

Identifying Communication Strategies for PPA

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Purpose of this session

Practical strategies

- Offer concrete, practical suggestions on how to improve communication at all stages of the disease

Empowerment

- These strategies and tools will help you to have more control over what is happening to your loved one

Hope

- Make the most out of every day
- Focus on the positives

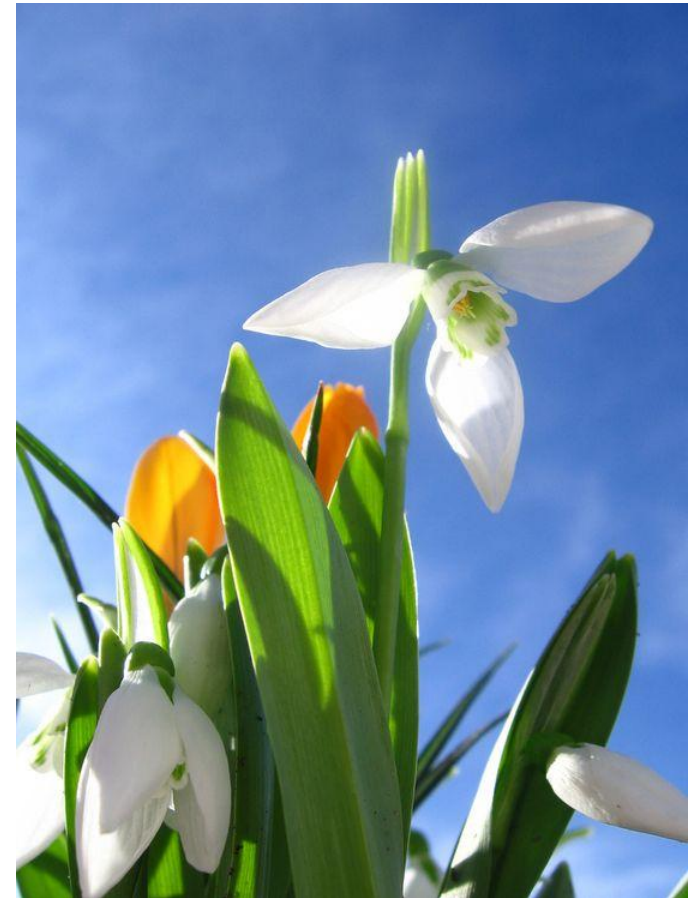


Review of PPA Symptoms

- Primary symptom: Loss of language
- Difficulties with reading and writing
- Difficulties with comprehension
- As disease progresses, may have difficulty with:
 - Memory
 - Attention
 - Judgment
 - Changes in behavior and personality
- Symptoms don't occur in stages
 - Existing symptoms worsen and new symptoms may appear in unpredictable manner

Individualized Approach

- Disease progresses differently for everyone
- Every individual has unique set of communication strengths and preferences
- Goal is to identify and support these strengths
- Every individual will need a different amount of support to use communication strategies



Accepting PPA

- Adapting to new forms of communication
- Learning to use new communication strategies and tools
 - Communication strategy: alternative ways of communicating that the individual and family can begin to use to help them compensate for the loss
 - Communication tool: high tech or low tech devices that assist the individual in communicating with others

Some general concepts to remember...

- **Goal is communication, not perfection**
- Avoid stress: makes the communication challenges more difficult
- Continue social activities (gatherings with friends/family)
- Be aware of signs of depression
- There will be good days and bad days. Do your best to provide additional support on the more difficult days



Strategies to Facilitate Comprehension

- Face the individual when speaking and making sure you have his/her full attention before starting to speak
- Speak slowly, and allow enough time for the individual to respond to questions
- Use gestures to help communicate your message
- Increase use of nonverbal cues: facial expressions, tone of voice, touch
- If a response is incomplete or not clear, ask for clarification; repeat back what you heard. Do not pretend to understand if you do not
- Try not to interrupt and only supply a word if your help is requested
- Manage the environment (background noise, number of people present)

Strategies to Facilitate Comprehension

- Give one direction at a time
- Use simple grammatical structure
- Replace complex words with more common vocabulary words
- Try asking questions that require a choice between two items or possibilities
- Try asking questions that can be answered with YES/NO



Self-cueing strategies

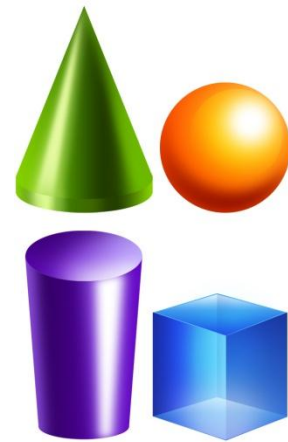
Help the individual use strategies to either retrieve the missing word or to communicate the message

