

Project Information

Project Title:	Supporting Students Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Throughout the School Day.
Project Description:	A short asynchronous interactive eLearning module designed for elementary school teachers and classroom staff who support students using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems in an inclusive classroom setting. The self-paced module will be developed in Articulate Rise 360 and designed to be completed in approximately 20 minutes. The purpose of the module is to address the gap between the communication needs of AAC users and the limited practical AAC training many educators receive. The module aims to increase educator awareness, confidence, and ability to support AAC use during classroom instruction, daily routines, and social interactions. Instructional content will focus on <i>3 components</i>: 1. Practical cueing strategies (Infographic, demonstration video, and knowledge check quiz). 2. How to incorporate AAC device use in classroom learning to promote vocabulary building. (activities: scenario-based learning through examples). 3. Identify opportunities to promote use of AAC devices throughout school day (application-based learning activities).
Gap Analysis/Needs Analysis:	Current or Actual Status Many teachers and classroom staff report limited training and confidence for supporting students with AAC use during classroom activities and daily routines. As a result, students who use AAC systems often experience limited opportunities for communication, classroom participation, and academic engagement within school settings. Desired Status Teachers and classroom staff will demonstrate increased awareness and confidence for supporting AAC users through practical knowledge and strategies. Thereby, promoting more consistent and meaningful AAC device use by students during academic, social, and routine-based interactions.

	Need or Desired Status A concise, practical professional development resource is needed to provide educators with foundational AAC implementation strategies that can be immediately applied within classroom settings. A self-paced asynchronous module will allow educators to independently access practical AAC training while accommodating varying schedules and prior AAC experience levels.
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Stakeholders and Their Roles and Responsibilities

Learning Designer:	Vinaya Kulkarni. Responsibilities: The learning designer will be responsible for conducting Gap analysis, learner analysis, designing instructional plan, developing multimedia elements, and creating assessments, all embedded within the final eLearning module ensuring alignment between instructional decisions, learning theories, and project goals.
Critical Project Stakeholders:	Elementary School Teachers Provide insight regarding classroom routines, instructional demands, and barriers impacting AAC implementation within inclusive classroom settings. Classroom Assistants / Paraprofessionals Provide perspective regarding daily communication support needs and AAC use within classroom as well as on school campus during diverse range of activities. Speech-Language Pathologists Provide guidance regarding evidence-based AAC implementation strategies and communication partner supports appropriate for school settings. They also provide technical support for customizing and navigating AAC devices. Students Who Use AAC Systems Serve as the central learner population whose communication participation needs to inform the instructional goals of the module. Families / Caregivers Provide perspective regarding the importance of consistent AAC support across school and home environments. School Administrators Support feasibility of professional development implementation and educator accessibility to AAC-related training resources.

Subject Matter Experts (person or resource):	Ashley Larsen M.S., CCC-SLP A speech therapist within the Madison County School district and an AAC expert with experience of collaborating with teachers for AAC use with students. Also: • Research literature focused on AAC participation, communication partner strategies, and classroom AAC implementation • Professional AAC implementation resources such as PrAACtical AAC • Professional experience and prior AAC training experience of the designer
Other Contributors:	N/A
Communication:	Communication with stakeholders and subject matter experts will occur through email communication, professional discussions, and review of instructional materials during module development. Feedback from the AAC subject matter expert and educators will be used to support the accuracy, relevance, and practicality of AAC implementation strategies included within the module. Informal educator feedback and brief pre/post module survey questions may also be used to evaluate learner confidence and perceive usefulness of the training content.

Learner Analysis

Target Audience:	The target audience for this module includes elementary school teachers and educational assistants who support students using AAC systems as a primary means of communication within inclusive classroom environments.
Unique Characteristics of Learners:	• Educational background may include high school diplomas, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, or master's degrees depending on professional role within the school setting. • Prior experience working with children with special needs may vary significantly among learners. • Prior knowledge and experience related to AAC systems and implementation strategies will likely be varied.

	• Learners are practicing educators and support staff with limited time available for professional development activities. • Learners are likely to prefer concise, practical instructional content that can be immediately applied within classroom settings. • Learners will independently navigate the asynchronous self-paced module without facilitator guidance. • Instructional materials should therefore include clear navigation, concise explanations, authentic classroom examples, and interactive learning opportunities to support engagement and independent learning.
Research / Theory / Model Selected in Response to Learners' Needs:	This module will be based on principles of Adult Learning Theory emphasizing relevance, practical application, and problem-centered learning experiences for adult learners. Since the target audience consists of practicing educators with immediate classroom responsibilities, instructional content will focus on realistic classroom application and strategies that can be implemented immediately within educational settings. The module will also incorporate elements of Merrill's Principles of Instruction using demonstration videos, application-based and authentic classroom scenarios-based activities providing opportunities for activation of prior knowledge as well as application and integration.

Project Content

Project Goal:	The goal of this project is to increase educator awareness, confidence, and practical skills for supporting students who use AAC systems within elementary classroom settings. Upon completion of the module, learners will recognize opportunities to encourage AAC use throughout the school day and apply practical communication support strategies that facilitate classroom participation, vocabulary development, and social interaction for AAC users.
Learning Objectives:	After completing this module, learners will be able to: 1. Distinguish effective and ineffective AAC communication partner cueing strategies used to support AAC users (Infographic, demonstration video, and knowledge check quiz).

