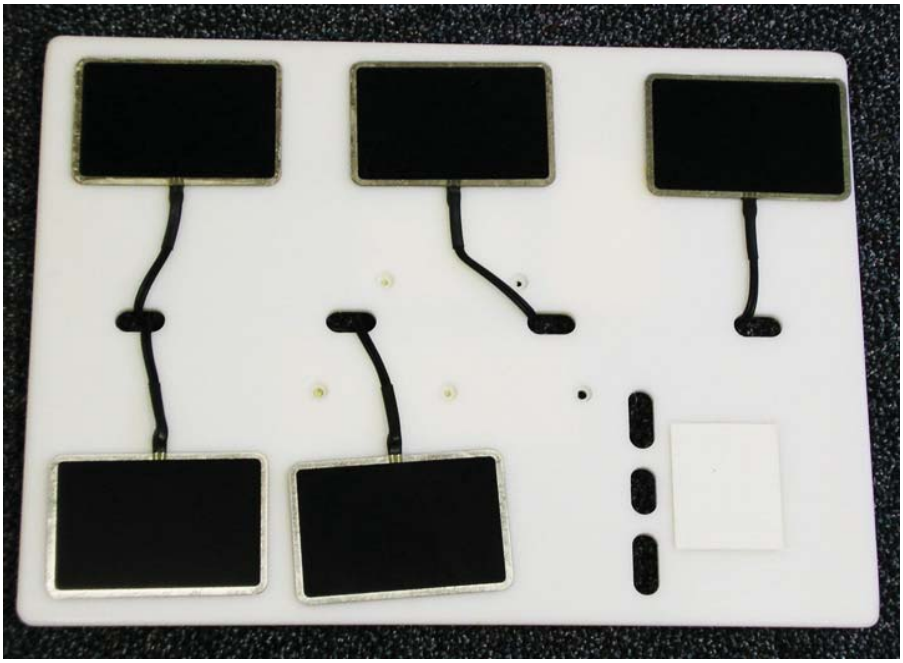
The HandiBoard's pre-drilled holes can accommodate 8 mini Pal Pads while still leaving room for device placement and/or additional materials.



Use a cutting board to create your own size-specific arrangement.



Combine different switch sizes and arrange them to best meet the motor-access needs of the user or to accommodate a variety of visual cues.



Create setups for multiple uses. We find that this setup of five small Pal Pads works well with many activities.

Schedules

Why we ♥ Visual Schedules:

- ALL people use schedules
- Keeps us on task
- Helps clarify information
- Provides structure
- Facilitates transitions
- Prepares us for change
- Creates independence

A visual schedule is a set of visual cues that communicates a series of events or the steps of a specific activity. Think about your day...How many times do you use some form of support to keep you organized? Our standard methods may not be appropriate for the individuals we are targeting to help. Many of the ideas you will see in this chapter use a combination of technology (adding voice output can be an additional benefit), objects, photographs, Picture Identification Communication Symbols and written words. Make sure to choose visual cues that meet the developmental needs of the user.

Features Needed:

-Multiple external switches

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-5 small Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

This is an example of a before-school schedule that used real photos on Pal Pads. Pal Pads were positioned and secured on the HanidBoard and cords pulled to the underside via the pre-drilled holes. Pal Pads were plugged into the VoicePal 8. Personalized messages were recorded.

Tips:

-The VoicePal 8 can be placed on the underside of the board to keep it out of reach.
-Pal Pads of different sizes can be used to change the number of messages and/or access area.
-Pal Pads can be secured using hook-and-loop fasteners, double-stick tape or carpet tape.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

-3 Lex
-TalkingMyWay Object Communication Cards

Description:

This object schedule was created using three Lexes. Messages were programmed and object cards placed on each Lex. Lexes were arranged horizontally from left to right. Printed times added an additional visual cue. Pressing any part of the object card activates the Lex.

Tips:

-Pulling the object card off of the Lex will play the message.
-The detachable PICS on the object cards can be used for object-picture matching.
-The schedule could also be arranged vertically.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

In the majority of classrooms, rules are prominently posted for students to see. Voice output adds an auditory component which benefits students who cannot read or who need additional information for rule clarification. The rules were programmed into the Sequencer. Each time the Sequencer was pressed, a recorded message played.

Tips:

-Posters can be found at teacher supply stores.
-Blank or customizable posters can be useful.
-Visual cues such as symbols or photos can be added for clarification.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-4 mini Pal Pads

Description:

Portable and activity-specific schedules are useful. Pal Pads with picture symbols were inserted into the pockets of a photo bag. The VoicePal 8 was used for voice output and placed inside the photo bag. Messages played when the user pressed each pocket.

Tips:

-Place scrapbook stickers on the bag to make the schedule more engaging.
-Even dollar stores have photo bags!
-Look for a variety of bag sizes and photo pocket sizes.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

-Lex
-6 large Overlay Pockets

Description:

Customize your own job charts! Here, Overlay Pockets were positioned on the poster and removable visual cues (job pictures) were added. After each chore was completed, the picture cue was removed and placed in the envelope on the Lex. This activated the message, “All done.”

Tips:

-Personalize the recorded message: “John, you finished it!” or “Nice work, John!”
-Overlay Pockets are clear and protect the pictures.
-No hook-and-loop fasteners are needed when Overlay Pockets are used.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

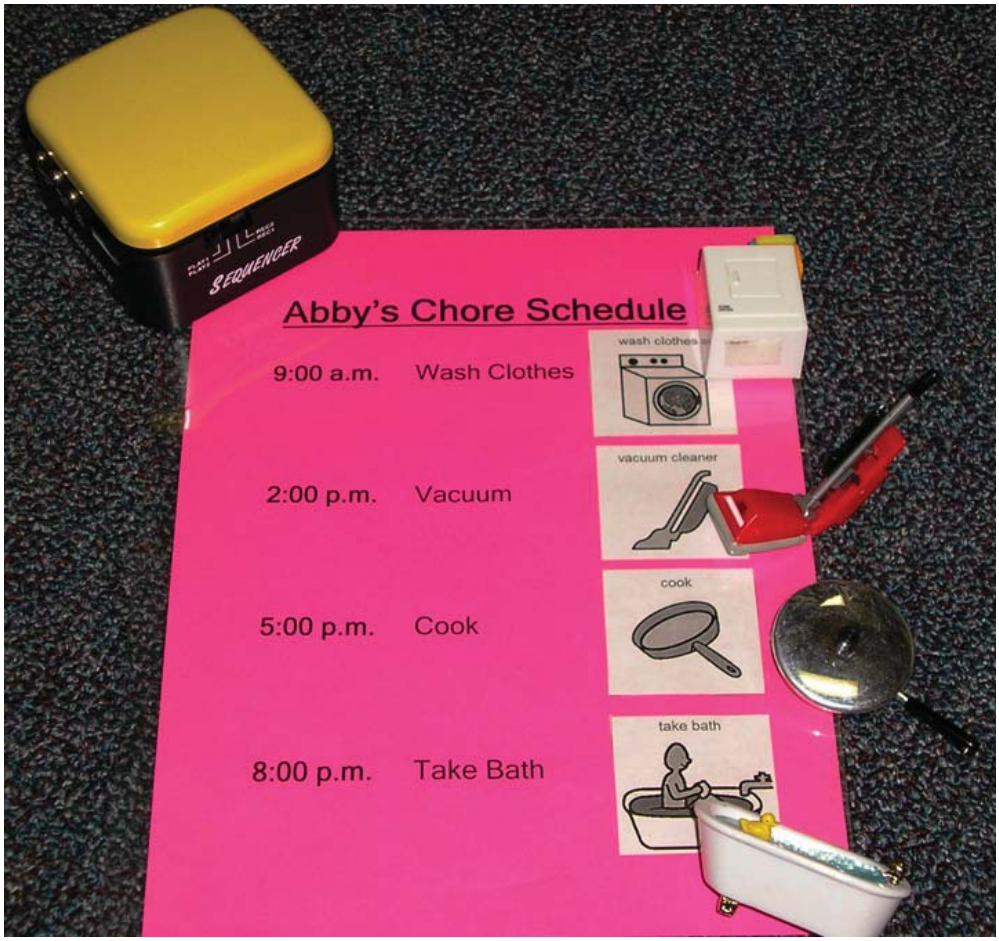
-VoicePal 8
-4 small Pal Pads

Description:

A choice board was created using a tackle box. Holes were drilled in the lid to accommodate Pal Pad cords. The cords were pulled to the inside, and the Pal Pads were secured to the lid using carpet tape. The VoicePal 8 was placed inside and connected to the Pal Pads. This application included an object, a photo, a symbol and a familiar logo to represent choices. The universal “no” sign was also used to indicate unavailable choices.

Tips:

-Plan out Pal Pad placement on the tackle box before drilling holes.
-If you need to use Pal Pads for another activity, use hook-and-loop fasteners instead of carpet tape for easier removal.
-The VoicePal 8 can be heard well even when inside the box.



Features Used:

-Sequential messages

Products Used:

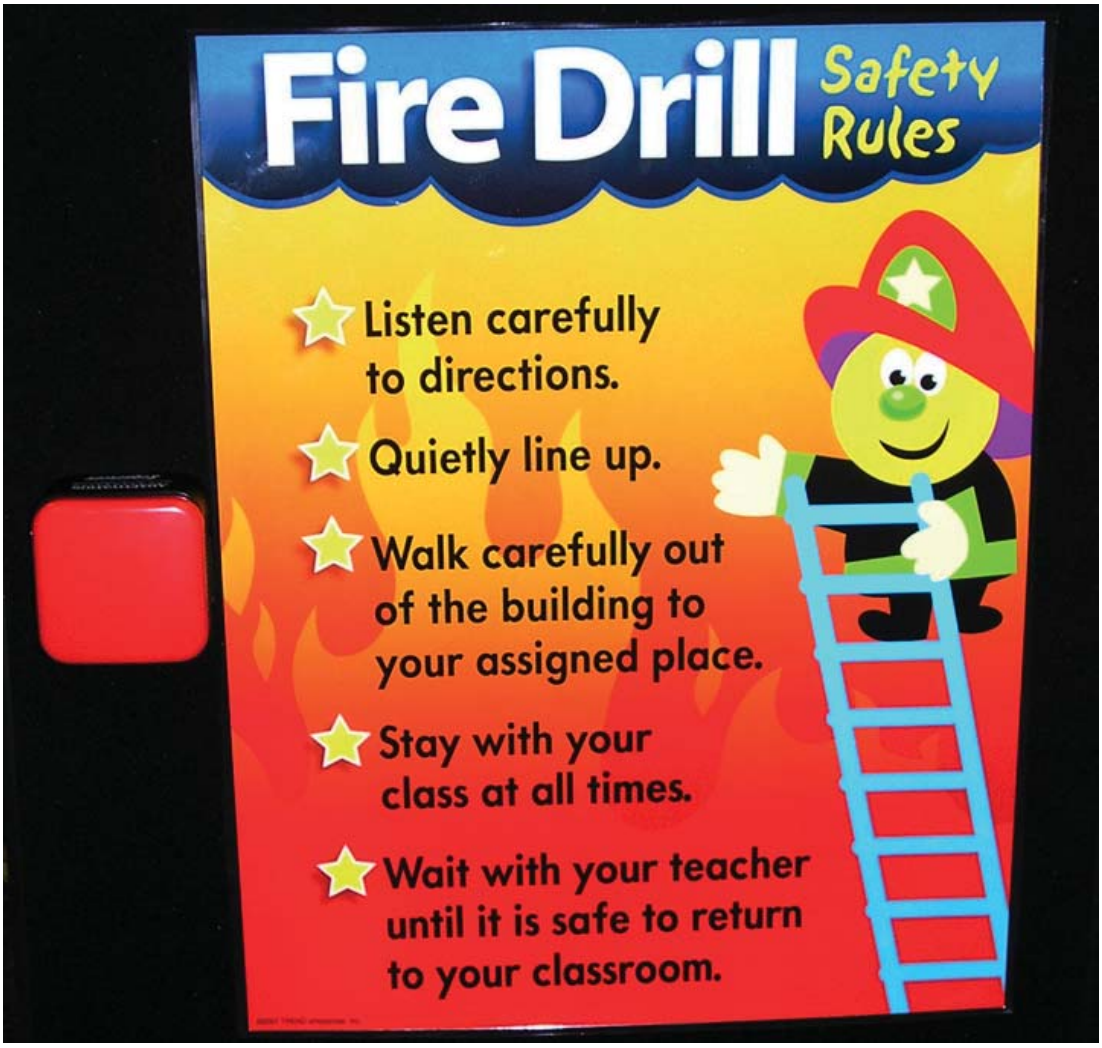
-Sequencer

Description:

Originally, this schedule paired objects and symbols as a way to transition from chore to chore. Adding voice output offerred an additional cue to reinforce transitions and created a more personalized schedule. The recorded messages explained each task. With each activation, the user listened to the message and performed the chore.

Tips:

-Having a family member or friend record the messages can be motivating.
-The use of objects may be discontinued as the user becomes more familiar with the symbols.
-Magnets work great as mini objects.



Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Sequencer
-large Pal Pad
-large Overlay Pocket

Description:

Ready-made posters come in a variety of common topics. Often, these topics need to be reviewed multiple times before their content can be transferred to real-life situations. We created this activity so the user could review the information independently. A Sequencer was programmed with all necessary information from the poster. An Overlay Pocket was attached to the back of the poster to hold the Pal Pad in place. When the poster was pressed, the Sequencer played the recorded information.

Tips:

-Here, the poster (not device) is the main focus of the activity.
-The size of the Pal Pad changes the access area.
-Using an Overlay Pocket allows you to put the Pal Pad in the same spot every time.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

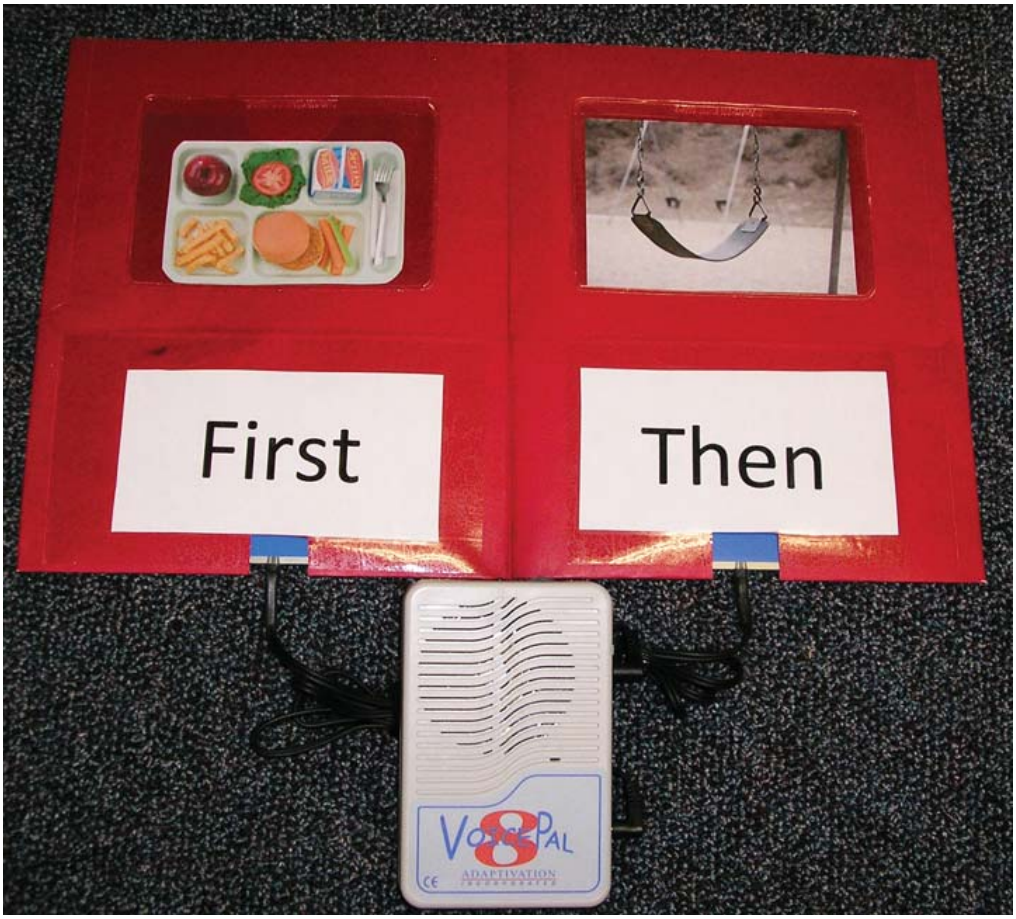
-VoicePal 8
-3 large Pal Pads

Description:

This setup has multiple possibilities...Use on the floor, set on a table or hang on the wall. Objects, photos, symbols and/or text could be placed on top of the Pal Pads. We plugged the Pal Pads into the VoicePal 8 for voice output and used objects as visual cues.

Tips:

-Up to eight switches can be plugged into the VoicePal 8.
-Not all switches need to be the same.
-This setup allows for horizontal or vertical placement of the switches.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-2 large Pal Pads

Description:

“First-Then” is a strategy commonly used to clarify expectations for the student. We took this to the next level and added voice output. Pal Pads were placed in the pockets of this folder. Notches were cut to accommodate the cords, and the cords were plugged into the VoicePal 8. Transitioning to a new activity can be done quickly by recording new messages.

Tips:

-Overlay Pockets can be used for the switches or the visual cues.
-Personalize the activity by using a folder that is appealing to the user.
-Two single-message devices can be used.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels
-10 mini Pal Pads

Description:

Switches give pocket charts a whole, new use. Pal Pads were inserted into several pockets of the chart. Small openings were cut allowing cords to be pulled to the back. Symbols representing school activities were placed in the pockets. The Pal Pads were plugged into the VoicePal Levels (placed behind the pocket chart). Messages were recorded into the device making the chart interactive.

Tips:

-Not all pockets need to have Pal Pads.
-Create “secret” talking spots.
-Pocket charts can be used while hanging or laying on a flat surface such as the floor or table.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switches

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

We found a solution for keeping objects accessible AND contained. These clear, plastic containers fit perfectly on the SwitchBoard. Objects were placed in the containers, and containers attached to the SwitchBoard. The SwitchBoard was plugged into the VoicePal 8. Touch the containers to activate the recorded messages.

Tips:

-The containers used come in various sizes and can be found at office supply stores.
-These containers fit well on Pal Pads.
-This is a solution for objects that would otherwise be difficult to attach within a schedule.

Features Used:

-Single message
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Chipper
-small Pal Pad
-small Overlay Pocket

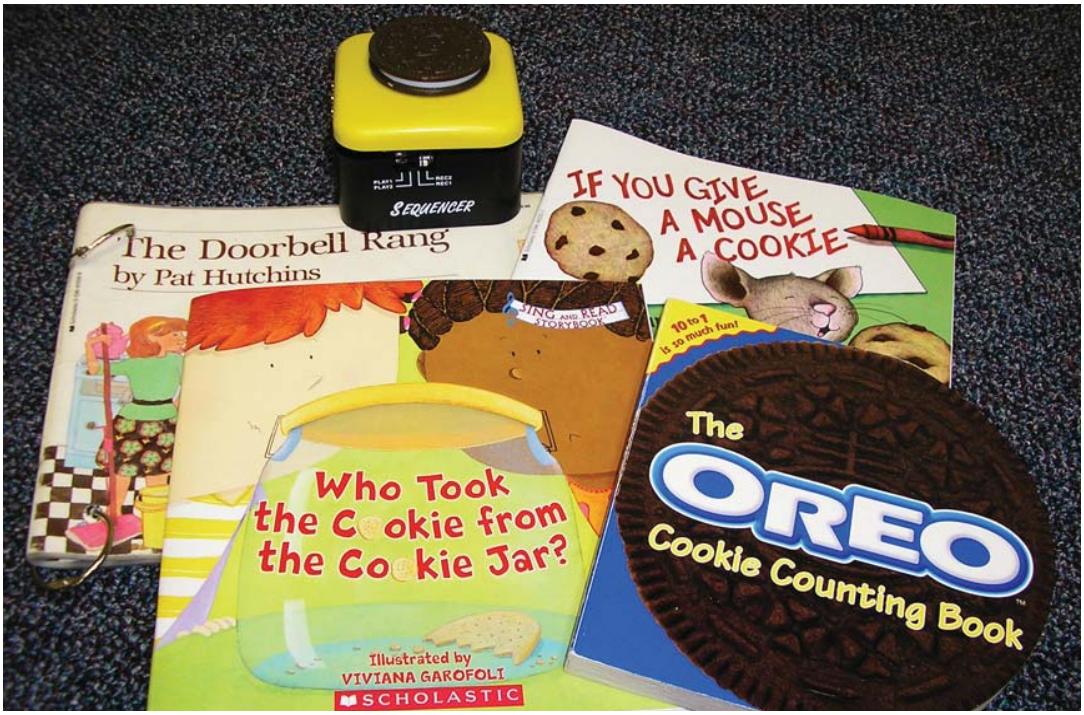
Description:

Use common craft items to create schedules. We added an Overlay Pocket to the back of a foam door hanger. The Pal Pad was placed inside and plugged into the Chipper. The message was activated by pressing the door hanger. The Chipper was chosen because the single message, “check your schedule,” was most appropriate.

Tips:

-The objects for this activity are mini erasers.
-Use photos instead of symbols.
-Using a Sequencer instead of a Chipper would allow for multiple messages to be played.