- Talking around the word
- Thinking of the first letter of the word
- Trying to write the word
- Visualizing the word
- Using gestures



Self-cueing Strategies: Talking around the word

- Cue the individual to talk around the word he/she is trying to say by encouraging, “Tell me about it...”
 - Describe its purpose or function
 - General category (fruit, clothing, sport)
 - Physical description (size, shape, color)
 - Location
 - Synonym or antonym for the word
- Fun game to practice this strategy
 - Write different words on index cards; have individual describe word to you without saying the word itself; then you do the same and have individual guess the word



Self-cueing Strategies: Thinking of the first letter

- Ask the individual: “Can you think of what it starts with?”
 - If so, ask him to repeat the sound a few times to help retrieve the word



Self-cueing Strategies:

Writing it down

- Can be used when reading and writing are relatively well preserved
- If the individual has difficulty pronouncing longer words, may benefit from writing out the word first and then using the written cues to say the word
- Communication partner can write out choices



Self-cueing Strategies:

Visualizing the word

- Ask the individual to try to picture the word they are trying to say

Gestures

- Ask the individual to try to make a gesture for the word they are trying to say

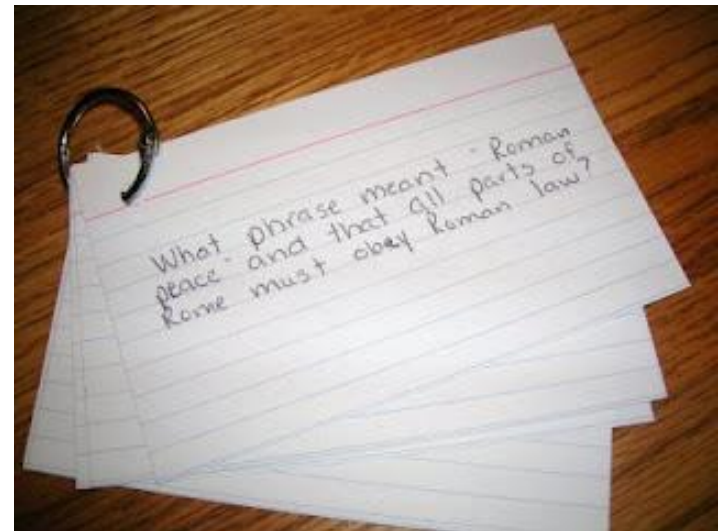


Strategies for Remembering Proper Nouns

1. Make a list of important people and locations
 - Family members, friends, political figures
 - Street names, stores, restaurants
2. Write a description of each person/place on back of card, with key word on front
3. Have individual quiz self using cards every day (should take about 5 minutes)
4. For any names that are missed, write the word down 5 times for practice
5. Can also be used for common nouns

Communication Wallet

- Materials: Cut index cards down to wallet size **or** type up, print, and laminate wallet-sized cards
- Punch hole in corner of each card
- Place on keyring
- Keep in pocket or purse



Communication Wallet

- Determine appropriate font size
 - Can individual easily read the information?
- Determine how much information to include on each page
- Decide on content
 - Should be words, phrases, or sentences that individual may need to frequently communicate in conversation

Font 10

Font 16

Font 22

Font 28

Font 34

Font 40

Communication Wallet

Ideas for Content

- Name, address, phone number
- Name and contact info for emergency contact
- Description of condition and what helps
- Names and contact info of family members, friends, doctors, bank, pharmacy
- List of important locations: stores, restaurants, street names
- Frequently asked questions
- Pictures of family members and friends with names

