

## AAC USER ABILITIES: AAC ABILITY LEVELS

~description of the AAC user's skills and competencies~

AAC User Abilities refers to how we categorize our users in terms of their abilities with AAC and language. Each profile has defined levels of ability and exposure with AAC. As we know in the real world, things are not black and white, and our clients may not clearly fit into one profile. These profiles do however help us gauge our user's abilities and enable us to begin thinking how we can meet their needs and further expand their skills.

<b>Emergent</b>	<b>Context-Dependent</b>
<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No symbolic expressive language</li> <li>• No prior experience with AAC</li> <li>• Communicative intent may be developing</li> <li>• Requires the support of a familiar partner</li> <li>• Limited communicative reliability</li> <li>• Exploring access</li> </ul> <p>Primary Goal: teach symbolic communication</p>	<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizes symbolic expressive language</li> <li>• Prior experience with AAC</li> <li>• Developing novel language generation</li> <li>• Demonstrates communicative intent</li> <li>• Successful communication is typically context dependent</li> <li>• Increase communicative success with familiar partners</li> <li>• Identified access</li> </ul> <p>Primary Goal: expand communicative contexts and partners</p>
<b>Context-Independent</b>	<b>Literate</b>
<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive use and knowledge of symbolic expressive language</li> <li>• Novel language generation</li> <li>• Prior experience with AAC</li> <li>• Successful communication in and out of context</li> <li>• Successful communication with unfamiliar partners</li> <li>• Determined access</li> </ul> <p>Primary Goal: explore user's goals and desires for communication</p>	<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizes text to speech</li> <li>• Intact spelling and reading skills</li> <li>• Novel language generation</li> <li>• Prior experience with AAC</li> <li>• Successful communication in and out of context</li> <li>• Successful communication with unfamiliar partners</li> <li>• Determined access</li> </ul> <p>Primary Goal: explore user's goals and desires for communication, communicative efficiency</p>

Dowden, Ph.D. (2004). (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://depts.washington.edu/augcomm/index.htm>