Literacy

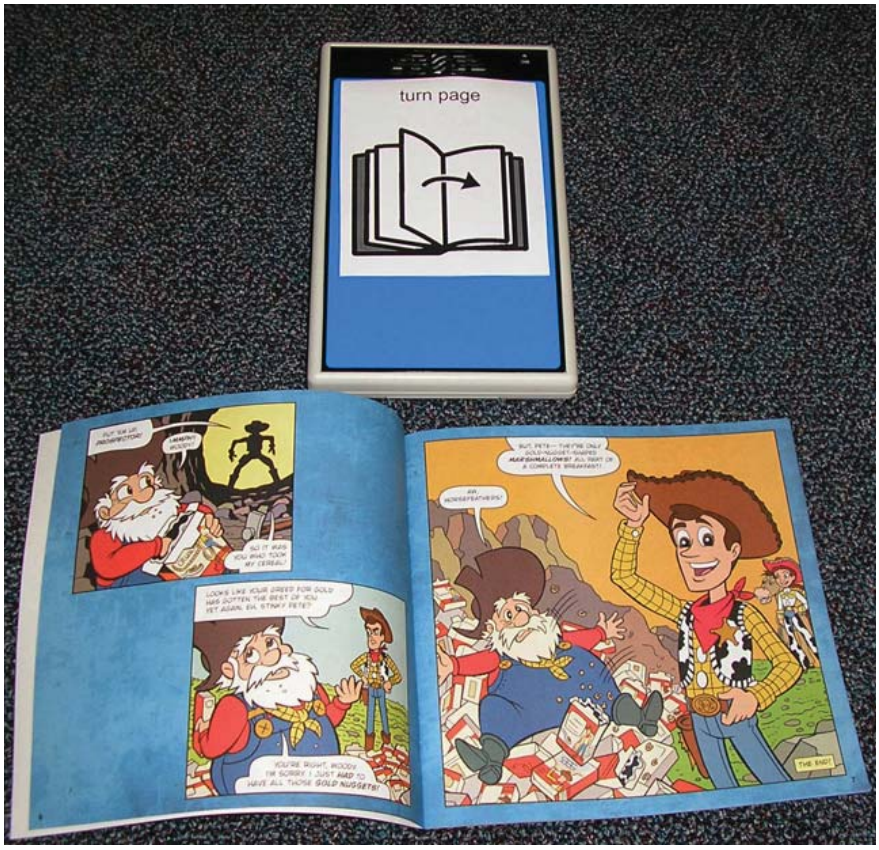


Why we ♥ using lite tech for literacy:

- Great for learning & leisure
- Books are easy to find
- Reading promotes interaction
- Reinforces repetition
- Expands vocabulary
- Helps focus attention
- Encourages listening

Books and technology are natural partners, and are much easier to incorporate than you may think. Literacy is something that should be introduced in infancy and continued throughout life...And no one should be excluded!

In this chapter, we chose many ideas to show how technology and books can be paired for functional literacy activities. These activities span many age levels, physical abilities and cognitive skills. Keep in mind that we have only touched the surface of possibilities when it comes to adapting books!



Disney Comics Collection: Toy Story 2 published by Creative Edge, LLC.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

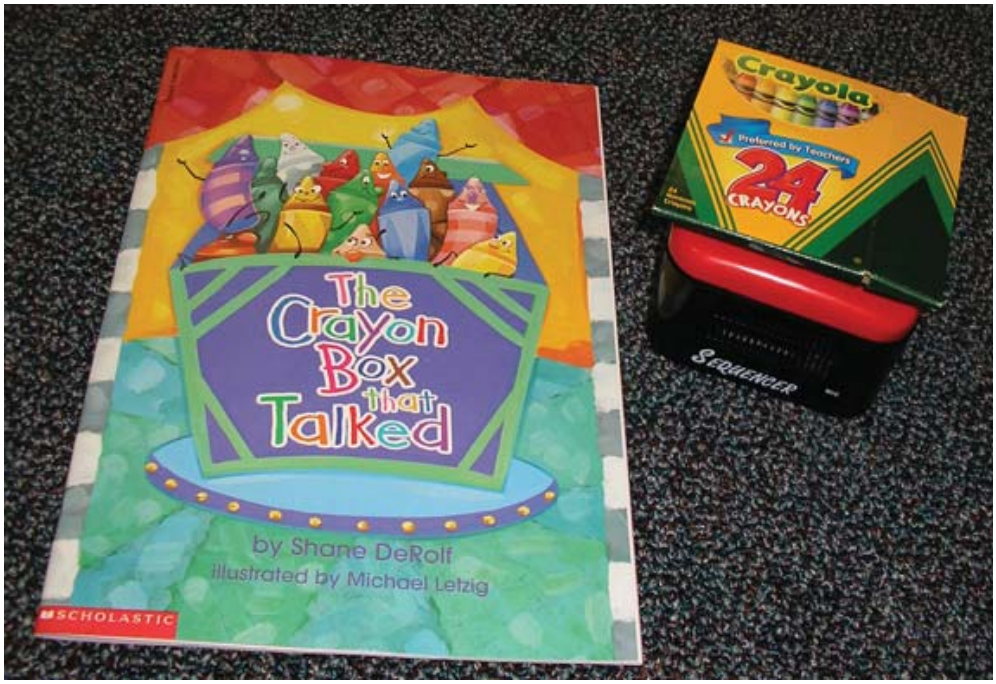
-Lex

Description:

For an older student, it is important to find age-appropriate activities. Books formatted as comics are a good example. Even if a student is not able to read, he can follow along and prompt page-turning. This keeps him engaged in the activity and encourages him to listen. In this activity, a single message was programmed into the Lex. The user activated the message when ready to move to the next page.

Tips:

-The reader should turn the page whenever the message is activated even if the page has not been completely read. This will help the user learn appropriate cause-and-effect.
-This is an activity for any age.
-If the user needs switch access, use a single message device such as the Chipper.



The Crayon Box that Talked published by Shane DeRolf

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

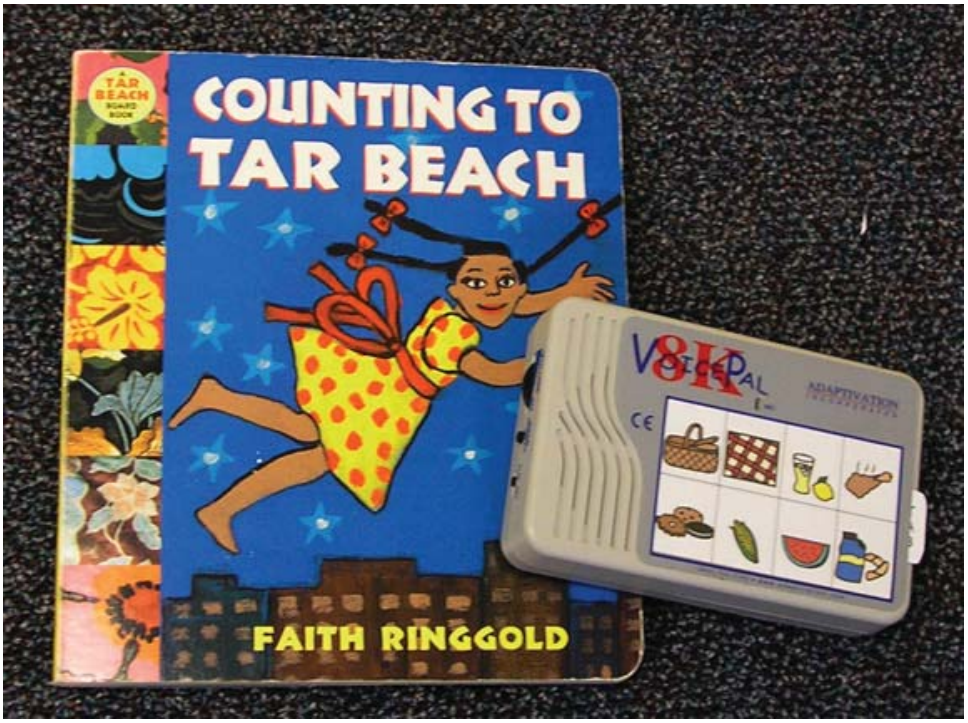
-Sequencer

Description:

Familiar objects make great visual cues. They are more fun and meaningful to the user, which in turn, makes device use more successful. The Sequencer was programmed with the rhyming words that appeared throughout the story. In this case, the reader paused and waited for the user to “fill in the blank” with the rhyming words.

Tips:

-The text of each page could be recorded into the Sequencer.
-If visual cues are needed for each message, the sequential-messaging feature of the Medley would be a more appropriate option.
-A device that uses an overlay can be used for those individuals who can listen and select the appropriate rhyming words.



Counting to Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

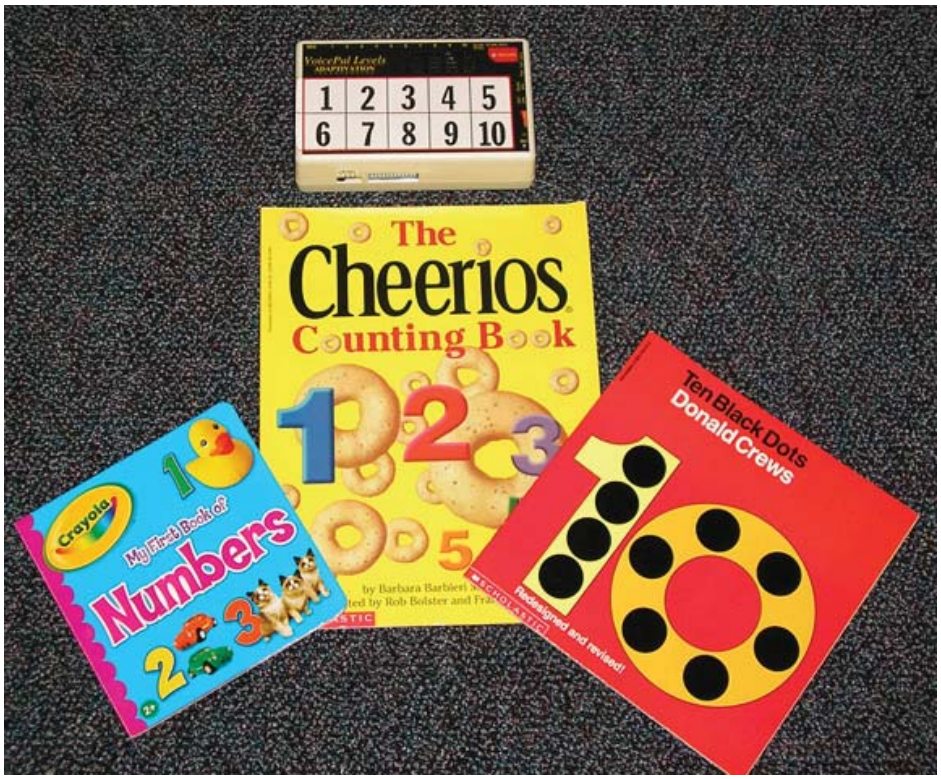
-VoicePal 8K

Description:

When reading stories, it is important to do follow-up activities that reinforce the concepts introduced. It is helpful to use books that incorporate real-life situations the user may encounter. For example, this book talked about a picnic. The acitivity represented by the overlay on the VoicePal 8K allowed the user to talk about the story and her own picnic.

Tips:

-An overlay can be created to represent the vocabulary in the book.
-Save and store overlays with the story so that they are available each time the book is re-read.
-External switches can be added to the VoicePal 8K if you are using objects or larger pictures.



My First Book of Numbers published by Creative Edge, LLC
The Cheerios® Counting Book by Barbara Barbieri McGrath
Ten Black Dots by Donald Crews

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Number overlays are useful for a variety of books and activities. Creating an overlay with the numbers one through ten is simple and can be used on multiple occasions. There are many “counting” books including simple songs, nursery rhymes and other stories. This overlay was used by a student capable of direct selection. Messages recorded ranged from the actual numbers to singing lines of a song (i.e., “five little monkeys jumping on the bed”).

Tips:

-Record with lots of enthusiasm to make messages interesting.
-The VoicePal Levels can accommodate individuals who are single-switch users and require scanning.
-Make sure to laminate overlays that are used often.

Transformers Animated: More than Meets the Eye! published by Bendon Publishing International, Inc.
What is a Princess? by Jennifer Weinberg

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

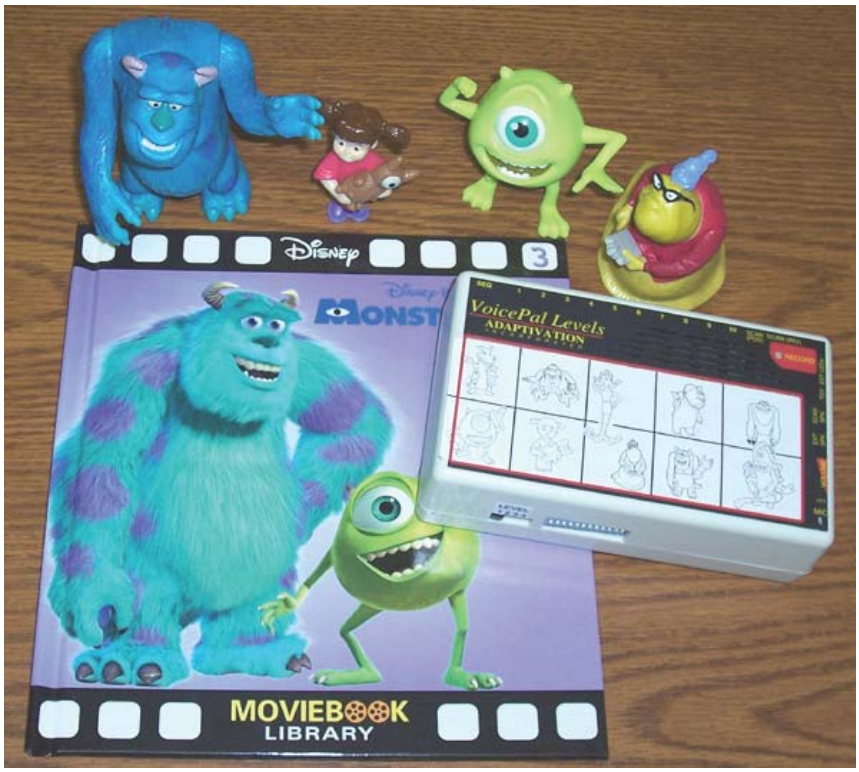
-Lex

Description:

We spend too much time creating visual cues when actual-activity items could be used instead. The Lex was chosen because of its large activation area. The activity choice itself (the book) was placed on the Lex. At choice-making time, the individual could see the actual book that was going to be read, making the option very clear. When the individual pressed the book, a message (i.e. “I’m ready for reading time”) played.

Tips:

-Large Pal Pads can accommodate larger visual cues.
-Since the Lex has three levels, three choices can be recorded and saved.
-Pulling the book off the Lex will play the message. This could be useful for users who are not initiating activation on their own but are interested in the visual cue.



Monster's Inc. published by Advance Publishers, L.C.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Make story time more fun with manipulatives. Popular movie and theme objects can be found almost anywhere (it was easy to collect these items from fast food kids' meals). The overlay on the VoicePal Levels was created by photocopying the directions that came with the toys. Recording character quotes was a fun message alternative.

Tips:

-Record actual character voices by downloading free sound clips.
-Record music from the movie soundtrack instead of voice messages.
-The VoicePal Levels has a sequential messaging mode and can be used to tell the story.

Monster Stew by Marcia S. Gresko

Features Used:

-Wireless AC-applicance control

Products Used:

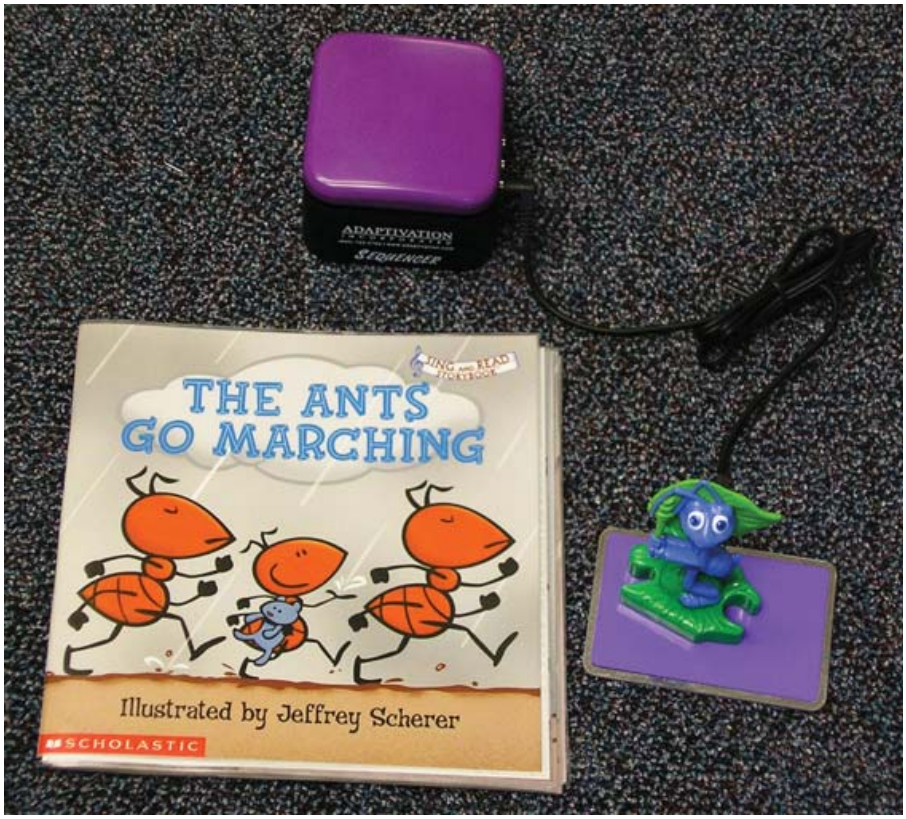
-FreeHand

Description:

Voice output isn't the only technology that is effective for literacy activities. Environmental controls are a fun and easy way to prevent students from becoming passive listeners only. The FreeHand allowed the pot of fire to be turned on and off throughout the story about making stew. We used a repetitive line from the story as the cue to turn on the pot.

Tips:

-Look in the holiday-clearance aisles for unique AC-operated lights. For instance, this pot was a Halloween-clearance item.
-For controlling the number of switch activations necessary, use either the timing or latch mode on the FreeHand.
-The wireless feature of the FreeHand allows for easy positioning to accommodate individual or group needs.



The Ants Go Marching illustrated by Jeffrey Scherer

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

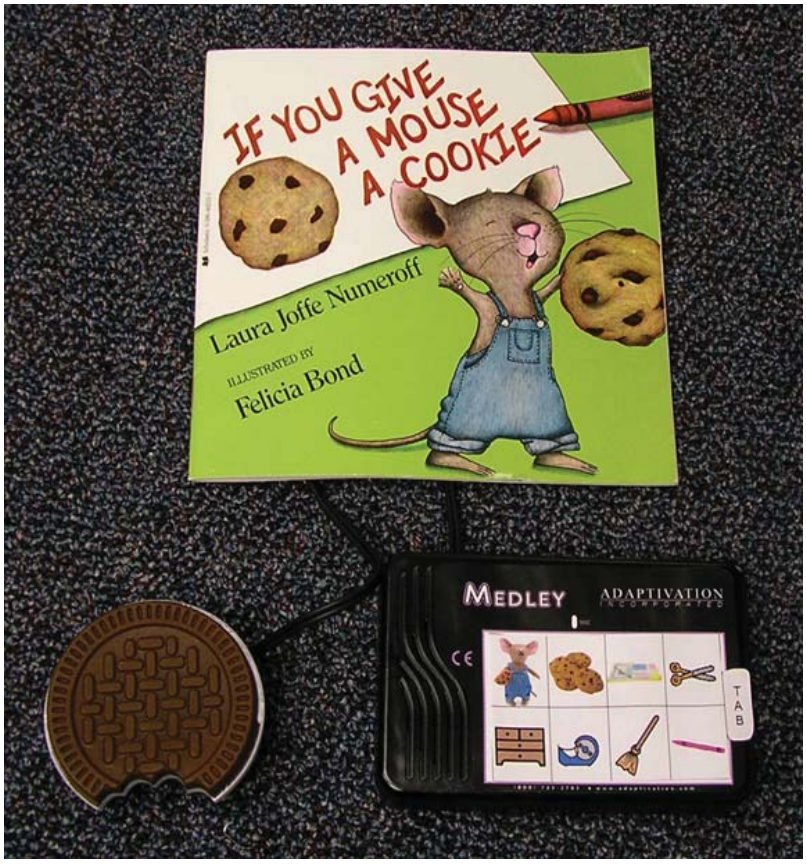
-Sequencer
-small Pal Pad

Description:

The advantages of using an external switch are often overlooked if they are not needed for physical access. The user may be more motivated to participate in the activity when a fun visual cue is used. Objects and other visual cues are simple to add to a switch such as the Pal Pad. For this example, the toy ant was placed on top of the Pal Pad. The user sang along by “pressing” the ant.

Tips:

-Pal Pads can be activated in a variety of ways (put the object on, take the object off or simply touch the object).
-Even when an external switch is plugged into the Sequencer, the user can still press the top to play the messages.
-Having more than one activation site is ideal in a group activity in which there are users with multiple access needs.