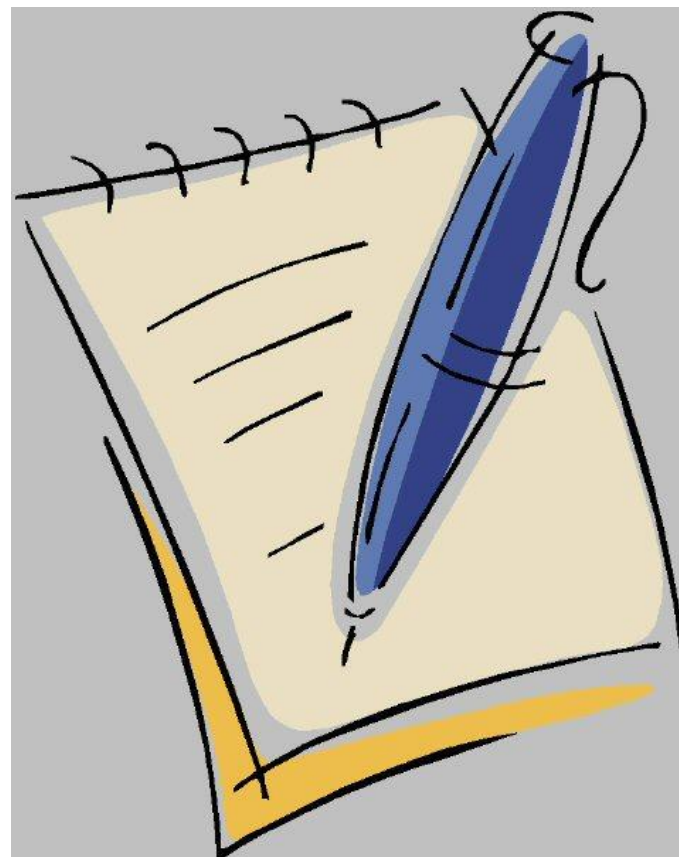
Communication Wallet

How to use

- Individual can use for reference during conversation when unable to think of a word or question.
- Individual can study particular names before going to a social event
- Communication partner can remind individual to pull out wallet to help find missing word

Writing Strategies

- Spell each word aloud as they are writing it
- Use word prediction feature when typing on a computer
- Use pocket dictionary to look up word



Emails

- **Spouse/Caregiver:** Type up template for email
 - Help individual cater template for each friend or family member
- **Spouse/Caregiver:** Talk with individual about what he/she wants to write in email
 - Write content down on piece of paper
 - Have individual type into email



Conversation Scripts

What is a script?

Written or typed statements that are practiced frequently until individual can say them more fluently and with greater confidence



Conversation Scripts

Can be used to:

- Talk to a family member or friend over the telephone and in other environments (e.g. with grandchildren)
- Order food at a favorite restaurant, schedule an appointment, or ask for directions over the telephone
- State personal information or biographical facts
- Explain the condition of “aphasia/PPA” and asking listeners to be patient
- Telling jokes or stories
- Giving a lecture or speech
- Saying prayers

Conversation Scripts

How to make:

- Put all scripts in page protectors in 3-ringed binder
- Can also laminate and include in Communication Wallet
- Best if typed up and printed out (but can also be handwritten)
- Type up individual's joke, story, or responses
- Try using landscape instead of portrait
- Try to keep one sentence per line.
- Assess most appropriate font size/spacing

Conversation Scripts

How to Practice:

- The key to success is repeated practice
- Read through script
- Highlight difficult words/phrases
- Repeat each of these 5 times
- Read through entire script again
- Practice scripts for ~20 minutes daily
- Practice telephone scripts directly before making a call

Moderate Stages

Computer Script Program

<http://ricaphasiascripts.digitalcontentcenter.com>



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Communication Book

What is it?

- Book full of pictures of commonly used words
- Does NOT replace spoken language – supplements it when needed
- Individual can refer to book to help get message across
- Communication partner may need to prompt use of book during conversation

Moderate Stages

Communication Books

- Can buy pre-made book
- Can buy computer program to help make book
- Can make yourself using Google images and digital photographs



Personalized Communication Book

- Includes a collection of pictures of family, friends, activities, and commonly used phrases.
- Pictures are arranged by category in different sections of the books and words and descriptive phrases are attached to each picture.
- Can use a 3-ringed binder with plastic page protectors. Pages can easily be added.
- Can also try binder with velcro to move pictures around if needed
- Try using Google Images to search for pictures that are meaningful to the individual.
- Take pictures of family, friends, and personal items with a digital camera

Sample page

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| food  | hamburger  | Pizza  | Burrito  | Spaghetti  |
| bread  | cheese  | French fries  | hot dog  | popcorn  |
| fruit  | banana  | ice cream  | cookie  | candy  |
| drink  | water  | juice  | soft drink  | coffee  |



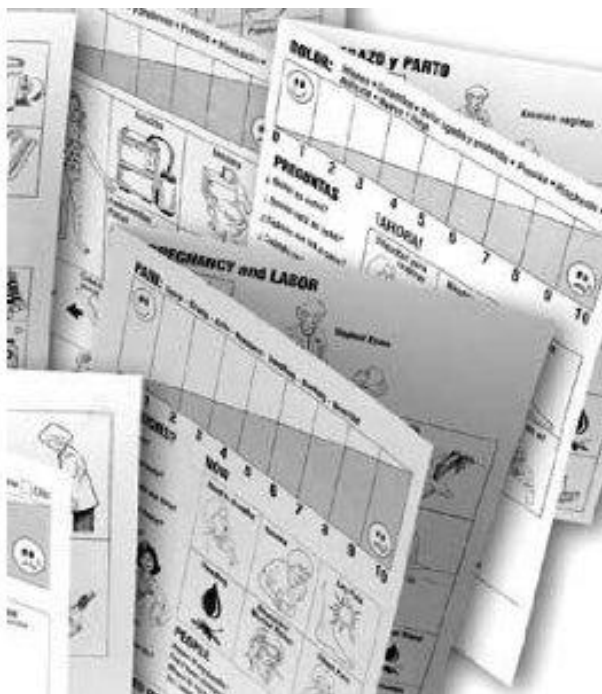
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Portable Communication Books



