



Assistive Communication for Every Classroom

Professional Learning Board integrated self-study professional development courses are conveniently available 24 x 7 to teacher-learners. Each self-study PD course includes:

- Course content delivered in an interactive online textbook,
- Practical suggestions that can be implemented immediately,
- Quiz
- Printable certificate of completion
- Lifetime access



Can students with disabilities learn more if they are able to communicate more? Are we, as teachers doing all that we can in order to facilitate better communication and learning for all students? Is a student's ability to learn connected to their communication ability in the classroom? If so, how do we address this challenge in the classroom?

This course answers these frequently asked questions. It is designed to introduce teachers to the different Assistive Communicative tools and strategies that can be employed to improve the communicative skills of students with disabilities. It aims at preparing teachers with the information and skills that are essential in the process of integration.

This course also shows teachers how to improve learning using various low-tech and high-tech Assistive Communication devices. It instructs teachers on how to identify and choose suitable devices and how to explore the laws promoting and supporting the use of these devices in the classroom. The suggestions, ideas and templates provided in the course will help teachers confidently apply these strategies in the classroom to support the needs of students with disabilities.

Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content and Teachers Facilitate Learning.



Course Outline:

Lesson 1: Introduction to Assistive Communication

Defining Assistive Communication, exploring its benefits and process of functioning.
 Identifying the laws advocating for and supporting use of Assistive Technology in the classroom.
 Understanding Assistive Communication, its purpose and the three types of Assistive Communication devices used in the classroom.
 Identifying the four categories of Assistive Communication Technologies used in the classroom.

Lesson 2: Low-Tech Strategies for Communication

Exploring the six phases of the Picture Exchange Communication System method and its application.
 Understanding American Sign Language and its use in the classroom.
 Practical application of the Picture Exchange Communication board and Topic rings/wallets in the classroom.
 Identifying the four main types of Communication cards effective in the classroom.

Lesson 3: High-Tech Strategies for Communication

Exploring the different high-tech strategies and their uses for improving communication and learning in the classroom.
 Computer modifications and adaptations enabling students with disabilities to achieve academic excellence.
 Practical application of the devices with regard to Physical, Visual, Communication and Learning disabilities.
 Identifying the smart phone applications that can enable communication.

Lesson 4: Implementing Assistive and Alternative Communication in Classrooms

Understanding the role of the teacher and the Assistive Communication team with regard to Assistive and Alternative communication.
 Exploring the process of implementation and classroom observations of Assistive and Alternative Communication in the classrooms.
 Defining the Multi-modal approach to communication and the three Levels of communication.
 Exploring the strategies aiding and facilitating communication, group work, assessment and homework.