If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-Keypad

Products Used:

-Medley
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

Sequencing can be used as a receptive OR an expressive language tool. For this story, the text was recorded into the Medley. Using the Pneumatic Switch with a squeeze cookie (for association) added interest to the messages. The user was able to tell or listen to the story by squeezing the cookie.

Tips:

-Even in sequential messaging, the keypad of the Medley is functional.
-Don't forget to use text as a visual cue if the user is familiar with the key vocabulary from the story.
-Check out the pet aisles for squeeze toys to use with the Pneumatic Switch.

Go for the Gold by Quinlan B. Lee

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-Keypad

Products Used:

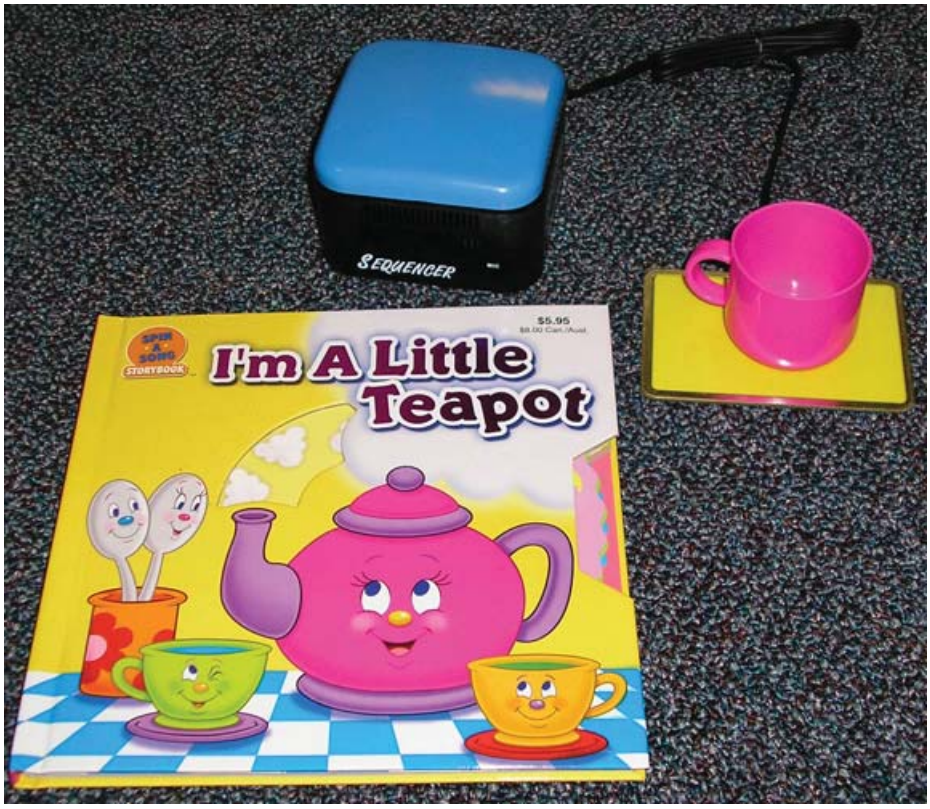
-VoicePal Levels
-mini Pal Pad

Description:

Some books reinforce developmental concepts. Here, word-family phonics are used in this rhyming story. An overlay was created using both pictures and text for concept reinforcement. An external switch (here, a mini Pal Pad was slipped inside a sock) is necessary for sequencing on the Voice-Pal Levels. The vocabulary was recorded into the VoicePal Levels. The rhyming words played in the sequence they occurred in the story.

Tips:

-Messages for sequencing on the VoicePal Levels can be recorded in any order. Individual messages can be changed without re-recording the entire sequence.
-Educational activities involving popular characters are common.
-Any external switch can be used as your access to sequencing on the VoicePal Levels.



I'm a Little Teapot published by Playmore Inc., Publishers

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

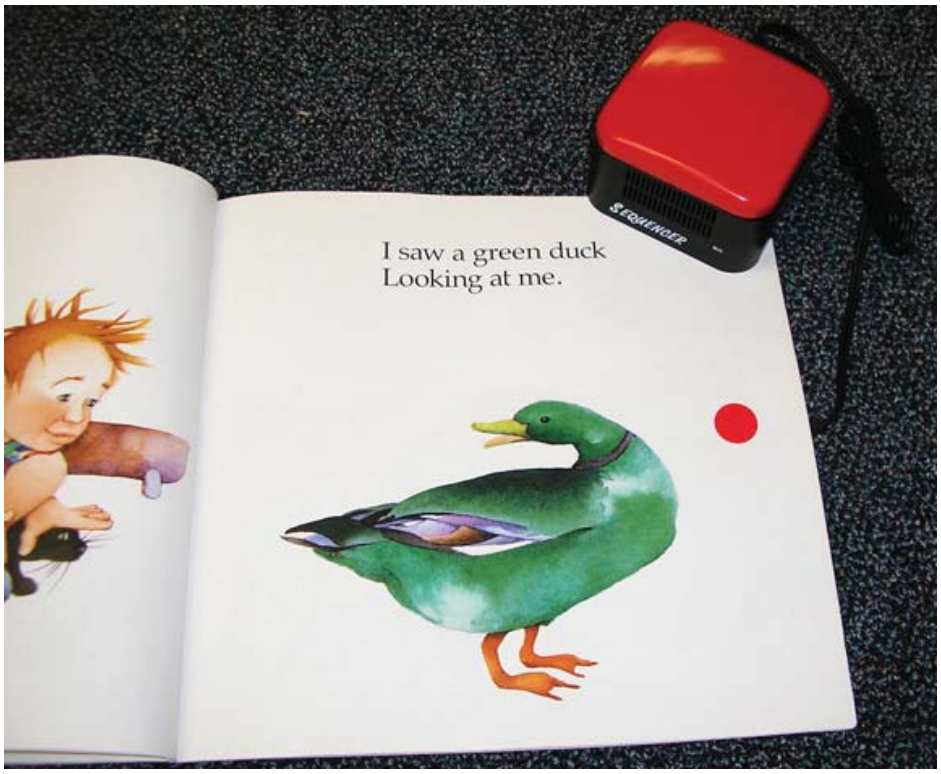
-Sequencer
-small Pal Pad

Description:

Nursery rhymes are vital in phonemic awareness development. Students who are non-verbal need a way to recite nursery rhymes and songs. Books can provide the visual cues to accompany the rhyme. Here, the lines of the song were recorded into the Sequencer (be sure to record using rhythm and familiar tunes). We chose a teacup as the visual cue and placed it on a small Pal Pad.

Tips:

-Sequential messaging is ideal technology for nursery rhymes and simple songs.
-Children need this type of activity repeated on numerous occasions.
-This setup of the Sequencer and Pal Pad combination can be used repeatedly for multiple activities.



I Went Walking by Sue Williams

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

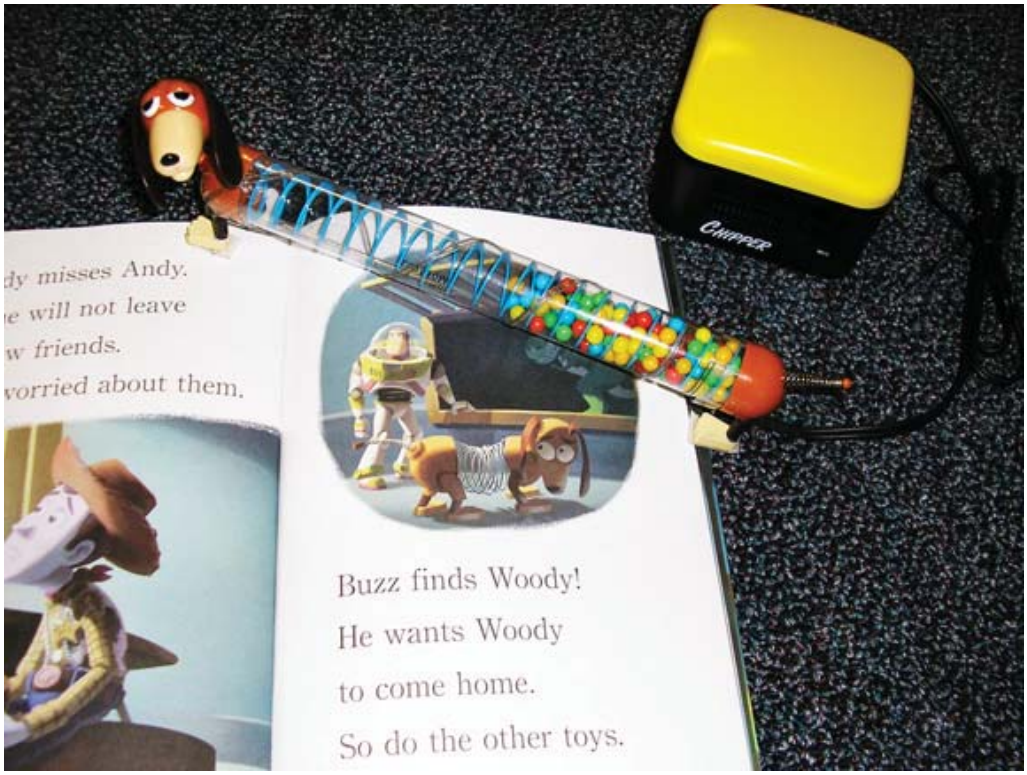
-Sequencer
-small Pal Pad
-small Overlay Pocket

Description:

Too often, the user's focus is on the technology, not the activity. "Hiding" the technology in the acitvity is a way to remedy this. Here, a flat switch was placed on the inside back cover of the book. When plugged into a sequential-messaging device, the book can be read by pressing each page of the book (pressing the page activates the switch underneath). In this example, a sticker was placed on each page to indicate where to press, and the text on each page was recorded as a message.

Tips:

-It is easy to increase or decrease the activation area by using different-size Pal Pads.
-Overlay Pockets allow easy placement and removal of the Pal Pad without permanently attaching the switch to the book.
-This setup can be used with a single-message device such as the Chipper (the same message such as a repetitive line will play for each page).



Friends Forever by Melissa Lagonegro

Features Used:

-Single message
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Chipper
-Taction Pad

Description:

Taction Pads turn any object into a switch. For some students, objects are more developmentally appropriate, while for others they provide additional motivation. We found a candy character to go along with this book. Because of the container's shape, we were able to wrap a Taction Pad around the container. In this instance, the Taction Pad is activated by grasping the candy container.

Tips:

-Look for objects associated with the topic of the book.
-Changing the message can change the activity (i.e. "Turn the page" v. a repetitive line).
-Utilize free internet sound clips to record character voices.
-Taction Pads are available in a variety of shapes and sizes.

Chicken on the Farm by David Crossley

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Sequencer
-Taction Pad

Description:

Before adapting any book, make sure to look for natural features you can use to make adapting easier. For example, books with cutouts pair well with Taction Pads. Taction Pads are clear, so they do not obscure the pictures in the story. Here, the Taction Pad was placed on the back inside cover and plugged into the Sequencer. When the Taction Pad was touched, text from the story played.

Tips:

-Cutouts in books can act as a natural keyguard.
-Taction Pads come in different sizes and can be cut if necessary.
-Taction Pads are activated by the moisture in your skin and require no pressure.

Two Feet by David Kennett

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Sequencer
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

Generally, Pneumatic Switches are activated by an oral puff or sip. With our Pneumatic Switch the "puff" can be supplied via a squeeze toy or object. Fun and interesting squeeze toys are easy to find and are usually inexpensive. Here, the Pneumatic Switch was paired with the squeeze rain boot. Squeezing the boot played messages on the Sequencer.

Tips:

-Empty chocolate syrup bottles and other real containers can be used in place of a squeeze toy.
-Pet departments carry an array of squeeze toys.
-The use of squeeze toys and objects is not limited to literacy. For example, a chocolate syrup bottle can become the switch that activates a blender for making malts.

Look at Me! published by Begin Smart™, LLC

Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

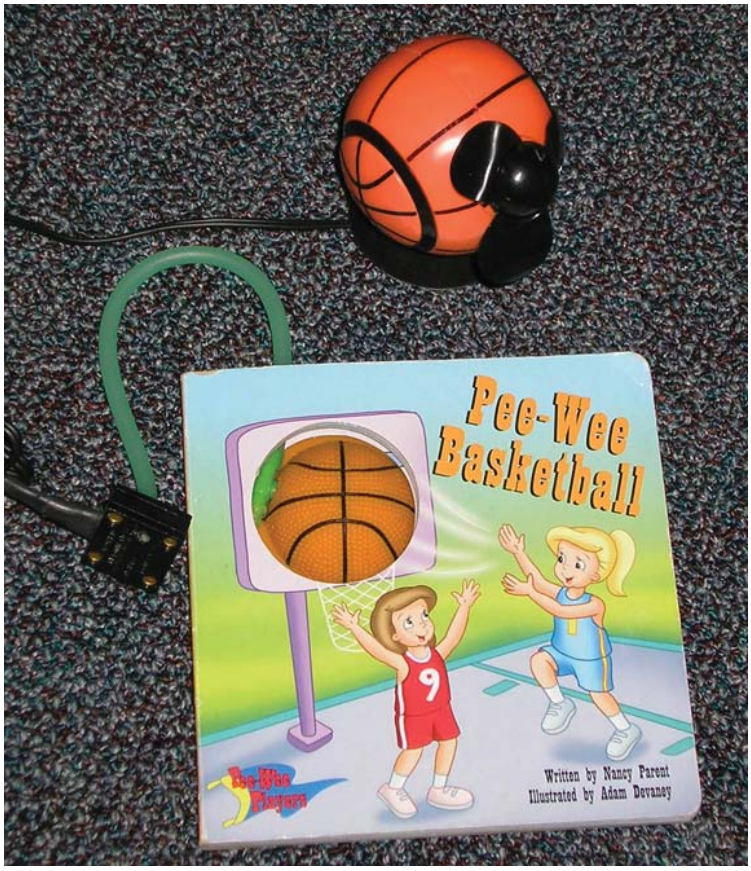
-Randomizer
-Flexible Switch

Description:

Books can be used for other activities in addition to reading. The animal sounds for this story were recorded into the Randomizer. As messages were played, the user had to find the matching animal page. Because messages were played randomly, the user had to listen closely. For another activation option, a Flexible Switch was placed on the back cover. The handle opening became a natural "keyguard" for the switch.

Tips:

-Record real-animal sounds.
-Random messaging on the Medley allows for visual cues for each message on the overlay.
-A Taction Pad or Pal Pad would also work for this example.



Pee-Wee Basketball by Nancy Parent

Features Used:

-Battery adaption

Products Used:

-Pneumatic Switch
-Battery Interrupter

Description:

The Pneumatic Switch is activated by the “puff” of a squeeze toy. Sometimes, squeeze toys are part of the book. In this case, an extension of tubing was required to connect the squeeze toy to the Pneumatic Switch. The switch was connected to a battery-adapted fan. When the basketball in the book was pressed, the fan turned on.

Tips:

-The LinkSwitch can provide additional modes of operation to a battery-adapted toy.
-A communication device can be used in place of the fan.
-When the word “basketball” appears in the story, the user presses the basketball in the book to make the fan turn on.

My First Action Rhymes pictures by Lynne Cravath

Features Used:

-Random messaging
-Battery adaption
-Relay (Toy Jack)

Products Used:

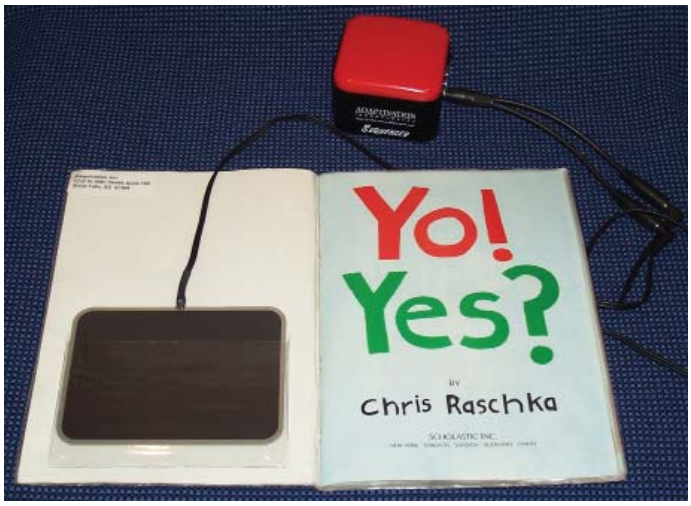
-Randomizer
-Battery Interrupter
-Male-Male Cable Connector

Description:

It is easy to add visual cause-and-effect to a communication device by using the Relay feature of the Randomizer. Take any battery-adapted item (here a Battery Interrupter was used to adapt a pop light) and connect it to the Randomizer using a Male-Male Cable Connector. Now, this light will come on when messages play. The Randomizer was selected for this activity so the messages (i.e. “clap your hands”) would be a “surprise”.

Tips:

-Use sequential messaging for singing songs line by line.
-Children respond differently to children’s voices, so let classmates record messages.
-Choose a longer length of on-time for your Relay item by recording silence after you finish speaking your message.



Yo! Yes? by Chris Raschka

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

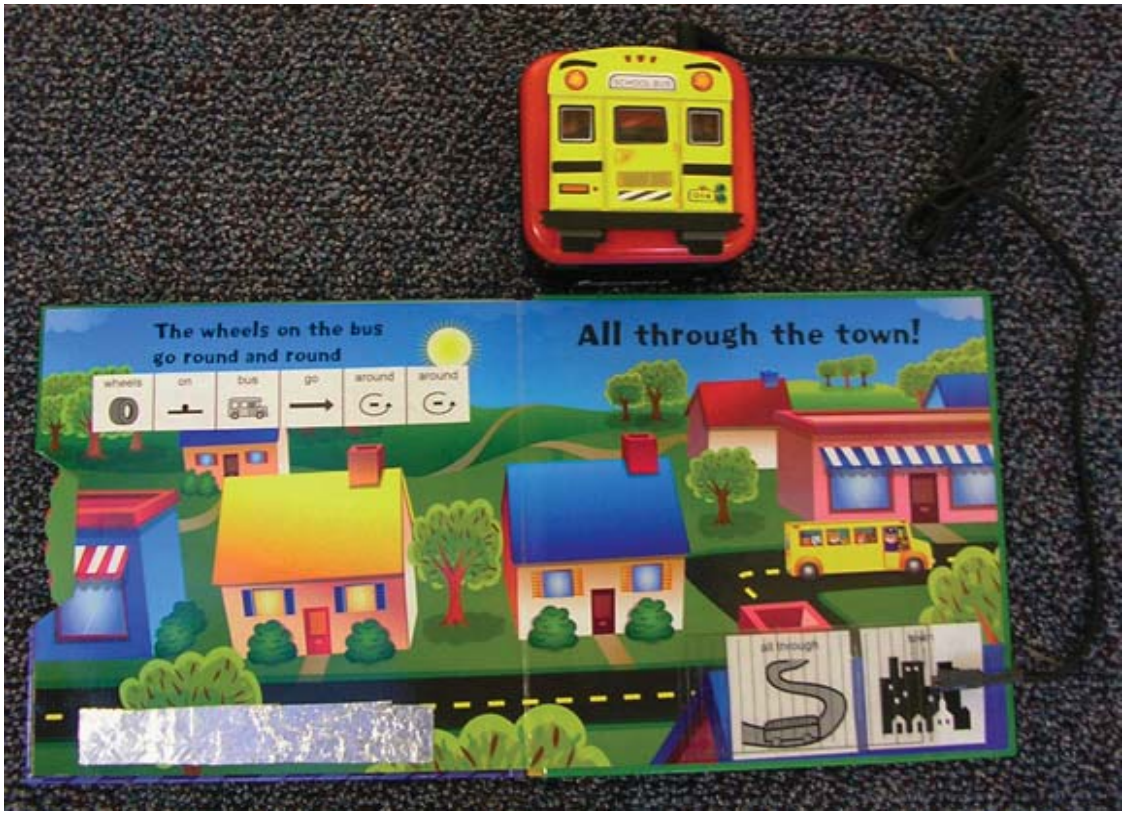
-Sequencer
-2 large Pal Pads
-2 large Overlay Pockets
-Y-Cable Connector (Radio Shack®)

Description:

There are books available that naturally promote turn-taking. Two switches were used in this setup (one for each user). A switch was placed on the front inside cover, and the other was placed on the inside back cover. Each switch was then plugged into a Y-Cable Connector, and the Connector was plugged into the switch jack of the Sequencer. The users had to alternate activation to keep the sequence going. This required them to remain engaged and wait their turn.

Tips:

-Two boys are the main characters of this book. Different voices can be recorded for each to distinguish their characters.
-This setup could be used for a single user to encourage bi-lateral hand use.
-The switch users may have unique access needs. Any switches can be used. The switches do not need to be identical.



