

Beginning Augmentative Communication

Making Choices

By Peggy Locke

It is important to consider ways to expand the variety of choices students are provided with throughout the school day. It's always a good idea to consider choices that would appeal to same-age peers. Of course the best way to gather that information is to listen to the conversations of typical peers and/or ask their opinions. In the meantime, here are some categories and ideas to get you started:

Morning Meeting:

1. Who will pass out lunch tickets, John or Mary?
2. Who will share classroom news, Sue or Freda? Do you want to share news about your puppy, Paxton, or your Grandpa, Phil?
3. What question should we answer about the calendar - about the weather or special activities?
4. Who will be the "student of the week"?
5. Who will start the pledge of allegiance?
6. Who will be line leader for the day?

Math/Science Time:

1. Who will be lab partners?
2. What animal to study, penguins or polar bears?
3. What worksheet to do first, addition or subtraction?
4. What type of objects to count, blocks or balls?
5. Who will tally the votes?
6. What program to use at the computer station?
7. What number the class should count by, 2s, 5s or 10s?
8. What items to measure with, paperclips or pencils?
9. What objects to weigh, feathers or rocks?

Snack Time:

1. What snack to eat, crackers or apples?
2. Who to share a snack with?
3. What topping to put on the snack, strawberry or chocolate?
4. Who will clean up?
5. What to drink, juice or milk?
6. What items to put in the smoothie, strawberries or bananas?
7. Who will prepare the snack?
8. Who will pass out the snack?
9. Who will feed the class pet at snack time?

Reading Time:

1. What book to read?
2. Whose turn to read?
3. Who will ask/answer questions about the story?

4. What character to write about?
5. What word to spell?
6. Which poem to recite?
7. What picture to illustrate the story?
8. What character to be in the puppet show?
9. What action or word to act out?
10. What letter to find and say/sound out?
11. What ending to make up rhyming words for?

Art Time:

1. What color background paper, red or blue?
2. Where to display the finished project, in the classroom or in the hallway?
3. What art materials to use, paints or crayons?
4. Who will work together?
5. What art project to work on, photo frames or potato people?
6. What artist to research/study?
7. What pictures to cut out/add to the collage?
8. What color crayon/marker/paint to use?
9. What role to play in the cooperative project?

School Jobs:

1. Who does what job?
2. When should we take a break, now or later?
3. Which delivery route to take, by the office or the gym?
4. Where to put the money collected, in the can or the bag?
5. What to do on break, read a magazine or play a game?
6. What order to perform job tasks?
7. Who will feed the class pet? Should we give the rabbit pellets or carrots? Do you want the gerbil to have the spin toy or the merry-go-round?

Music Time:

1. What song to sing?
2. Who will pass out instruments?
3. What instrument to play?
4. Whether to play or sing fast or slow?
5. What verse to sing in the song?
6. What tape/CD to listen to?
7. Which musician to study/listen to?
8. Which classmates to sing a song with?
9. What words to make a song with?

Note: Don't forget to use symbols on all switches and communication aids to help students assign meaning to their actions and communications. Exposing students to symbols will only increase the likelihood they will come to understand them over time.