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Generic vs. Personalized



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Communication Book

Ideas for book sections

- Communicating medical needs
- Favorite foods/beverages
- Frequently visited locations
- Family members/friends
- Household objects
- Articles of clothing
- Career and hobbies
- Places visited
- Politicians, famous people, current events



Augmentative & Alternative Communication Devices

Speech Generating Device (SGD)

- A device featuring pictures or icons that when pressed, say a specific word or phrase
- Can be simple or complex
- Can have computerized voice or record individual's own speech
- Individual can use to supplement own speech
- May use as a main mode of communication in the severe stages

Considerations for buying SGD:

- Does the individual have experience with computers or high tech devices?
- Does the individual *want* to communicate with a device?
- Does the individual have significant difficulty with comprehension?
- Does the individual have low vision?
- Does the individual have fine motor deficits?
- Does the individual have visuospatial deficits?
- Does the individual have sequencing deficits?
- Is the device portable?
- Is this a device that the individual will most likely be able to use as his/her cognitive skills get worse?

Will insurance cover SGD's?

- Sometimes, depends on the individual policy. Need to check with your insurance company.



Criteria for Medicare to Cover a SGD:

1. The beneficiary is enrolled in Medicare Part B;
2. The beneficiary lives in his/her family home, or an assisted living facility (but not in a hospital, skilled nursing facility, or hospice);
3. The beneficiary is determined, following an assessment by a speech-language pathologist, to require an SGD to meet daily functional communication needs; and
4. The beneficiary's physician prescribes the SGD

Medicare Implementation Team (2001-2011) Medicare Funding of AAC Technology: Who is Eligible and other basic information. *The RERC on Communication Enhancement*. Retrieved 2/12/12 from

<http://aac-rerc.psu.edu/index.php/pages/show/id/17>.

Severe Stages

GoTalk20+ (\$200)

- Simple device
- Easy to use
- Allows user to record his/her own voice for 100 short utterances.
- 5 levels, with overlays
- Computer software for images



Proloquo2Go (\$189)

(For the I-Phone and I-Pad)

- Provides high resolution symbols and a default vocabulary of over 7000 items
- This device does not have a voice recording option, so the voice is computer sounding
- Very comprehensive and complex
- Compared to other applications, this one is the most expensive
- This is the most popular application used by individuals who have PPA

Voice 4 U (\$29.00)

(For the I-Phone, I-Pad, I-Pod touch)

- Offers icons in nine categories
- Can create as many icons and categories as needed
- Can also use their own pictures and recorded voice on the personalized icons.
- Opening the appropriate category of the word they are looking for may be difficult

Severe Stages

Voice 4 U



I can Speak! (\$29.00)

(For the I-Pad)

- Has both a static and a dynamic area use to produce short sentences
- Can create thousands of simple sentences
- This application is word focused

Severe Stages

I Can Speak

The interface features a top bar with a text input field and 'Speak' and 'Clear' buttons. The main area is a grid of icons organized into several sections:

- Personal Pronouns and Verbs:** you, me, am, is, was, he, she, can, will, we, they, do, did, has, had, it, not, a, and, in, on, this, or, up, do..., with, want, good, more, or, so, like, right, before, as, all, need, question, answer, please, go.
- Art Supplies:** pen, pencil, marker, crayon, eraser, brushes, palette, paint, supplies.
- Shapes:** shape, circle, square, oval, rectan..., triangle, diamond, octagon, star, round, diagonal.
- Colors and Patterns:** black, blue..., blue, brown, gold, green, grey, orange, purple, red, yellow, white, rainbow.

The right sidebar contains the following categories:

- Actions, Linking, Helping
- A, B, C, D, E, F
- G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N
- O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V
- Words (with up and down arrows)
- Art, Animals, Appl...
- Assis..., Body, Clothes
- Conta..., Drink, Eat
- Furnit..., Geog..., HELP
- Activities (with up and down arrows)

Severe Stages

Products by Small Talk (free version available) (*For the I-pod touch or I-Phone*)

- Users can create their own selection of icons, phrases, and videos on the Lingraphica, and SmallTalk Aphasia transfers them to the iPhone or iPod touch
- This application was developed for adults with aphasia (most other devices developed for children)

Severe Stages

Lingraphica SmallTalk



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