The Wheels on the Bus published by Playmore Inc., Publishers

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

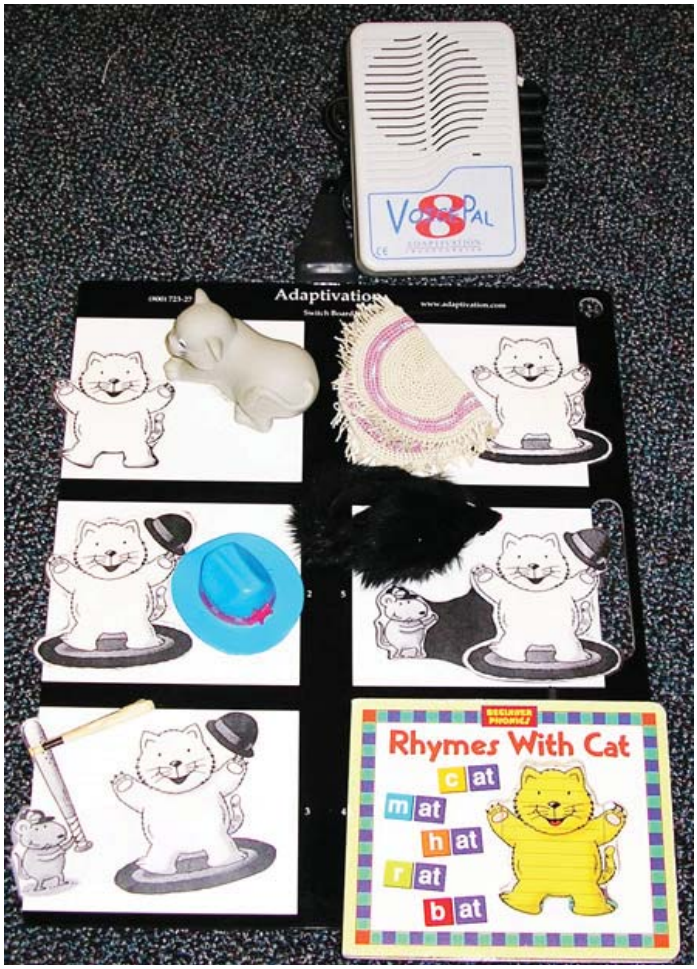
-Sequencer
-Taction Pad

Description:

Taction Pads are normally activated by skin touch, but they can also be activated by aluminum foil. This combination of a thin, clear switch and foil works well in books. The Taction Pad was adhered to the back inside cover and plugged into the Sequencer. A thin strip of foil was adhered in the same location on the opposite page. The voice output is activated by pressing on the right-hand page. This brings the foil into contact with the Taction Pad.

Tips:

-If you intend to use the Taction Pad in other activities, it is advised that you first adhere it to a clear transparency sheet. Then, place it in the book using hook-and-loop fasteners or double-stick tape.
-Put a sticker on each page to indicate where to press.
-A visual cue can be added to the Sequencer to represent the current activity.



Rhymes with Cat published by Louis Weber, C.E.O., Publications International, Ltd.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

The pages of this story were photocopied and cut out. Black and white was chosen to provide contrast to the colored pages in the book. The photocopies were paired with miniature objects, and both were placed on the SwitchBoard. Messages containing the rhyming words were recorded into the VoicePal 8. Touching the pictures or the objects activated the messages.

Tips:

-Match the object with the picture (placing the object on the picture will activate the message).
-Pull the object off of the SwitchBoard to activate the message.
-Use a variety of visual cues within one activity to help meet the varied needs of a group.

Old Macdonald had a farm illustrated by Pam Adams

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

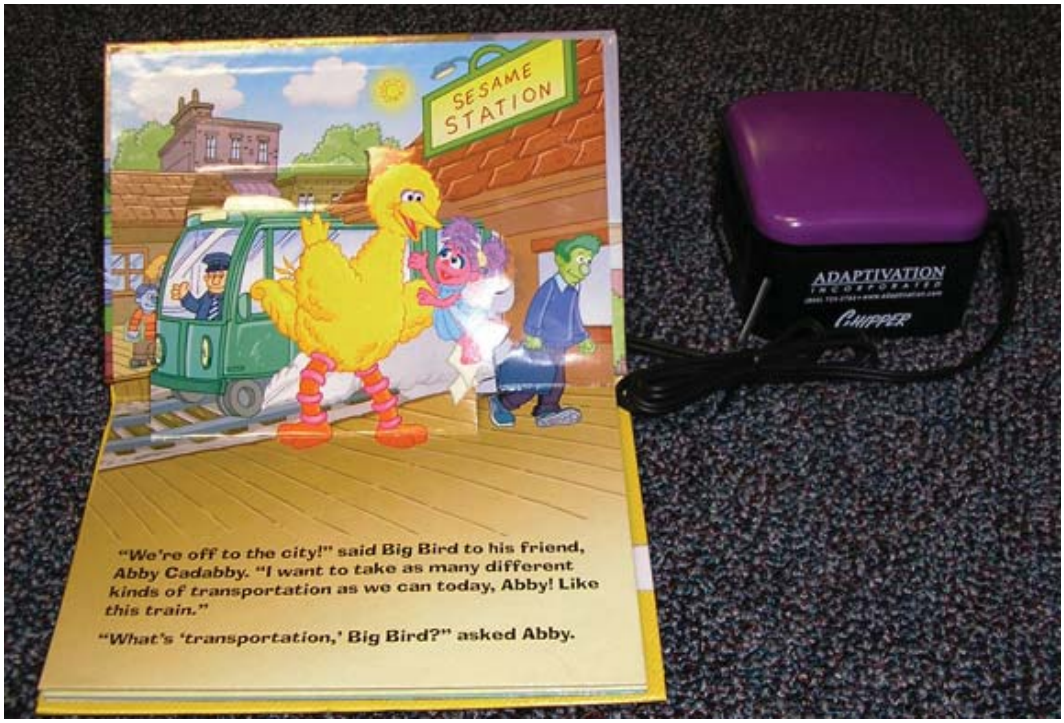
-VoicePal 8K
-7 mini Pal Pads
-7 mini Overlay Pockets

Description:

This IntelliTools® overlay was adapted by attaching Overlay Pockets to the back and placing switches in the pockets. The switches were plugged into the VoicePal 8K. Pressing the pictures on the overlay activated the messages.

Tips:

-Create larger access areas by using different switch sizes.
-To serve more students, use the keypad feature of the VoicePal 8K by creating an overlay.
-Record animal sounds for the messages.



Big Bird in the City by Lee Howard

Features Used:

-Single message
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Chipper
-large Pal Pad
-large Overlay Pocket

Description:

Pop-up books are popular and add a 3-D visual component. An Overlay Pocket was attached to the back outside cover of the book, and a Pal Pad was inserted into the pocket. The Pal Pad was plugged into the Chipper. Pressing anywhere on the page activated the message.

Tips:

-Use a mini Pal Pad to decrease the size of the activation area. This can be important if a student is working on fine-motor skills such as pointing.
-A single message that repeats throughout the story can be very effective.
-Greeting cards are another source of 3-D pop ups.

Shrek the Third: Friends and Foes adapted by Catherine Hapka

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-External switch jack
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8K
-large Pal Pad

Description:

Kids are drawn to things they see on TV and in movies. Books and visual cues with these characters are easy to find. This setup contains visual cues of various sizes...The keypad overlay was created using stickers, and the visual cue on the Pal Pad is a piece of a puzzle. Both were purchased at a local dollar store. The visual cues now match the characters in the story.

Tips:

-Visual cues can be used in a variety of activities (not just for reading the story).
-Find character voices by searching for free sound clips on the internet.
-Popular characters provide a common interest for device users and their peers.

What Can You Do on a Snowy Day? by Sandra Damashek

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-8 Pal Pads (variety)
-HandiBoard

Description:

Textures can be used in a variety of ways.There are many books that include textures. If possible, purchase two copies of the book. Take one copy apart to create a set of matching textures. For this example, the texture pieces were placed on Pal Pad switches. When pressed, they activated the messages on the VoicePal 8.

Tips:

-Textures found in books are generally easy to find at fabric and craft stores.
-Your own switch array can be created by using the HandiBoard.
-The HandiBoard keeps cords organized and draws focus to the activity (not the technology).

Touch and Feel Farm published by Dorling Kindersley Limited

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-5 small Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

The flat surface of a Pal Pad makes it easy to affix various textures. This book contained five different textures, so five Pal Pads were mounted to the HandiBoard. The VoicePal 8 was used to accommodate the switches. The user was encouraged to match the texture on each page to the corresponding texture on the Pal Pad.

Tips:

-In this activity, the user does not need direct access to the VoicePal 8. Attach the device to the back of the HandiBoard to keep it out of reach and to make the setup portable.
-Textures can be used for other activities that don't include technology.
-The *Touch and Feel* book series use simple-to-find textures and real photos.

The Costume Parade published by Rozanne Lanczak Williams

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-6 small Pal Pads

Description:

Dont' shy away from using multiple external switches, because the cords seem cumbersome and unmanageable. Cord troubles can be solved by using an inexpensive, plastic case. Pal Pads were attached to the lid and holes were drilled to accommodate the cords. The cords were pulled to the inside of the case, and the VoicePal 8 was placed inside. This created a self-contained communication system.

Tips:

-In this example, the visual cues were created by color copying pictures from the book.
-Make your visual cues last longer by covering them with clear-contact paper.
-Create case arrangements that can be used for multiple activities.

Old MacDonald Had a Farm published by Playmore Inc., Publishers

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-Pal Pads (variety)
-Overlay Pockets (variety)

Description:

Placemats can be used as a multi-switch overlay. They work well, because they are moisture resistant and visually appealing. You can find placemats that represent important concepts and/or characters. This farm placemat was adapted by placing Overlay Pockets underneath various animals. Pal Pads were inserted in the Overlay Pockets creating multiple activation areas. The VoicePal 8 was chosen because it accommodated multiple switches.

Tips:

-Place Overlay Pockets on a placemat to allow for easy re-creation for the activity even if Pal Pads are removed and used elsewhere.
-Use different Pal Pad sizes to change the size of the activation area.
-This setup also works well with posters.

Five Little Monkeys Jumping On the Bed by Eileen Christelow

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-5 small Pal Pads

Description:

Look for creative ways to add visual interest and to encourage participation. Pal Pads and hand puppets are a great combination. Generally, a small Pal Pad can be inserted into a puppet. Here, five dollar store monkey puppets were used to represent the five monkeys in the book. Switches were activated by “petting” the monkeys. Story-related messages were recorded for each monkey.

Tips:

-For this book, pull a puppet off the Pal Pad each time a monkey “falls” off the bed.
-This setup used a mat made of Velcro®-sensitive material to secure Pal Pads.
-The device and cords were hidden under the material.

What is a Princess? by Jennifer Weinberg

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

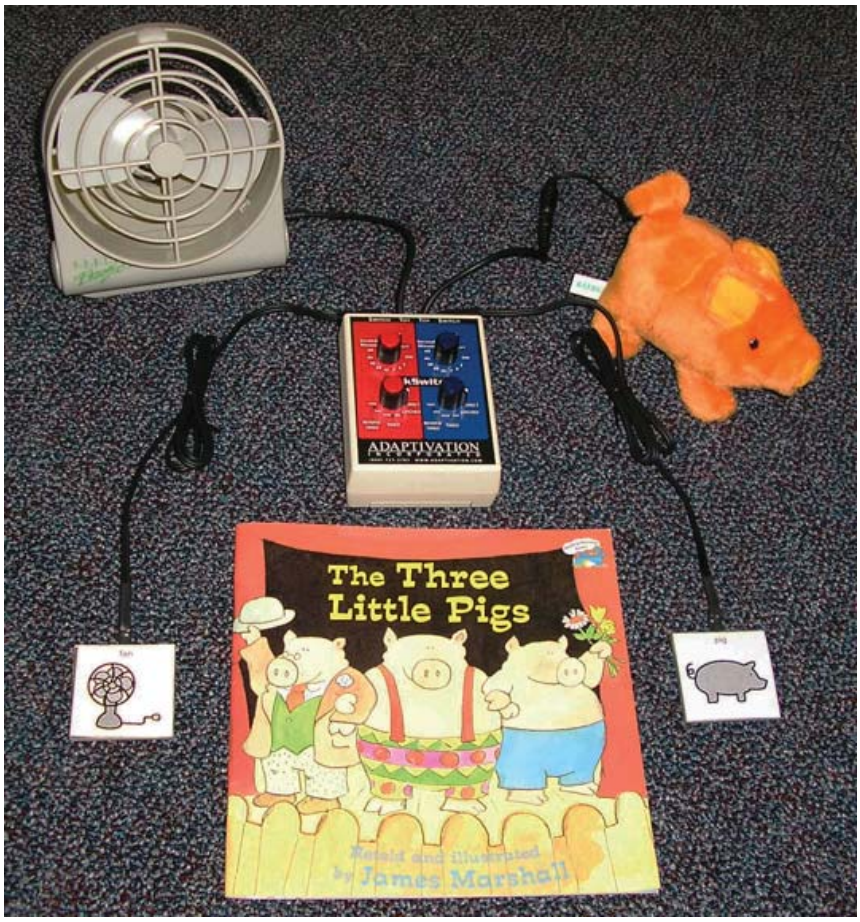
-VoicePal 8
-2 small Pal Pads

Description:

Choice making should be incorporated into literacy. The VoicePal 8 and a combination of external switches is an easy way to move from single-message activation to multiple choices without changing devices. Here, the VoicePal 8 and two Pal Pads were mounted on a cutting board. The user was able to choose between the princess characters.

Tips:

-Re-use empty bubble-bath containers as visual cues.
-Recognizable and/or favorite characters can be used to entice participation.
-This setup allows for easy addition of more choice options.



The Three Little Pigs retold and illustrated by James Marshall

Features Used:

-Switch-Latch-Timer
-Battery adaption

Products Used:

-LinkSwitch
-2 Battery Interrupters
-2 mini Pal Pads

Description:

Not all technology used to enhance literacy needs to involve voice output. Battery-adapted items are a fun alternative especially when they complement the story. A battery-adapted pig and fan represented repetitive lines for the pigs and wolf. When the line was heard, the user pressed the appropriate switch. The timing feature of the LinkSwitch allows toys to be operated for a desired amount of time with only one activation.

Tips:

-Choose to operate just one or two toys via the LinkSwitch.
-The LinkSwitch also offers a Latch mode of operation.
-Use a switch that allows the most independence for the user.

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Shell by Lucille Colandro
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Chick by Lucille Colandro
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves by Lucille Colandro
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Bell by Lucille Colandro
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Snow by Lucille Colandro

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

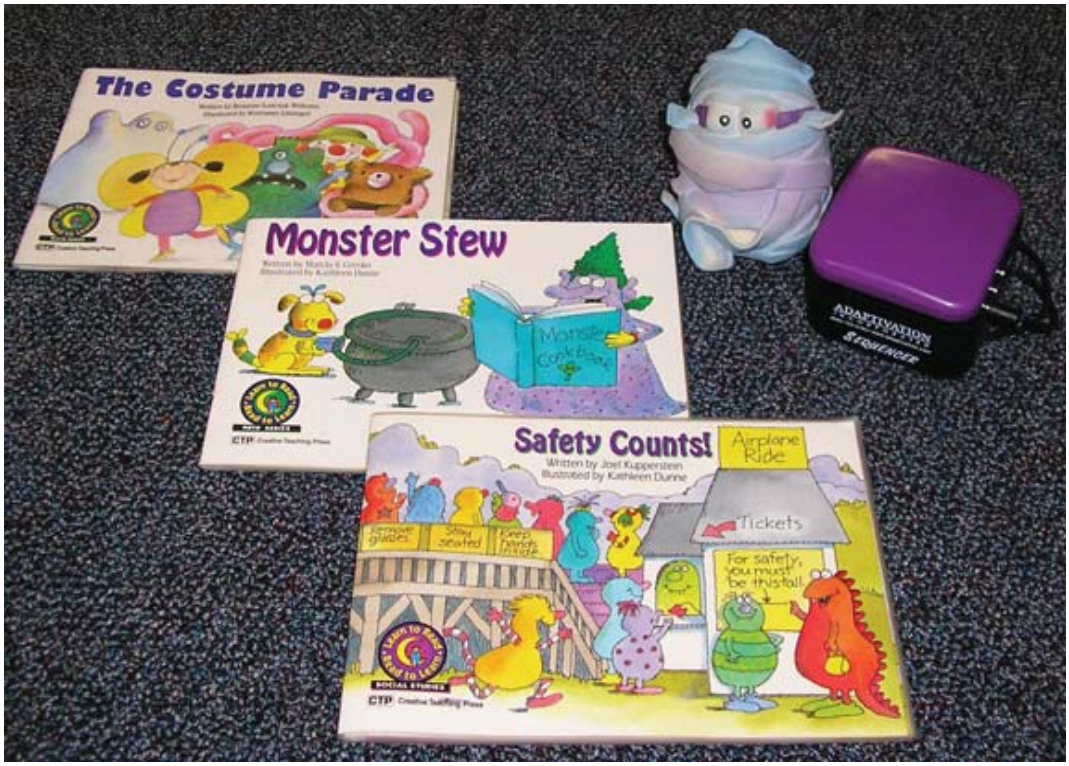
-Medley
-2 small Pal Pads

Description:

Books in a series often have a consistent format. This makes it easy to use the same technology setup for all of the books. The External-Swtich option of the Medley was paired with two switches. One represented “old lady” and the other, “swallowed”. These lines are repeated over and over in every story.

Tips:

-Sequence the story by plugging a switch into the Sequencing Jack of the Medley.
-An overlay for the Medley was created for each book in the series. The overlays represented the items “swallowed”.
-The overlay can be recreated on eight external switches for larger activation-area needs.



The Costume Parade by Rozanne Lanczak Williams
Safety Counts by Joel Kupperstein
Monster Stew by Marcia S. Gresko

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

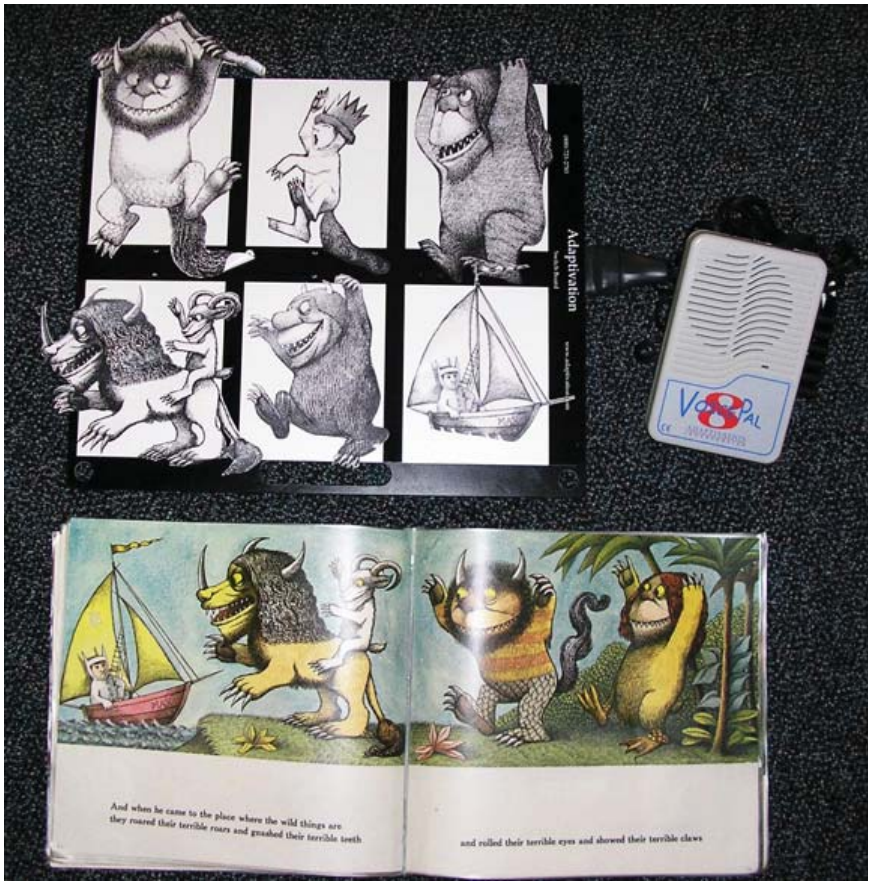
-Sequencer
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

Find objects that you can use throughout a book series. A monster squeeze toy was paired with the Pneumatic Switch and used to access the Sequencer. This monster switch was also used for a variety of other “monster” activities.

Tips:

-Change what you record into the Sequencer to change the activity (i.e. numbers for counting, text of the story, rhyming words, repetitive lines and monster sounds).
-The monster toy can also be placed on a Pal Pad.
-Sequential messaging is a great feature and can also be found on the Medley and VoicePal Levels.



Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jack

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Adapting classic books is more than worth it, because they are timeless. Photocopying images and using them as visual cues is easy and practical. These pictures were placed on top of the Switch-Board pockets (instead of inside) which allowed for easy manipulation. The book and cutouts were covered with clear contact paper to prolong their life.

Tips:

-Covering the book with contact paper not only protects the pages, but allows the visual cues to be inserted and removed without damaging the book.
-An alternative to the SwitchBoard is to use six external switches and the HandiBoard.
-The manipulatives for classic books can often be purchased.

