

TASN ATBS Spotlight of the Month!

Meet the dynamic SLP duo from Hays, KS and how they are supporting students with complex communication needs.

Hannah Dreiling and Andrea Wichers are school-based Speech-Language Pathologists who have embraced teaching and supporting core words with students who use augmentative alternative communication. Their work in this area has been a 2-3-year project that is continually expanding. They have not only embraced adding core words to the vocabulary set of all of their students, but have also expanded their work to a concept developed by [Rachel Langley](#) called “core function of the week” In addition to intentionally setting up times to practice core words for a variety of communicative functions, they have also utilized the evidence-based practice of video-modeling to support and train staff who will be implementing the specific activities with students across the day.



CORE WORD TUBS:



This project began by creating Core Word Tub Resources. They currently have about 80 Core Word Tub Resources. These communication tubs are available for across the district for teachers to check out to use in their classrooms. Each tub is equipped with materials and directions on the lid that identify the targeted core words and communicative functions that can be modeled and practiced with each activity. Over the years they have added QR codes to the tubs that provide access to additional interactive activities from the [Boom Learning website](#) that are related to that specific core word. If there was not a “Boom Card” already provided in the store, they would make one themselves. This SLP duo also created a core word “classroom” in their Boom Learning account. They made each core word a “student”, then assigned which activities would appear and let the website create a QR

code.

These QR codes are printed off and taped inside the lid of each tub.



CORE FUNCTIONS of the week and the Hallway Walk:

In addition to supporting the core word of the week, they have also started implementing a “Core Function” of the week. They target a different function of communication each week (gaining attention, greetings, opinions, recurrence, requesting help, refusal, negation, commenting, requesting objects or actions, asking questions) and prepare a Boom Card and activity for students to use in their life skills classroom. See [Core Function Handout](#) and [Core Function SLP resources](#).



This year the team implemented the “Core Function Hallway Walk”. Blue folders are outside the classroom door and have a different picture of a phrase or activity weekly that can be practiced while on a walk. This week if the student uses the phrases “I want”, “Want it”, or “Want”, the staff then provides the student with a sticker that is located in the blue folder.

Another extension that provides additional practice outside the classroom includes putting up prompts around the building. Each prompt has a word or phrase related to a core function, making the walk around the building a “core function walk”! Students can practice saying the phrases aloud or on their AAC device when they see a prompt. **SEE video below re: Hallway Walk.



PLANNING for Flexibility:

A key component of their work is considering all students. Some students don't have access to the classroom core function activities because of schedules and/or service times. These students have access to the QR codes with the boom card link through the school box that is located in their general education classroom. They can complete their Boom Cards with a paraprofessional when their schedule allows.



Date	None	Minimal	Min-Mod	Moderate	Mod- Max	Maximal
	No prompt	Visual prompting	Verbal prompting	Verbal/Visual prompt	Verbal, visual and tactile prompting	Hand over hand prompting
1 st exposure 8/31/21						2-3 word phrases verbal + LAMP
2 nd exposure 9/2/21						2-5 word phrases verbal + LAMP
1 st exposure 10/9/21						3 word phrases verbal + LAMP
2 nd exposure 10/21/21						1-4 word phrases verbal + LAMP
1 st exposure 12/2/21						4-6 word phrases verbal + LAMP
2 nd exposure 12/9/21						4-6 word phrases verbal + LAMP
1 st exposure 2/8/22						3-5 word phrases verbal + LAMP
2 nd exposure 2/10/22						1-7 word phrases verbal + LAMP

OUTCOMES and DATA

In addition to the classroom and hallway practices, each student also works on the same Boom Card and hands-on activities in their weekly speech sessions so they are receiving multiple exposures to the core function and targeted phrases. By the end of each week, the students are much more proficient with each function and phrase.

TRAINING STAFF: Utilizing Video Modeling for Adults



Hannah and Andrea provide an overview video to support staff that demonstrates how to model language/communication activities to the students. They begin by uploading the videos to their YouTube™ channel as “unlisted”, then share the link to each video in an app called “Group Me” each Friday. This allows the staff to watch it on their own time so that they are ready to model the core function and words the following Monday. See examples below.

Core Word Tubs: Teachers scan the QR code on top of the tub to watch the instruction video for that core word. Here are some examples:

- “Go” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4malUoip3Sw>
- “Want” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocdS3bQajAY>

Core Function of the Week: An instructional video is posted each Friday and sent out to staff. Here are some examples:

- “Asking Questions” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQbmNljiajI>
- “Requesting Objects/Actions” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XQgfHEQhJY>

Hallway Walk: See this example of the Core Functional Hallway Walk:

- “Asking Questions” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzM8VY97njs>
- “Requesting Objects or Actions” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19lrbTmW_cs

Links to Hannah and Andrea’s Boom Card Store:

Andrea’s site:

- <https://wow.boomlearning.com/store/authorId/2x3o6D5MM6RJnexhk/?collection=Decks&keyword=jesus%20&sort=score&order=-1>

Hannah’s site:

- <https://wow.boomlearning.com/author/hannahspeechbanana?collection=Decks&keyword=jesus%20&sort=score&order=-1>

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