

Communication Temptations

How to set up the environment to tempt students to communicate with us!

The rationale for using them: **a student is much more likely to communicate if they have a reason for doing so!**

How to do it:

1. Find an activity or an object that the student really enjoys.

- Look for an activity that is easily stopped and started (e.g., bubbles, a swing, a game, a song) **or** an object that has multiple parts that you can hand to the student (e.g., crackers that they love to eat, cars for a car track, pieces to a puzzle, pieces to a game).



2. Arrange the environment so that you create an obstacle to getting that object, but so that the student can see the object.

- For example, put the favorite item up on a high shelf, or put the pieces in see-through containers the student can't open.

3. Start the activity, have a bit of fun and then stop.

- For example, put the lid on the bubbles or give a few pieces of food or parts to a game and keep the rest in the container.



4. Wait! It is easy to forget this part, but it's an important one.

- Give the student a chance to communicate first.**
- Ideally, we want the student to communicate without us helping them (we want them to initiate the communication), so always **wait** first.
- Observe what the student does.
- Look expectantly at the student, like you are waiting for them to do something (which, of course, you are!)



5. When the student communicates with you:

- If the student isn't yet using words**, wait until they do something--anything-- to indicate that they want more (e.g., moves their body in anticipation, points, reaches).
 - When the student does (and they will!), say the word for what the student wants, wait just a few moments more, and give it to him.
- If the student vocalizes** to indicate they want more but doesn't actually say the word, say the word, wait just a few more seconds, and give the student what they want.
- If the student imitates the word**, or even part of the word, give the student what they want and praise them!
- If the student always imitates your words**, but doesn't say them on their own, try waiting progressively longer before you say the word for what they wants.
 - Wait for one second and then say the word.
 - Then (the next time), wait for two seconds before saying the word.
 - Then (the next time), wait for three seconds before saying the word....and so on.
 - If the student gets frustrated, go back to waiting less and then build up again.