Toy Story 2 by Kirsten L. Depken

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

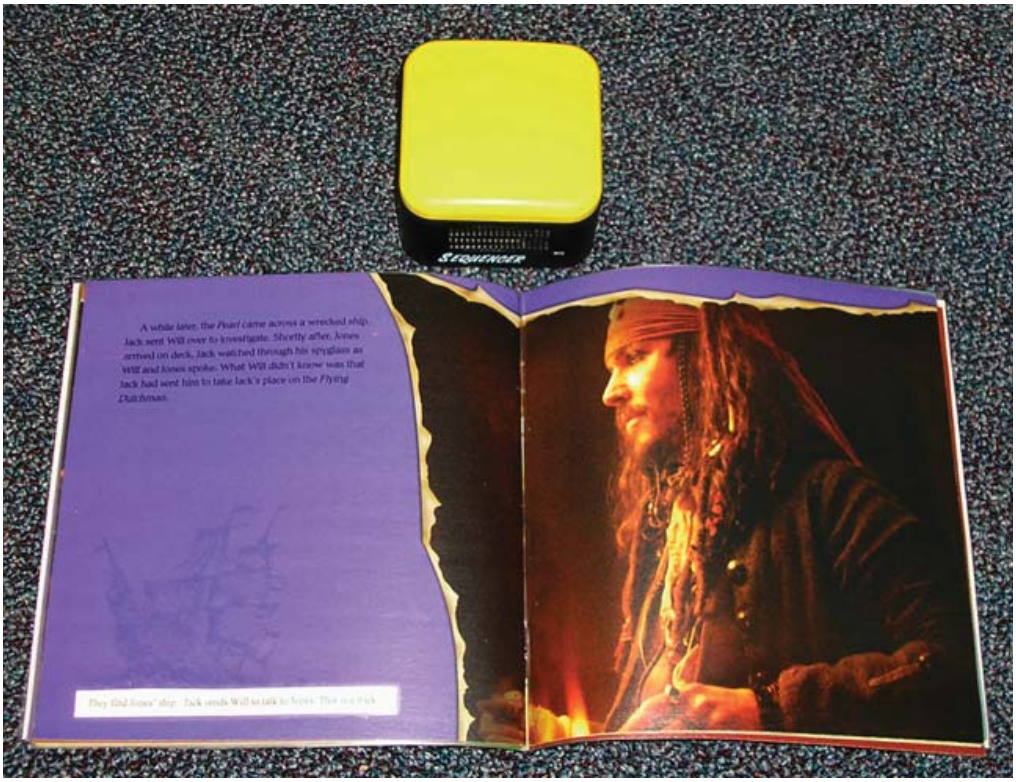
-VoicePal Levels
-6 small Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

Using a variety of visual cues within an activity can make it more interesting. We created a multi-purpose activity by combining an overlay made with stickers and external switches arranged on a HandiBoard. The varied visual cues (i.e. playing card, puzzle piece, mini frisbee, candy dispenser and a rubber toy) were associated with illustrations in the book. The VoicePal Levels can accommodate a wide range of visual cues while only needing to be recorded once.

Tips:

-The SwitchBoard has six built-in switches and is an external switch alternative.
-The keypad of the VoicePal Levels will remain active even when external switches are plugged in.
-Overlays can be created by using standard Picture Communication Symbol Programs.



Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of Davy Jones adapted by Kitty Richards

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Finding age-appropriate books with limited text is a challenge. To remedy this issue, the text can be paraphrased. The paraphrasing done for this story was printed and placed in the book. This shorter text was recorded into the Sequencer. The Sequencer was then used to read the story.

Tips:

-Paraphrasing is useful for long stories.
-Look for books based with printed movie footage as the illustrations.
-Many popular movies are appropriate for ALL ages (i.e. Toy Story and Spiderman).

Taking a Trip on My Train by Shirley Neitzel

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

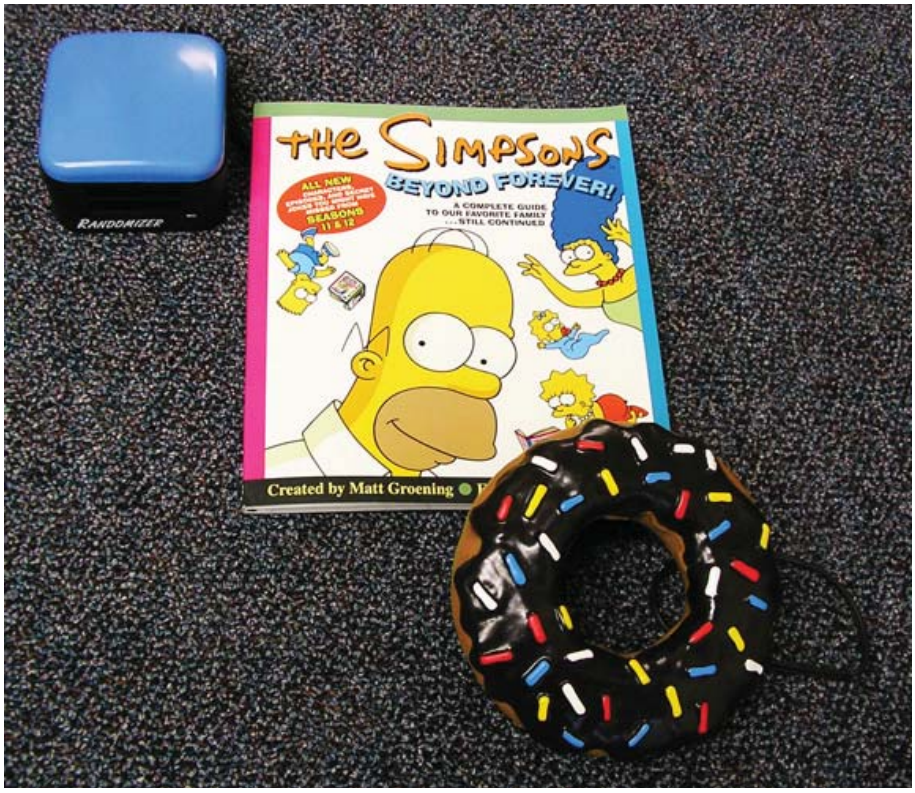
-VoicePal 8
-3 Taction Pads

Description:

Adding voice output to puzzles gives them a whole new use! This puzzle was adapted by placing Taction Pads in the cutout areas. Holes were drilled and cords pulled to the back. A small piece of aluminum foil was put on the back of each puzzle piece. When the puzzle piece was inserted, a message played.

Tips:

-The activity is easily changed by what you record (i.e. music, sound effects, text of the book).
-A 3-knob puzzle can become more age-appropriate by recording facts as messages (“the Wright Brothers designed the first aircraft”).
-Taction Pads can be cut to fit the puzzle cutout area.



The SImpsons: Beyond Forever created by Matt Groening

Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Randomizer
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

Incorporate objects into age-appropriate activities to make them more entertaining! Who wouldn't be amused by activating the message with the squeezable donut? The Randomizer was programmed with "Homer" quotes from the book. This is a great way to encourage peer interaction.

Tips:

-A single-message device can be used effectively by recording a conversation-starter phrase ("Who's your favorite Simpsons character?").
-Users can also press the top of the Randomizer to play messages.
-Remember to utilize both levels on the Randomizer.

Jingle Bells illustrated by Darcy May

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels
-large Pal Pad

Description:

We know the rhythm and repetition of music enhances learning. Many common songs are represented in book form. Singing-a-long through sequential messaging is easy to do. Lines of the song were recorded into the VoicePal Levels and played by pressing the Pal Pad.

Tips:

-The Sequencer and Medley also have a sequential messaging feature.
-The book could be adapted with a switch and used as the visual cue.
-If you don't like to sing, have someone who does record the song.

Pirate by Gaby Goldsack

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-Medley
-SwitchBoard

Description:

The Medley can be used for sequencing, randomizing, direct selection and external switch access. Adapting a book using all of the features can be fun! Here, an overlay was created for sequencing, randomizing and/or direct selection. Picture cues associated with the overlay were placed on the SwitchBoard. We are now ready for mulitple activities and multiple users!

Tips:

-Pictures cues used on the SwitchBoard were copied directly from the book.
-Photocopying in black and white offers a distinct contrast to the pictures in the book.
-You do not need to use all eight messages on the Medley.

Fire Truck! by Ivan Ulz

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

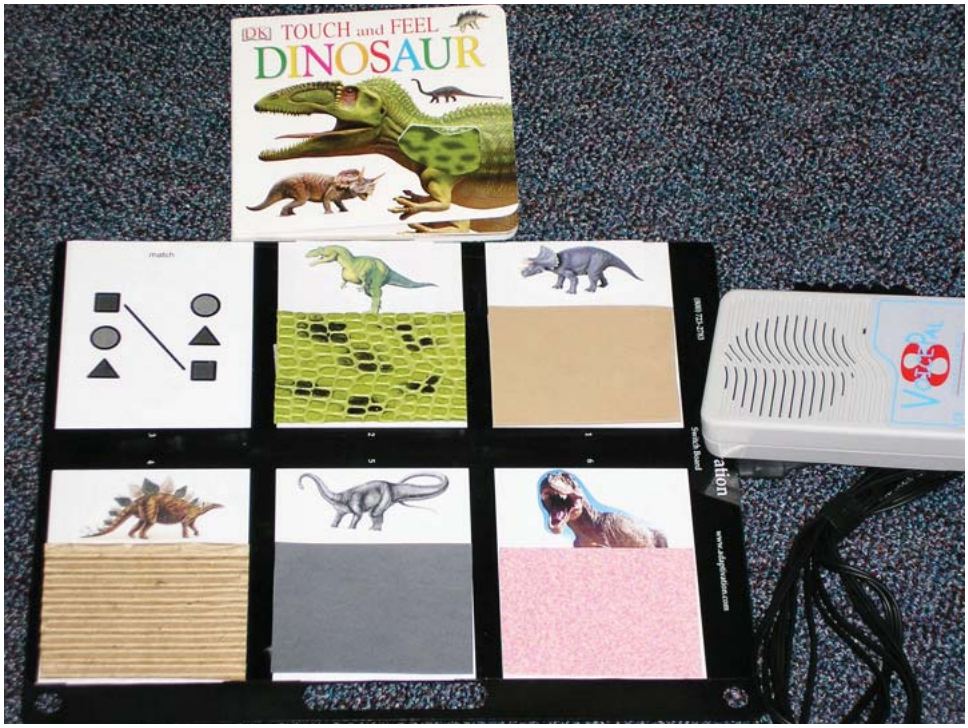
-Medley
-8 mini Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

When creating an activity setup, keep in mind that individuals with varying abilities might need to utilize it. Eight mini Pal Pads were arranged on the HandiBoard with the Medley. This made the overlay and switches available at the same time. Another advantage of such an arrangement is that it allowed visual cues to be large or small and accessed through the switches or keypad.

Tips:

-If access to the device is not necessary or is visually distracting, the device can be placed behind the HandiBoard.
-You can use a variety of switches and switch sizes together.
-Double-stick carpet tape works well for securing Pal Pads.



Touch and Feel Dinosaur published by Dorling Kindersley Limited

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jack

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Don't judge a book by its cover. This "infant" board book contains realistic-looking photos along with textures. This activity combined similar photos and textures into a matching activity. The textures were all found in a scrapbooking section of a craft store. The photos were placed inside the SwitchBoard pockets, but the textures were attached to the outside of the pockets. Facts about each dinosaur were recorded into the VoicePal 8. Not for infants any more!

Tips:

-The internet is a great resource for finding realistic-looking photos.
-Many infant board books contain real pictures. Consider them as an age-appropriate option.
-Cover existing text entirely or replace with your own text.

My First Book of Numbers published by Creative Edge, LLC

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-8 mini Pal Pads

Description:

Think ahead! Plan switch setups that can be used over and over again. For example, there are numerous books that involve counting (usually up to ten). Ten mini Pal Pads were mounted on a case, and the communication device was placed inside. Magnets were used to represent the numbers one through ten. The switches could then be used for object and/or picture cues. Miniature objects that corresponded with the story were placed on the switches.

Tips:

-If possible, keep the objects and book together in a re-sealable bag.
-It is okay to use a combination of pictures and objects.
-The case can also be used to store objects.

Real Life

Why we ♥ every-day activities:

- Opportunities for learning
- Practical
- Necessary
- Meaningful
- Social
- Repeatable
- Fun

We know technology works in the classroom. We know technology is effective at work. Why not expand its use into all aspects of life? If we don't...We all miss out. Many opportunities are lost by not having technology available for re-occuring every-day events.

In this chapter, we have examples of games, self-care, leisure and community involvement for all ages. Remember, use activities you are already doing and add the technology. The individual user will become an active participant instead of an on-looker!

Features Used:

-Random messaging

Products Used:

-Randomizer

Description:

Independent participation for an individual with physical limitations can be easy to accomplish. For Candy Land, picking cards was replaced by pressing the Randomizer. The color choices and special characters on the cards were recorded into the Randomizer as individual messages.

Tips:

-Consider an external switch for users who cannot directly access the Randomizer.
-All the students will want to use the Randomizer!
-The Randomizer can be passed from player to player.

Features Used:

-Battery adaption

Products Used:

-large Pal Pad
-Battery Interrupter

Description:

All kids love bubbles! A Battery Interrupter was used to make the bubble machine switch accessible. Any switch can be used to “make” bubbles. This bubble machine remained on as long as the switch was being pressed.

Tips:

-Use the bubble bottle as a visual cue!
-Add timing or latch (on/off) features to the bubble machine by using the LinkSwitch.
-Summer is a great time to look for bubble machines, fans and fun lights!

Features Used:

-Switch-Latch-Timer
-Battery adaption

Products Used:

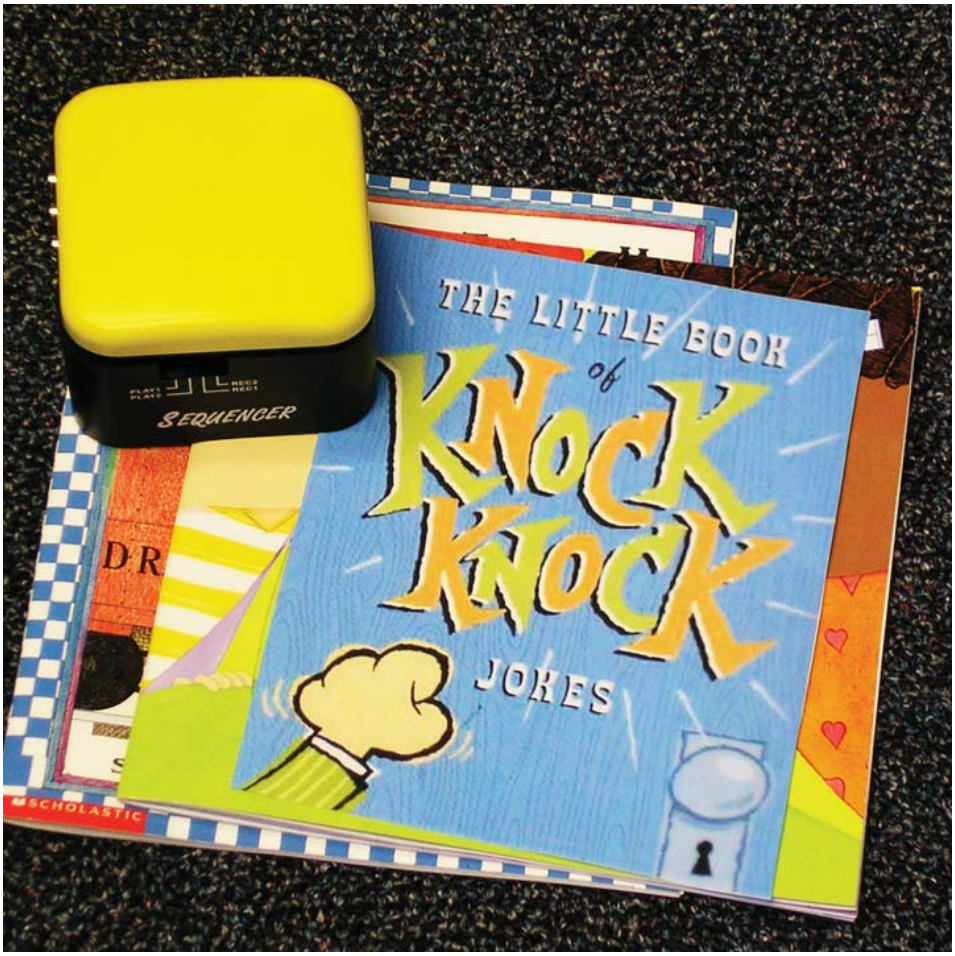
-LinkSwitch
-Taction Pad

Description:

Look around the house for items that can be used re-used. This vibrating pig pillow was adapted using a Battery Interrupter, making it switch accessible. The paper plate became the switch by adding a Taction Pad. The LinkSwitch provided a variety of operating modes for the pillow.

Tips:

-Activate the pig pillow during the story of *The Three Little Pigs*.
-Look for items with a sensory component that can be adapted.
-Sometimes stuffed toys with a sensory component can be considered age-appropriate.



Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

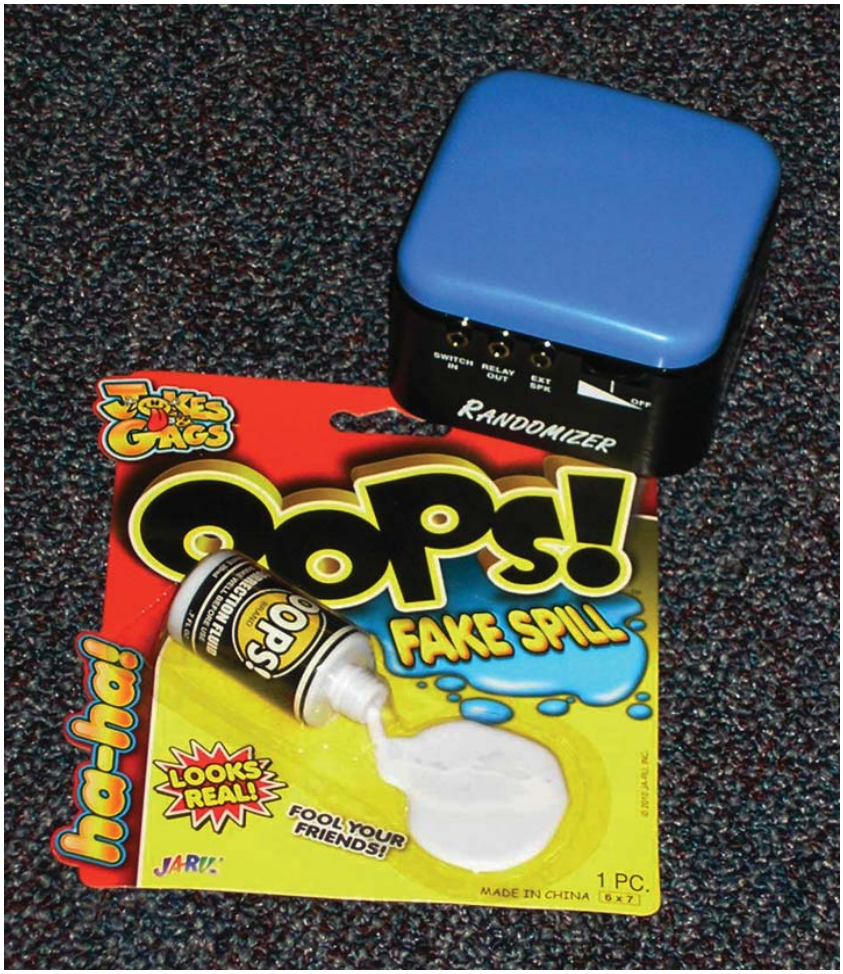
-Sequencer

Description:

Knock Knock jokes are interactive and have a predictable flow that can be used with sequential messaging. First, determine whether the user will be the joke teller or the joke receiver. This dictates what will be recorded into the Sequencer. The activity may seem simple, but it reinforces many skills needed for good communication (i.e. turn-taking, listening and timing).

Tips:

-Record with the emotion and inflection that enhances joke telling.
-Additional messages such as “Did you think that was funny?” or “Why aren’t you laughing?” are great additions to the interaction.
-Take advantage of the Sequencer’s two levels by recording a joke on each level.



Features Used:

-Random messaging

Products Used:

-Randomizer

Description:

Practical jokes are fun for all ages. Random commenting about the joke is amusing to both the “prankster” and the person being pranked. Participating can be as simple as playing messages recorded on the Randomizer...no one will know what message is next! Here are some ideas for messages: “It wasn’t me!”, “Look at this!”, “What a mess!”, “Don’t touch it!”, “Ick!”, “I bet it will stain!” and “Who did this?”.

Tips:

-Humor is a great teaching tool. Don’t be afraid to use it!
-A single message device can be sufficient for some users.
-The Medley and VoicePal Levels also have random messaging.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Everybody wants to be a star! Scripts offer a set sequence of dialogue. The lines of the character are recorded in the order they occur in the script. The user must listen to the other characters and "say" their own lines when appropriate.