	2. Identify opportunities to incorporate AAC use within academic classroom activities (classroom examples scenario and matching task). 3. Identify opportunities to encourage AAC participation during daily school routines and social interactions. (Hotspot activity application-based learning activities- reflection and downloadable resource.).
Description of Engagement Strategies/ Interaction	Multimedia Demonstration Activities A self-produced demonstration video and visual examples model practical AAC communication partner strategies, including aided language input, wait time, validation of communication attempts, and the use of open-ended prompts. These demonstrations align with Merrill's demonstration principle by providing authentic school-based examples that educators can apply within their own classrooms. Authentic Classroom Examples and School-Day Scenarios Learners engage with authentic classroom examples and school-day scenarios illustrating AAC participation during academic instruction, daily routines, and social interactions. These examples support activation of prior knowledge and application of learning within realistic educational contexts. Embedded Interactive Knowledge Checks Formative knowledge checks are embedded throughout the module to reinforce key concepts and maintain learner engagement. Activities include a sorting activity focused on AAC communication partner strategies and a matching activity focused on AAC participation during academic learning. Immediate feedback is provided following learner responses. Application-Based Learning Activities Learners explore opportunities for AAC participation throughout the school day using an interactive hotspot activity representing multiple school environments. A brief reflection prompt encourages learners to consider how AAC opportunities can be incorporated within their own educational settings. Downloadable Support Resource The module concludes with two downloadable resources: an AAC Cueing Strategies Infographic and an AAC Support Action Plan Worksheet for Educators. These resources are intended to support transfer of learning into classroom practice.
Assessment Plan:	Formative Assessments • Embedded knowledge check questions throughout instructional content

	• Scenario-based decision-making activities requiring learners to identify appropriate AAC support strategies • Interactive identification of communication opportunities during classroom routines and academic instruction • Immediate automated feedback following learner responses Summative Assessment Learners will complete a 5-question scenario-based quiz consisting of multiple-choice and multiple-response items designed to evaluate understanding of practical AAC support strategies, opportunities for AAC use throughout the school day, and application of AAC implementation concepts within classroom scenarios. • practical AAC communication support strategies, • opportunities for AAC use throughout the school day, • and application of AAC implementation concepts within classroom scenarios.
Content Outline (brief):	Module Introduction • Common AAC Challenges • What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)? • Why AAC Use and Educator Support Matter • Learning Objectives Section 1: Practical AAC Support Strategies • AAC Do's and Don'ts Infographic • Communication Partner Demonstration Video • Sorting Activity Knowledge Check Section 2: AAC Use During Classroom Learning • Classroom Examples of AAC Use • Reading and Language Arts • Mathematics • Science • Writing • Matching Activity Section 3: Opportunities for AAC Use Throughout the School Day • Interactive School-Day Hotspot Activity • Classroom / Morning Meeting • Recess • Cafeteria

- Music Room
- Science Lab
- Hallway / Transition
- Bus Stop / Dismissal
- School Nurse
- Reflection Prompt

Module Conclusion

- Key Takeaways
- Final Quiz
- Conclusion
- Downloadable Resources

Course Deliverables

Platform(s) or Authoring Tool(s) to be Used:	• Rise 360 • Canva • CapCut • Rise AI • ChatGPT image generation
Description of Deliverables / Course Assets (All items to be created and delivered to create the final module):	A self-paced asynchronous eLearning module developed in Articulate Rise 360 including the following assets: • Instructional content focused on practical AAC communication partner strategies, AAC use during classroom learning, and opportunities for AAC participation throughout the school day • 1 AAC Do's and Don'ts infographic • 1 AAC Support Action Plan Worksheet for Educators • 1 self-produced demonstration video modeling AAC communication partner strategies • 1 sorting activity knowledge check • 1 matching activity knowledge check • 1 interactive hotspot/labeled graphic activity focused on identifying AAC opportunities throughout the school day • 1 summative final quiz • Rise AI-generated instructional visuals • Original classroom photographs demonstrating AAC use during academic activities • AI-generated school-day hotspot image • Learner accessibility supports including captions, alt text, audio controls, and clear navigation features • Storyboard document outlining module flow, media, interactions, and assessments • Copyright and media attribution documentation • Reflection paper

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ID Reflection

How does learning about this topic apply to your future professional plans?	Learning about this topic directly aligns with both my clinical background as a speech-language pathologist and my future professional interests in instructional design. I have over 11 years of experience working primarily with adult and geriatric populations with complex communication needs, including individuals with ALS, traumatic brain injury, stroke, and dementia. Through this experience, I have developed a strong appreciation for the impact AAC systems can have on communication, participation, and quality of life for individuals with limited verbal communication abilities. As I continue developing instructional design skills, I am particularly interested in opportunities that combine healthcare, AAC, and professional education. Developing this module has allowed me to integrate my clinical AAC knowledge with instructional design principles to create practical learning experiences that support AAC implementation and communication participation within real-world settings.
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