Tips:

-Use the external speaker jack of the Sequencer if more volume is needed.
-This is a great way to practice facial expressions and other body language that add to the character.
-Digitized speech allows the recorded voice to match the character being portrayed.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

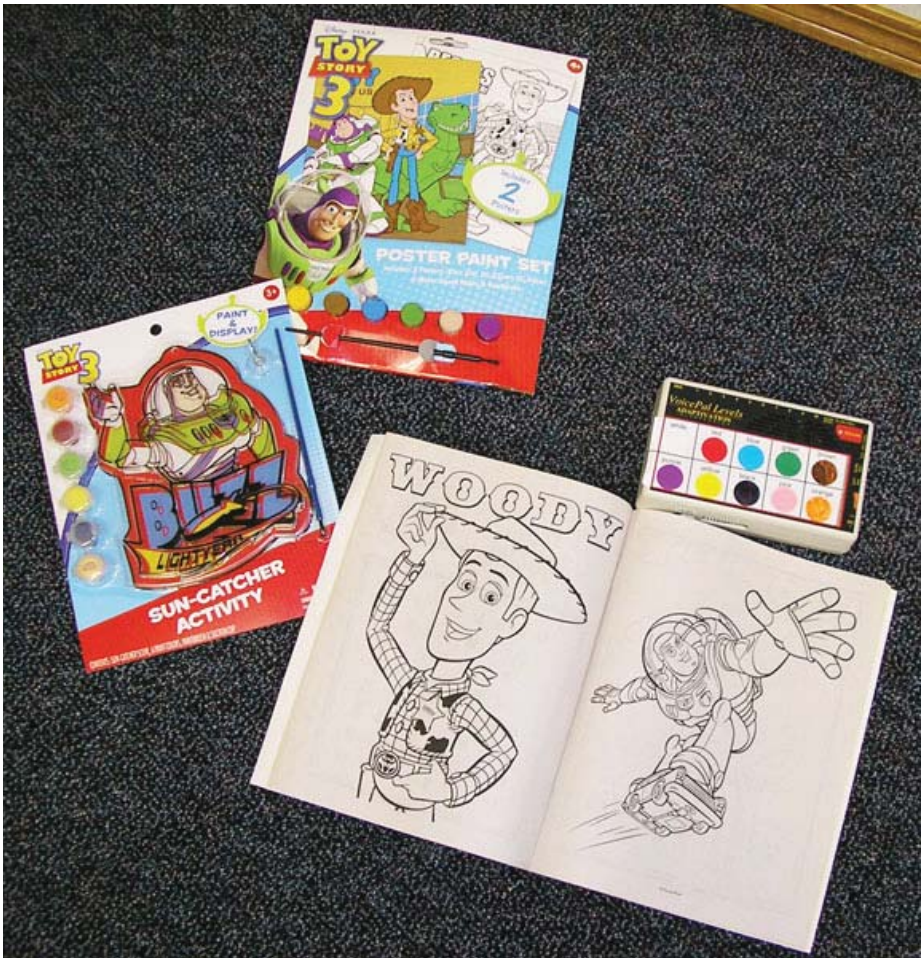
-2 Lex

Description:

The Lex is perfect for choice making because of its large activation surface. There is no distracting “click” when activated which helps keep focus on the message and not on activation. It is easy to add objects and other large visual cues. We used two movie cases to represent the available choices. The user was able to select the movie that she wanted to watch by touching the DVD case itself.

Tips:

-The Lex can be easily mounted on the floor, wall or tabletop.
-The DVDs above incorporate objects, real photos and text making it useful to different developmental levels.
-The Lex has 3 levels. Record a different message for each one.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

It is worth the time it takes to make overlays that can be used for multiple activities; An overlay of colors is one of them. Here, the user pressed the colors he wanted in order to complete the picture. This changed him from a passive observer to an active participant.

Tips:

-Altering the messages changes the activity. For example, programming “Color the hat brown” is very different than “I need pink”.
-To make overlays last longer, cover them with clear-contact paper.
-The VoicePal Levels has multiple scanning options for a single-switch user.

Features Used:

-Battery adaption

Products Used:

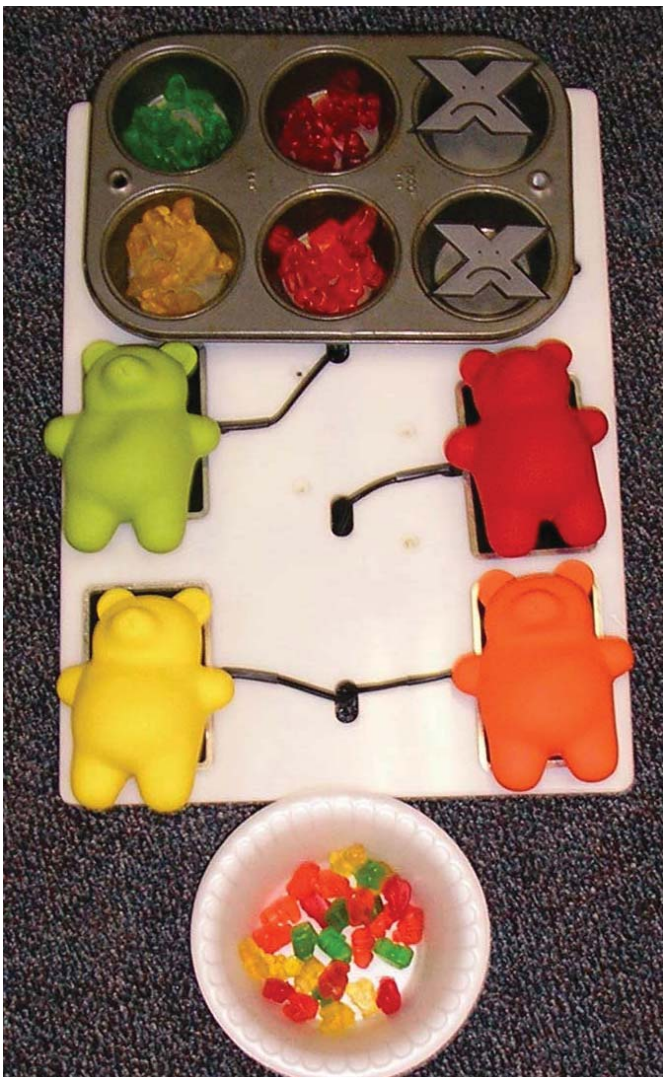
-Battery Interrupter
-large Pal Pad

Description:

Believe it or not, this paint spinner became another way to make random choices. A Battery Interrupter was used to provide switch access. This color overlay was created to go along with the coloring and painting activities.

Tips:

-Spinner overlays can be made for any activity or game.
-If voice output is needed, a Randomizer may be a better option for the user.
-Be creative in your switch choice. Any switch can be plugged into a Battery Interrupter.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-External switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-4 small Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

Turn snack time into a learning activity. Four Pal Pads were mounted on the HandiBoard and plugged into the VoicePal 8. Squeeze-toys representing the gummy bear colors were placed on the Pal Pads. As the user picked a gummy bear, he indicated the appropriate color by touching a colored bear. The bears later became the snack!

Tips:

-The squeeze bears were found in the pet aisle.
-The squeeze bears can be paired with the Pneumatic Switch.
-Colored counters can be used in place of gummy bears.

Features Used:

-Random messaging

Products Used:

-Randomizer

Description:

Off-the-shelf Bingo games (in many forms) are a staple in most classrooms. Bingo calling is random messaging! All possible game vocabulary was recorded onto the Randomizer, and the user became the caller for the game.

Tips:

-The Randomizer is great for Bingo, because recording is not limited by number of messages only by total record time.
-Design your own bingo games to reinforce vocabulary and other concepts.
-Use the external speaker jack of the Randomizer to give the caller a “big voice”.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Augmentative & Alternative Communication devices should not be limited to inside use only. To protect a device, place it in a re-sealable bag (the activation is not affected by the bag).Now it's ready for use in the sand!

Tips:

-Program social comments such as "I hate sand" or "It's too hot" along with more standard messages like "Dump it out" or "Watch me dig."
-Because it isn't practical to use high-tech devices in the sand or for similar activities, lite tech devices are a great supplement.
-The VoicePal 8K and the Medley have keypads and fit well in re-sealable bags.

Features Used:

-Battery adaption

Products Used:

-Battery Interrupter
-mini Pal Pad

Description:

The original fishing game now has many versions...This one is aliens. The game requires good fine-motor skills to participate. Adapting it for switch use is one way for someone with limited fine-motor abilities to be involved. Randomly stopping and starting the movement throughout the game can be the responsibility of the switch user.

Tips:

-A sock is the perfect visual cue and slips over a Pal Pad easily. It is washable too!
-Look for travel-size games, because they generally have fewer loose parts.
-The timing mode of the LinkSwitch can change be used to change the dynamics of the game (i.e. getting the most fish in a certain amount of time).

Features Used:

-Wireless AC-appliance control

Products Used:

-FreeHand

Description:

Think outside the box when using environmental controls. Here, the FreeHand activated a baseball light during a baseball game. When the team got a hit, the user turned on the light. The timing mode was set to turn on the light for a pre-determined amount of time with each activation.

Tips:

-Familiar logos make great visual cue.
-The wireless feature of the FreeHand allows the light to be placed in a spot where everyone can see.
-The FreeHand has a range of 75 feet.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

-2 Chippers

Description:

In classrooms, it is often more efficient to use several lite-tech devices instead of a single high-tech device. For this activity, animals were sorted into two categories. The categories were represented by the visual cues on the devices and by the paper plates. As animals were presented, the user specified a category by pressing one of the devices.

Tips:

-Turn paper plates into switches by placing Pal Pads under the plates. Placing animals on the plate would activate the message.
-Changing the recorded message can create a whole new activity. “Find a farm animal.” vs. “This one belongs in the jungle.”

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

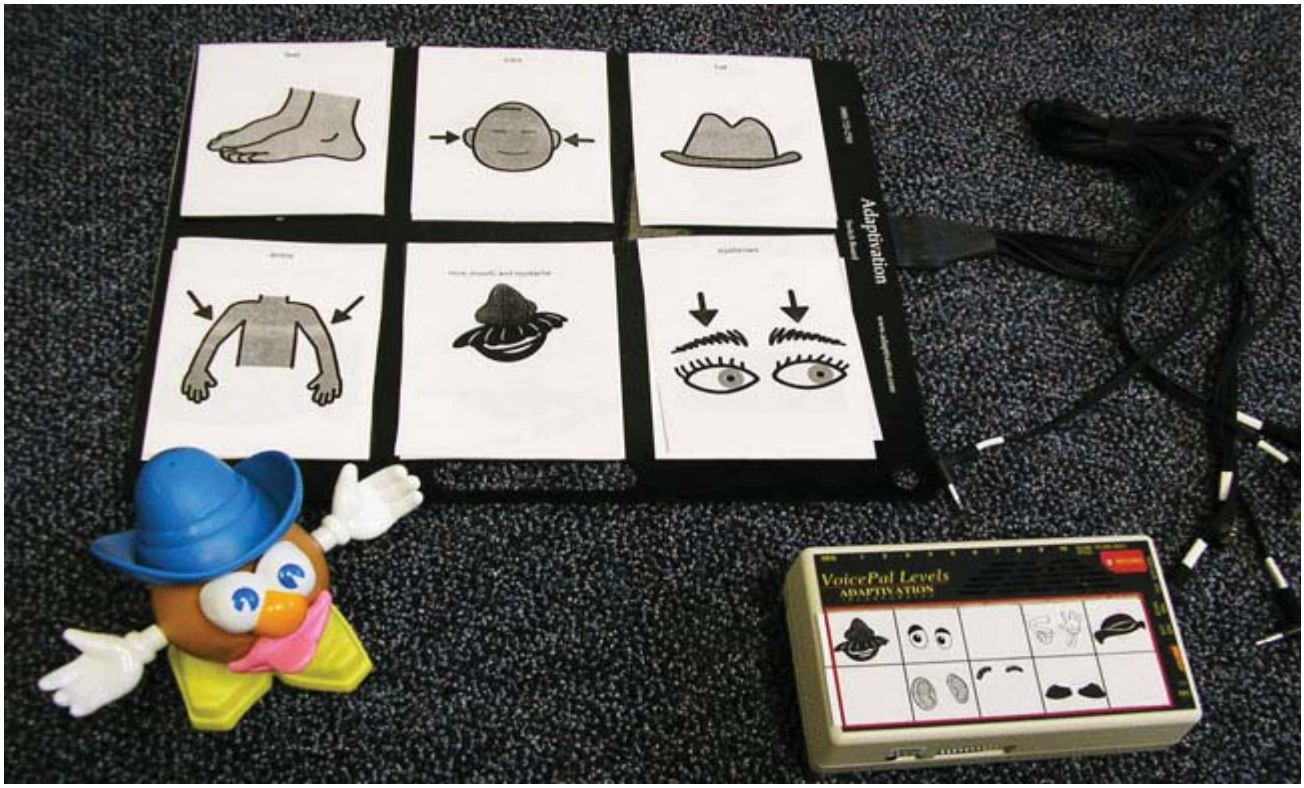
-Chipper

Description:

A single message does not mean recording one sentence. It means one activation will give all the information recorded. Everyone needs a quick way to introduce oneself. This Chipper was recorded with identifying information (“Hi, my name is Amy. I am from Sioux Falls, South Dakota.”) and a conversation starter (“What’s your name?”). All of this was said with one press.

Tips:

-A communication device can be helpful for individuals who are not always able to verbalize on demand.
-*Everyone* should have a way to give important information no matter where they are.
-When recording multiple ideas in a single-message device, don’t run your messages together. Pause naturally to give the listener time to comprehend the message.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Mr. Potato Head has been around for many years. Like other pre-school games, it reinforces important concepts (body parts). Game vocabulary was recorded on the VoicePal Levels. Access was provided through both the SwitchBoard and the keypad on the VoicePal Levels. This setup worked great in a group. It required only one device to be recorded, and students with a variety of access needs could participate.

Tips:

-A single switch for scanning could be added to the activity to meet additional access needs.
-Use Mr. Potato Head parts on the SwitchBoard as the visual cues.
-Store the game and overlays together to make it easy to re-create the activity.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8K

Description:

As adults, we get in a rut when it comes to recording messages. For ideas, listen to a group of children during their pretend play. This is what was heard and recorded for a tea-party activity (“Would you like some tea”, “Sugar?”, “One lump or two?”, “Be careful, it’s hot!”, “It’s delicious”, “We should do this more often”).

Tips:

-Write messages on the back of the overlay so you don’t have to make up new messages each time you record.
-Let kids record on devices for their peers.
-Kids are not always polite. Don’t forget to record messages such as “Get out of here.”, “Leave me alone.”, “I don’t want to.” or “That’s mine!”

Features Used:

-Battery adaption

Products Used:

-2 Pal Pads
-2 Battery Interrupters

Description:

Find ways for kids to actively participate in the games their peers are playing. In Red Light, Green Light, it is fun to be a runner, but it is just as fun to be the caller. This stop light required some custom adaption for two-switch access (we have an engineer in our office...thanks Jon!). The red switch turned on the red light, and the green switch turned on the green light.

Tips:

-Check with people in the school who are mechanically inclined. They may be able to help you adapt items.
-A red Chipper and a green Chipper would be a fun way to add voice output.
-The stop light could also be used for role playing real-life activities such as crossing the street.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

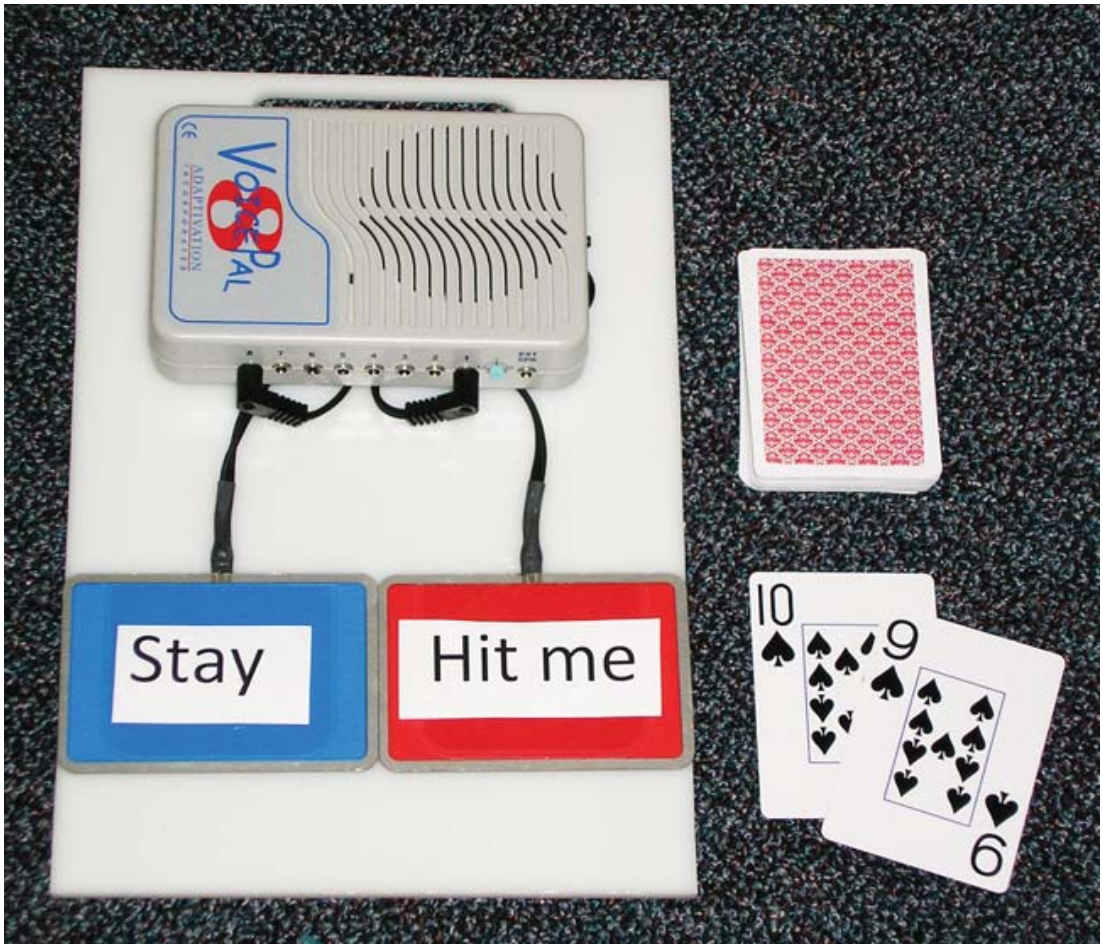
-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Make card-game vocabulary as complex or as simple as needed for the user. Here are two examples of overlays created for the same game (War). The overlay in the VoicePal Levels depicted all of the card choices, and the overlay below was simplified to indicate who won the round.

Tips:

-The keypad of the VoicePal Levels can be configured for two, three, five or ten messages.
-The ten-message overlay was created with stickers.
-An overlay with numbers would also work for the game.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-2 small Pal Pads

Description:

Not all games require an extensive amount of vocabulary to participate fully. For example, Black Jack needs only two. The VoicePal 8 was used as the voice output and two external switches were added. The user pressed a switch to indicate to the dealer what she wanted to do next.

Tips:

-Unfamiliar listeners may have an easier time understanding digitized speech.
-Even though the VoicePal 8 offers up to eight messages, not all of them need to be used.
-Use text as the visual cue when appropriate.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

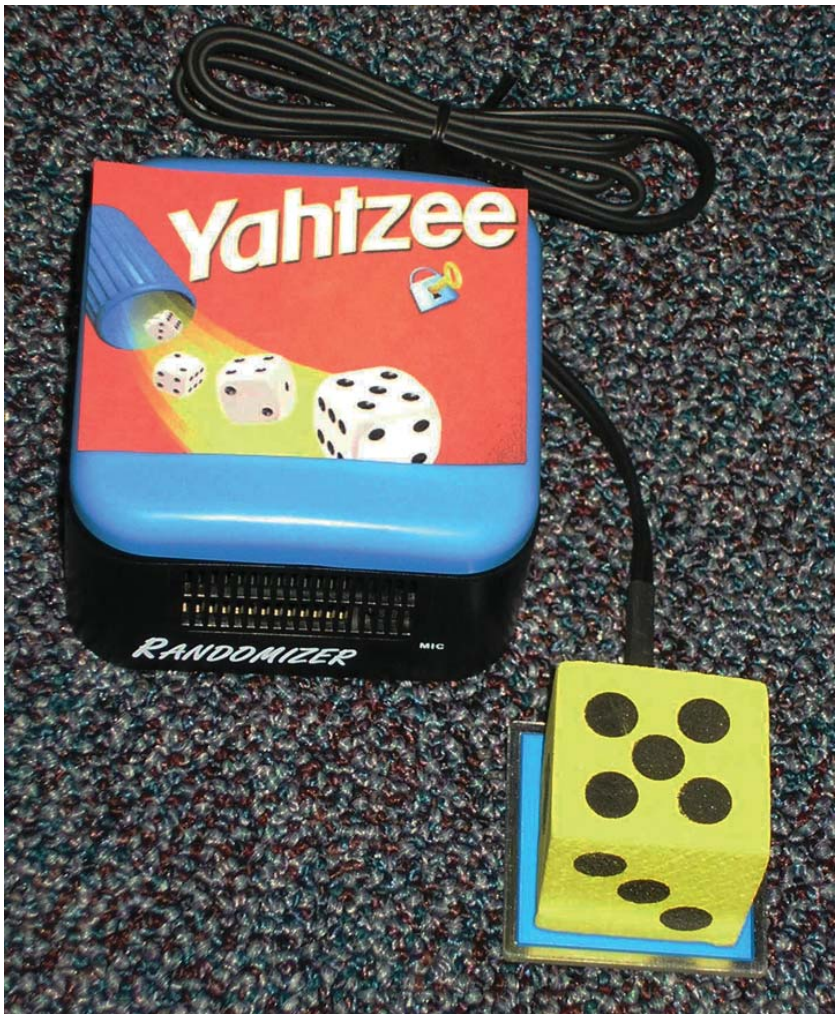
-VoicePal 8K

Description:

Technology is often absent during sensory activities because of potential damage to the device, but these activities offer great communication opportunities. Protecting the VoicePal 8K was as simple as sealing it in a plastic bag. This allowed the device to be placed in the middle of the activity without fear of it getting damaged.

Tips:

-The VoicePal 8 can be accessible to multiple users during the activity.
-Record messages like “This is gross!”, “I’ve had enough” or “When am I done?” for those students who find sensory activities overwhelming.
-Create overlays that can be used with multiple sensory activities.



Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

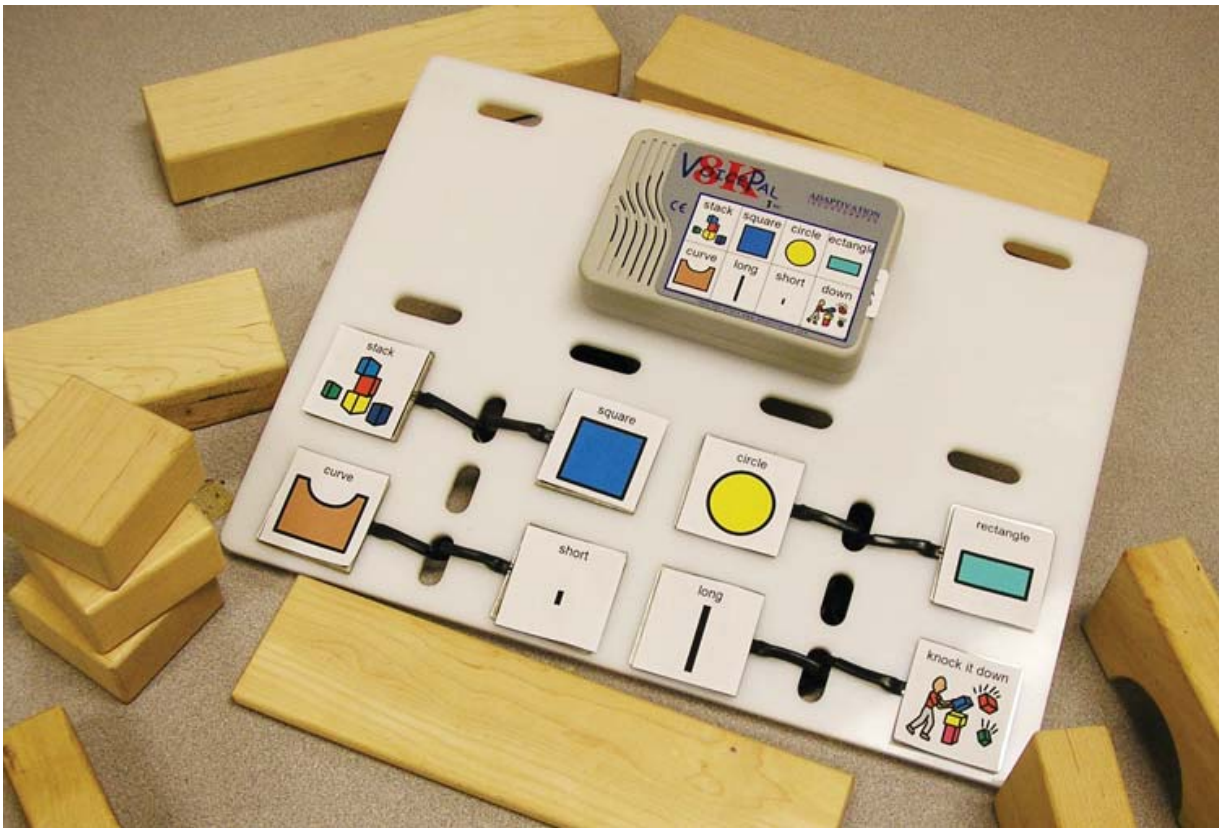
-Randomizer
-mini Pal Pad

Description:

Games that use dice are ideal for the Randomizer. For Yahtzee, the numbers one through six were recorded. An external switch with a foam die was used as the visual cue. Instead of throwing the dice, the user pressed the foam die!

Tips:

-For games that use a pair of dice, be sure to record the number combinations possible.
-Add fun messages for the numbers (“I rolled a snake’s eyes” or “Double Fives!”).
-Logos are eye-catching and are often more recognizable than other visual cues.



Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jack

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8K
-8 mini Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

Classroom centers provide repetition and practice-opportunities for communication. Because centers are used by several students at the same time, it is key to include technology that meets the needs of everyone. Eight mini Pal Pads were mounted on a HandiBoard and plugged into the VoicePal 8K. An overlay was created to match the visual cues used on the Pal Pads. Students at the center could use either the keypad or the switches to play.

Tips:

-The arrangement of the Pal Pads and the placement of the VociePal 8K can be altered to meet access needs.
-If possible, keep the communication setup in each center consistent.
-In inclusive settings, typical peers should have an understanding of the technology.

Features Used:

-Random messaging

Products Used:

-Randomizer

Description:

The game Duck, Duck Goose is one of the first interactive games kids learn. The Randomizer allows a single-switch user to play a part. Even the user won't know what will be said next which adds to the excitement of the game!

Tips:

-Because you want to have "duck" said more often than "goose", record "duck" multiple times and record "goose" once.
-All the players can use the same device.
-The rubber duck on top of the Randomizer can also be connected to a Pneumatic Switch if external switch use is needed.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-3 Taction Pads

Description:

Want to add sound effects to your puzzles? Taction Pads were placed in the cutouts of the wood puzzle. Holes were drilled so that cords could be pulled to the back and plugged into the VoicePal 8. Fun sound effects (sirens, horn honking and engine revs) were recorded on the VoicePal 8. A small strip of tin foil was placed on the back of each puzzle piece. This activated the Taction Pad when the pieces were inserted correctly.

Tips:

-Taction Pads can be cut to fit into the cutouts of the puzzle.
-Free sound effects are easy to find on the internet. Just record using your computer speaker.
-The simplicity of the VoicePal 8 allows the focus to remain on the activity instead of the technology.

Features Used:

-Random messaging

Products Used:

-Randomizer

Description:

The Magic 8 Ball is a perfect example of random messaging. Here are all the authentic messages: “Yes.” “Reply hazy, try again.” “Without a doubt.” “My sources say no.” “As I see it, yes.” “You may rely on it.” “Concentrate and ask again.” “Outlook not so good.” “It is decidedly so.” “Better not tell you now.” “Very doubtful.” “Yes - definitely.” “It is certain.” “Cannot predict now.” “Most likely.” “Ask again later.” “My reply is no.” “Outlook good.” “Don’t count on it.”

Tips:

-The mini Magic 8 Ball was found in the party-favor section of a discount store.
-An external switch can be plugged into the Randomizer.
-Use the 2nd level of the Randomizer to record questions to ask the Magic 8 Ball.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Overlays that correspond to game pictures are helpful...This overlay was made with stickers. To participate, the user matches pictures. The activity was made more amusing, by recording character voices on the VoicePal Levels.

Tips:

-The overlay can be used as a manual communication system without voice output.
-Dollar stores have stickers and games of popular TV and movie characters.
-The visual cues for this game could have been made by photo copying the game board.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal Levels

Description:

Seemingly complex games can often be played with less vocabulary than you think. To determine vocabulary, read the directions and play through the game. Narrow down the vocabulary to only what is needed (i.e. you do not need both questions “Is yours a man?” and “Is yours a woman?”). Plan your vocabulary before creating an overlay.

Tips:

-Guess Who is a great question/answer game.
-The responder in Guess Who only needs to answer “Yes” or “No”.
-Once an overlay is created for a game, keep the it with the game. Writing messages on the back of the overlay will help save time.

Features Used:

-Single message

Products Used:

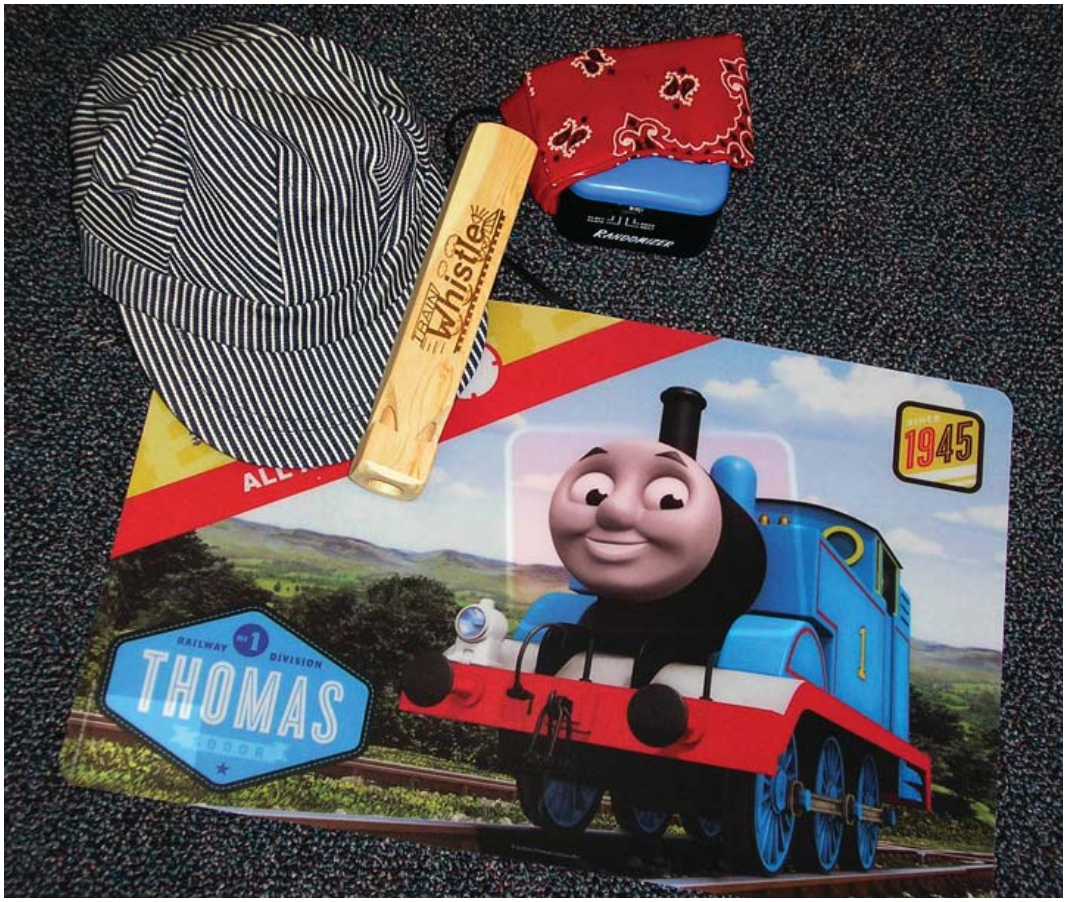
-Chipper

Description:

Some students are limited in their ability to physically particiapte in games. This should not hold them back! For this matching game, the Chipper was recorded with the message “It’s a match!”. The user had to watch the game and hit the Chipper when a match appeared.

Tips:

-Make the game more competitive by including two or more device users to see who can hit their device first.
-Record multiple messages into the Randomizer to surprise the user.
-Make your own matching games using everyone’s favorite characters or relevant vocabulary.



Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Randomizer
-large Pal Pad
-large Overlay Pocket

Description:

Create opportunities for using technology in pretend play. Messages spoken by a conductor were recorded on the Randomizer. For added emphasis, a placemat became the switch. This was done by placing a Pal Pad under the placemat. Pressing the train, activated the messages.

Tips:

-Add dress-up props to make the character come to life.
-A paper plate, poster or even a toy train can be used instead of the placemat.
-Consider theme-based activities when planning.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

It is possible to work on pre-literacy skills such as left to right progression and moving from one line to another, at the object level. The SwitchBoard has a pre-arranged layout which is perfect for such tasks. Objects were chosen to represent the steps needed to complete a planting activity and placed on the SwitchBoard. The SwitchBoard was paired with the VoicePal 8 for voice output.

Tips:

-Pictures can be inserted into the pockets of the SwitchBoard.
-Create an object-picture matching activity.
-In addition to touching the objects, messages can be activated by placing the objects on the SwitchBoard or pulling them off.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Sequencing devices are used as list-making memory tools. Here, the Sequencer was the “list” for packing a beach bag. All the necessary items were recorded into the Sequencer. The client was instructed to listen to a message and then place the item in the bag before activating the next message. Listening to the Sequencer allowed the user to complete the task independently.

Tips:

-Voice output devices should be used for receptive language tasks as well as expressive tasks.
-It can be helpful to provide a visual list that corresponds to the recorded messages.
-For individuals with physical limitations, the ability to direct someone else in a task is important.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Greeters can be found in a variety of settings: school plays, concerts, churches, discount stores and reception areas of businesses. Take advantage of these reoccurring opportunities and use them for practicing communication interactions. Many times, these interactions have a predictable sequence. For a greeting opportunity at a local gym, the sequence was “Hi!”, “Check in please”, “What type of workout are you doing today?”, “Towels are available on the counter” and “Have a good workout!”.

Tips:

-Use the Medley if the user needs visual cues for each message.
-The user should be reminded to keep eye contact with the listener while messages play.
-The user must wait for the listener to respond to the questions before going on to the next message.

Features Used:

-Wireless AC-appliance control

Products Used:

-FreeHand

Description:

Utilize holiday traditions as a way to include technology. Here, the famous leg lamp from *A Christmas Story* was activated by the FreeHand. The latch mode of the FreeHand was used as an on/off function. The timing mode allowed the light to be turned on for a pre-set amount of time.

Tips:

-Go shopping after the holidays to find bargains on unique AC and battery-operated items.
-Christmas tree lights, light-up jack-o'-lanterns, singing snowmen and window lights are all AC-powered.
-Make use of holiday items all year. For example, a light-up pumpkin could be used at planting time and during fall activities.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

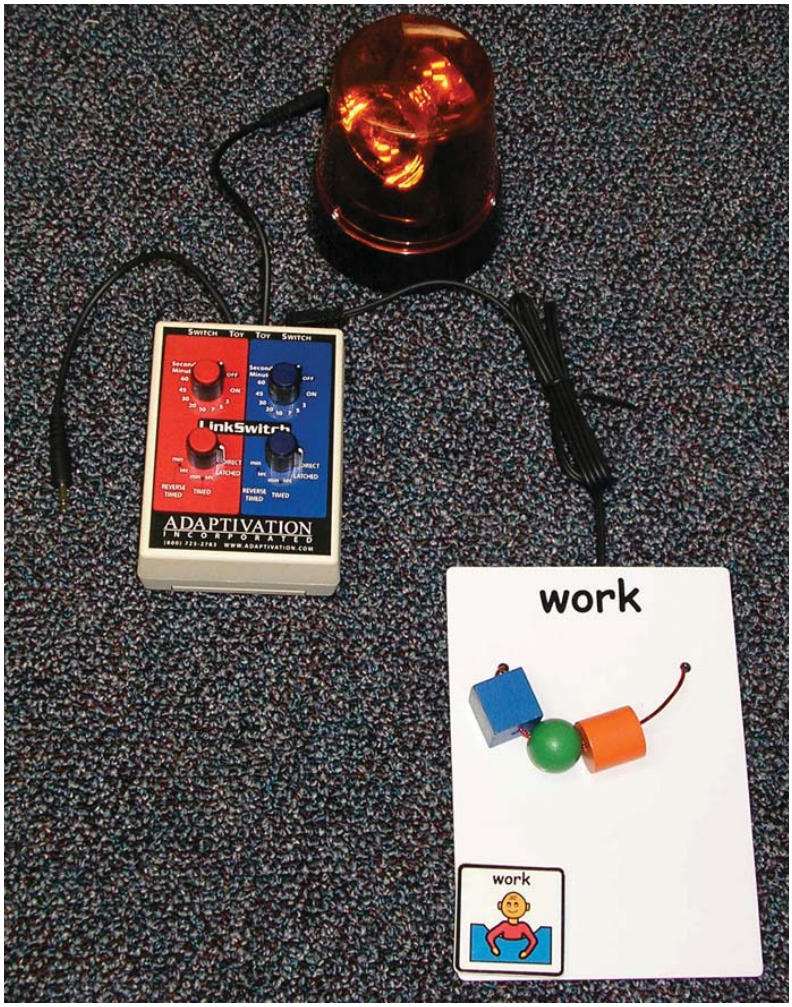
-Sequencer
-small Pal Pad
-small Overlay Pocket

Description:

Technology needs to be easily accessible and available, or it won't get used. This schedule for a work break was created using a foam door hanger and erasers. A Pal Pad was placed under the schedule and plugged into the Sequencer. The voice output was mounted to the door itself, so the user always knew where the schedule was located.

Tips:

-Set up a schedule in a common area to make it available to multiple users.
-Pair picture cues with objects for those transitioning from one visual cue to another.
-The schedule can be used without voice output.



Features Used:

-Switch-Latch-Timer
-Battery Adaption

Products Used:

-LinkSwitch
-large Pal Pad
-Battery Interrupter
-TalkingMy Way Object Communication Card

Description:

Reverse timing is a little-known feature of the LinkSwitch. In this instance, the feature was used for a work activity. The client knew he needed to work for ten minutes. The LinkSwitch was set for ten minutes. The client activated the Pal Pad (located underneath the TalkingMyWay card) and after ten minutes elapsed, the battery-adapted light turned on to indicate that time was up.

Tips:

-The LinkSwitch can be set in seconds or minutes up to one hour.
-TalkingMyWay Object Communication cards are available in Child and Teen/Adult sets.
-Let the user choose the battery-adapted device that turns on when time is up.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

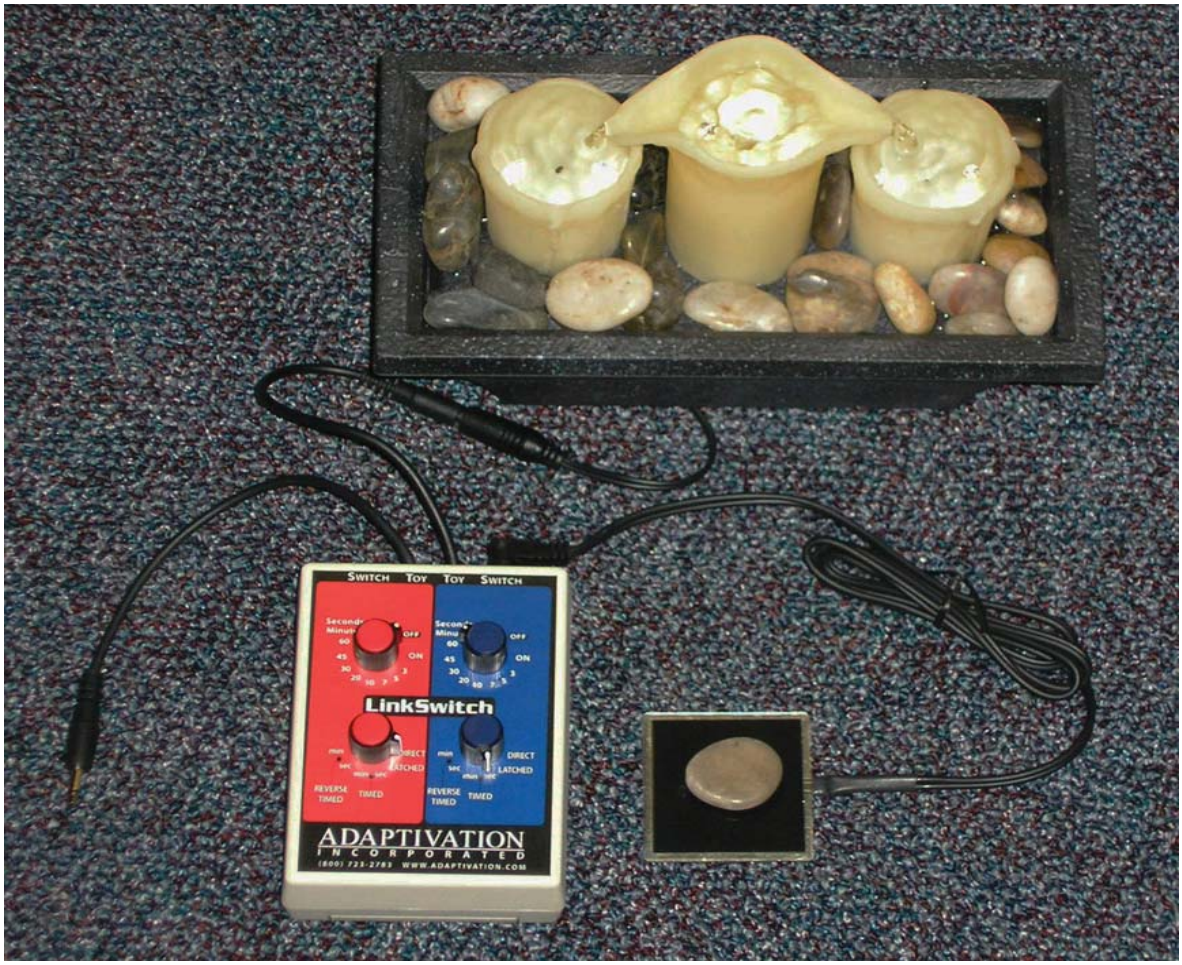
-Sequencer

Description:

Use of technology can take a person from being a passive observer to an active contributor. The Sequencer was programmed with the steps needed to do laundry. The user directed a peer to in completing the task.

Tips:

-An external switch can be plugged into the Sequencer to accommodate physical access needs.
-Customize the number and length of messages to the user's needs.
-Utilize both levels of the Sequencer. Level 1 - putting laundry in the washer.
Level 2 - taking laundry out of the washer.



Features Used:

-Switch-Latch-Timer

Products Used:

-LinkSwitch
-mini Pal Pad

Description:

Create a calming atmosphere using off-the-shelf water fountains. These fountains are the current trend, are inexpensive and easy to find. A Battery Interrupter was all that was necessary to adapt the fountain for switch use. We found that the LinkSwitch timing mode (pre-set amount of on time) was most practical.

Tips:

-Access is customized by the type of external switch used.
-Trendy items can often be found in clearance aisles and at thrift stores.
-Use meaningful visual cues on the switch.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

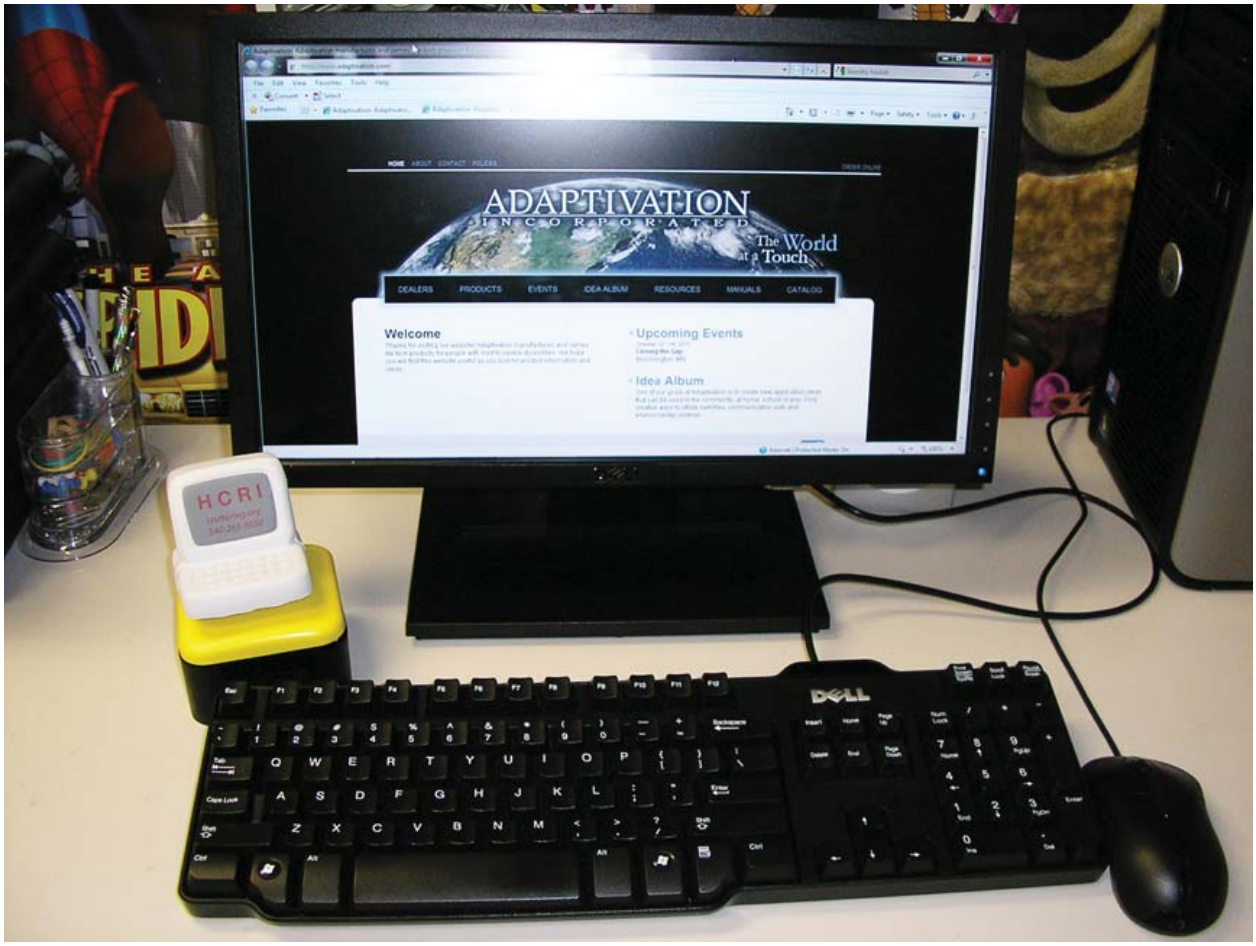
-Sequencer
-large Pal Pad
-large Overlay Pocket

Description:

Checklists come in many forms. This poster checklist became interactive by adding a Pal Pad and Sequencer. The Pal Pad was positioned behind the poster and held in place by an Overlay Pocket. Touching the poster played the messages.

Tips:

-To change the size of the activation area, use a different size Pal Pad.
-The Sequencer fits on the ledge of the white board (no need to mount it).
-Listening to the messages of the Sequencer is as important as saying them.



Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

It is necessary to establish rules and boundaries for activities. Space does not always allow large visual cues to be displayed. Here, the rules for computer use were recorded on the Sequencer. Before the user was allowed to use the computer, she had to listen to each rule.

Tips:

-If rules are forgotten or not understood the first time through the sequence, the sequence can be repeated.
-Recording rules and directions provides consistency from day to day.
-Messages can be customized to the user.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

At some point, all students will be asked to give an oral report. We used a poster as a visual to supplement the report. Sequential messaging helped control the flow of the report. Each message on the Sequencer can be recorded with as much or as little information as wanted.

Tips:

-A Pal Pad can be placed behind the poster to make the poster interactive.
-Poster information can often become the messages of the sequence.
-Teacher-supply stores carry posters on many topics.

Features Used:

-Wireless AC-appliance control

Products Used:

-FreeHand

Description:

Remember to incorporate environmental controls into everyday tasks. Here, the FreeHand was used to operate the flag light. Each day, a student was assigned the job of turning on the flag light for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tips:

-Control via the FreeHand is wireless. Even though the flag is mounted to the wall, it can be turned on from any location in the classroom.
-This flag light was found in the clearance section after the 4th of July.
-Use a flag light when singing patriotic songs and other activities.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-8 Pal Pads (variety)
-HandiBoard

Description:

Reality television dominates the airwaves, and these shows are often the topics of conversation. Pal Pads were arranged on the HandiBoard and plugged into the VoicePal 8. Pictures of *American Idol* winners were placed on top of the Pal Pads, and sound clips of each singer were recorded into the VoicePal 8.

Tips:

-Set up the HandiBoard at the beginning of a season and eliminate contestants as the show progresses.
-Turn it into a matching game by listening to the sound clips and matching the correct singer.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-2 small Pal Pads
-2 Flexible Switches

Description:

It can be tricky to take technology from the classroom to the community and have it remain functional. The pockets of this canvas bag were originally intended for photos. Simply adding switches to each pocket and a communication device inside transformed the bag into a portable communication system.

Tips:

-The pockets accommodate a wide variety of visual cues.
-Change messages and visual cues only (bag setup stays the same) to alter the activity.
-We have found bags at dollar stores, discount stores and department stores (none of them were over $4.00).

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

This is our most unique switch application yet! The newest craze in pet toys are water-bottle cruncher animals. A Pneumatic Switch was attached to a water bottle which was placed inside the cat. Squeezing the cat activated the messages of the Sequencer.

Tips:

-The Pneumatic Switch will fit securely in a hole drilled using a 9/64 bit.
-The animal covers of the bottle offer tactile input and are washable.
-Record messages for daily tasks such as feeding the cat.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Lots of research and marketing goes into developing a memorable logo. Don't forget to use them as visual cues! The client picked logos from her favorite shopping destinations. They were attached to the SwitchBoard which was plugged into the VoicePal 8 for voice output. Messages ranged from asking about particular items to be purchased to general statements about the stores.

Tips:

-Find logos on bags, ads coupons and direct mail.
-Once you have collected the logos, cover them with contact paper and make a file for future use.
-Restaurants, entertainment and sports venues all have logos.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-4 Pal Pads (variety)

Description:

Throughout this book, we have shown a variety of switch setups. Here, we stepped it up to match the personality of the user. This was a scrapbook-paper-storage box. It was easy to place the device inside and make holes in the lid for the switch cords. How cool does this pedicure activity look now?!?!

Tips:

-A variety of switch sizes can be used in a switch array.
-Other cardboard containers such as photo boxes have unique designs.
-Boxes and other containers are a great way to keep cords organized and out of reach.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-3 large Pal Pads

Description:

Newspaper headlines offer consistency in their look. Use this to your advantage in current event activities. For a classroom that read from the newspaper daily, the students picked the section from which they wanted information. Large Pal Pads were chosen to accommodate the actual newspaper headline.

Tips:

-To change an activity, messages can request information or report information.
-Activities that occur daily provide important repetition.
-If you don't have a newspaper subscription, use find your news online.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-5 small Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

It is amazing what can become a meaningful visual cue. We used food packaging, real marshmallows, and 3-D scrapbook stickers to supplement a fun book about making s'mores. As you can see, they are not all alike. We picked the same HandiBoard setup that was used for a previous activity (p. 64).

Tips:

-Pre-made switch setups are great time savers and can be used repeatedly.
-Even when the user can read, fun visual cues may be more engaging.
-Incorporate literacy whenever possible to reinforce concept development.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-2 small Pal Pads

Description:

Once you have created an activity, look for other ways to use it! Peanut butter & jelly is not only one of the first recipes a person learns, it is also the theme of some songs (for all ages!). Actual peanut butter & jelly containers were placed on top of Pal Pads. Touching the containers played the messages.

Tips:

-See p. 68 for switch setup.
-Pneumatic Switches and Taction Pads could also be used with the containers.
-Incorporate popular music for more age-appropriate activities.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-5 Pal Pads (variety)

Description:

A bake sale can be used to teach skills including greeting (“Welcome to our bake sale”), manners (“Thank you”), relaying information (“Cupcakes are $1.50”), answering questions about prices, and giving back change. Five Pal Pads were mounted to a plastic case and the cords were pulled to the inside. The case also held the device to protect it from spills.

Tips:

-The bake sale items were created during classroom baking activities.
-Money for the bake sale can be stored in the case.
-The money on the Pal Pads represented the possible cost combinations.

Features Used:

-Wireless AC-appliance control

Products Used:

-FreeHand

Description:

Movie nights should include popcorn! This air popper was controlled by the FreeHand. Wireless operation allowed the user to be positioned away from the popper to prevent burns. A movie popcorn container was placed on top of the FreeHand as the visual cue.

Tips:

-The latch mode on the FreeHand works the best with air poppers.
-This is an example of taking what you are already doing and adding tech.
-Look for other small appliances to operate (i.e. snow-cone machine).

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks
-Keypad

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8K
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Fast food is on every corner, so make it a functional communication opportunity. Here, we paired miniature objects with picture cues for a matching activity. This setup also served as a way to place an order. The SwitchBoard was plugged into the VoicePal 8K for voice output.

Tips:

-Request photo menus. These can be used as communication boards.
-Miniature object sets for some fast food chains can be purchased.
-Black-and-white picture cues provide a nice contrast to the objects.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-8 mini Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

Social stories can be used to support appropriate behavior in a specific setting (they come in many forms). Eight Pal Pads, along with picture cues, were arranged from left to right on a HandiBoard to create a story. The picture menu gave additional visual cues. The following messages were recorded: “We are going to Wendy’s”, “I have $3 to spend”, “I can pick three items from the menu”, “I will have to stand in line”, “When it is my turn, I will point to the three items I want”, “We are not staying at Wendy’s. My order will be to go.”, “I will give my money when they ask”, “I will say thank you before I leave”.

Tips:

-Use social stories prior to the activity occurring and repeat as necessary.
-Develop social stories that contain as few or as many messages needed by the user.
-Sequential messaging is a good tool for stories.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Voice output helps explain visual information. A list of grocery items was created for a shopper. Voice output was added to clarify weekly needs. The Sequencer was used to clarify each of the items on the list (i.e. “one loaf of bread” “one-and-a-half gallon of milk”, “No bananas”, “one box of Cheerios”. “No eggs” and “Pick a cake mix”).

Tips:

-The Sequencer can be used without a visual list.
-Use Level 1 of the Sequencer for the grocery list and Level 2 for messages needed to check out.
-A Pal Pad can be placed underneath the list and plugged into the Sequencer. Pressing the list activates the messages.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

-VoicePal 8
-8 mini Pal Pads
-HandiBoard

Description:

Looking for real-photo visual cues? Use grocery flyers and other ads. The setup seen here was used for a previous activity (p. 137). We simply changed the visual cues and the messages. This highlights the idea of creating one setup for multiple uses.

Tips:

-The HandiBoard can accommodate a various quantities and sizes of switches.
-With the HandiBoard, the voice output device can be visible or hidden.
-When cords and voice output are out of sight, focus is kept on the activity.

Features Used:

-Sequential messaging

Products Used:

-Sequencer

Description:

Recipes follow a natural sequence. We recorded the steps into the Sequencer. The user was taught to listen to each step and complete it before moving on to the next message. The complexity of the message and the number of messages in the sequence should be based on the user's abilities.

Tips:

-If a visual cue is needed for each step, create overlays and use the Medley or VoicePal Levels.
-Keep the user's favorite recipes in a cookbook.
-Recipes can be used as a receptive (listening) or expressive (giving directions) activities.

Features Used:

-Multiple messages
-Multiple external switch jacks

Products Used:

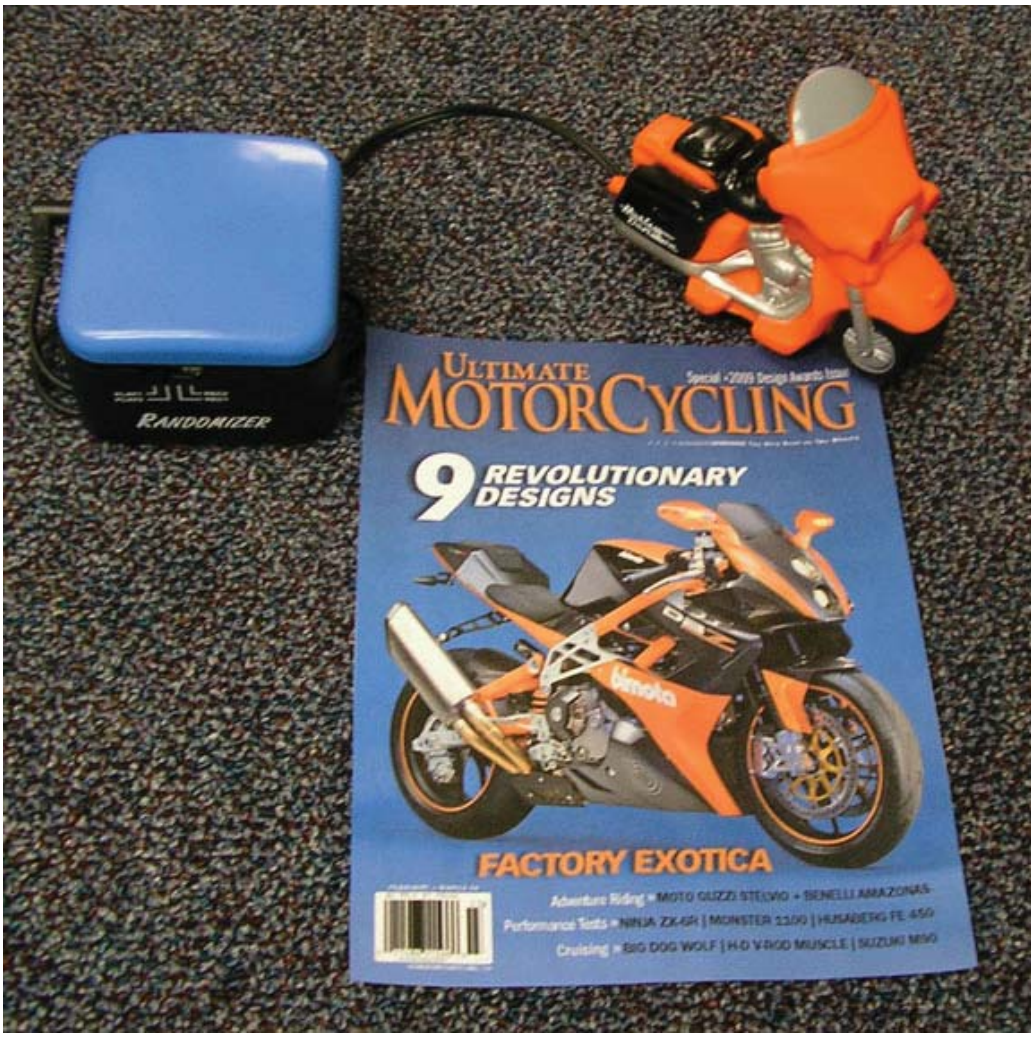
-VoicePal 8K
-SwitchBoard

Description:

Create a group cooking activity by including a range of visual cues that meet individual needs. This activity offered objects, large and small picture cues and large and small text all with one voice output device. Both large and small access areas were also available.

Tips:

-Use Pal Pads and a HandiBoard instead of the SwitchBoard.
-This activity could be used for matching, pretend play or retelling the activity after it is completed simply by changing the messages.
-Print multiple overlays for the same activity in case one is lost or ruined.



Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

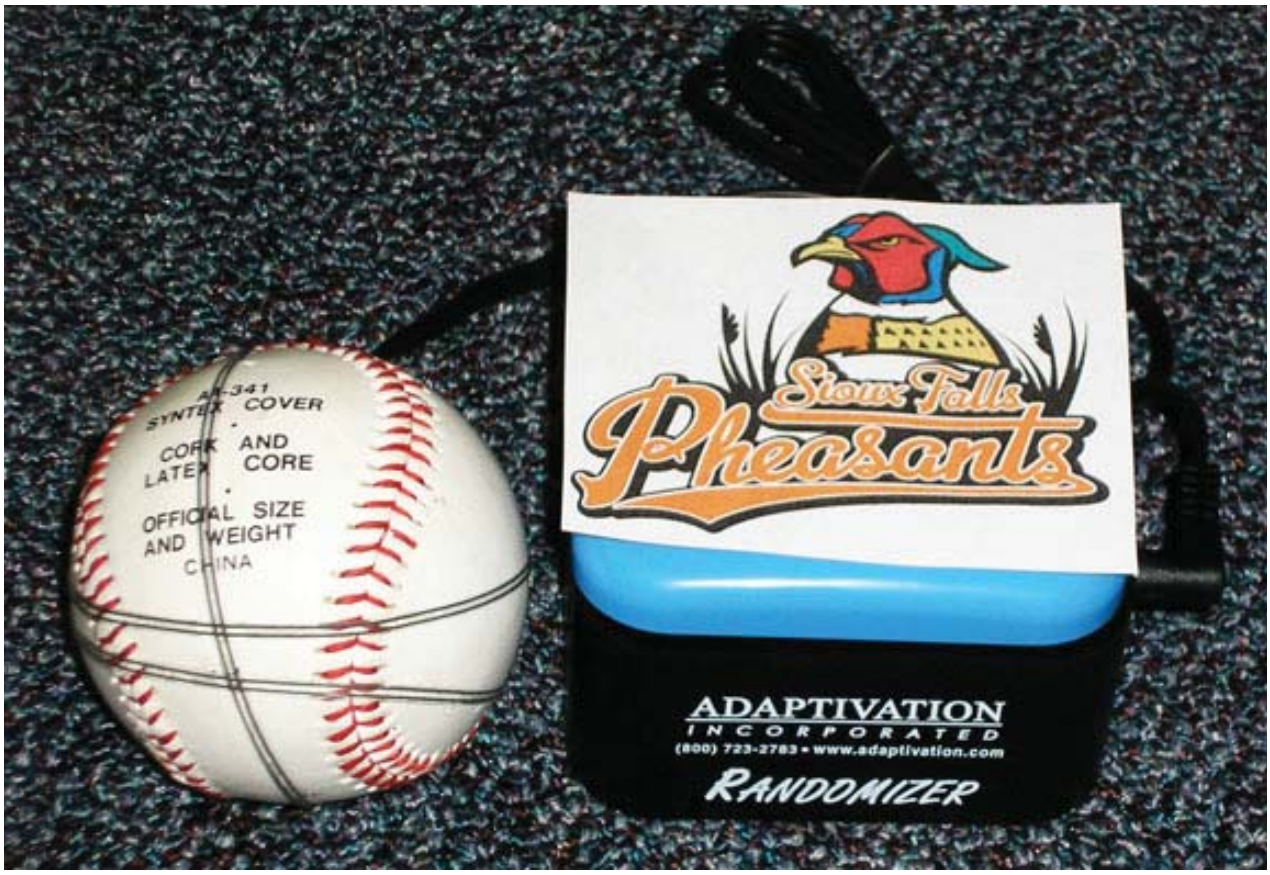
-Randomizer
-Pneumatic Switch

Description:

Object use can be age appropriate. Different facts from the magazine were recorded into the Randomizer as a conversation starter. A squeeze motorcycle was paired with a Pneumatic Switch and plugged into the Randomizer. When the motorcycle was pressed, messages played.

Tips:

-If the user has a favorite subject, integrate it into functional activities.
-Objects are easily attached to Pal Pads.
-Random messaging keeps both the user and the listener engaged.



Features Used:

-Random messaging
-External switch jack

Products Used:

-Randomizer
-Taction Pad

Description:

Taction Pads are a great way to make objects into switches. Taction Pad-C (long and thing) can wrap around odd-shaped objects. Once wrapped, grasping the baseball will activate the voice-output device. We took this application to a baseball game where the client cheered for his team.

Tips:

-Taction Pads are activated by skin touch (moisture), not pressure.
-Taction Pads can be cut to fit objects.
-Sound effects can be just as effective as verbal messages.

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