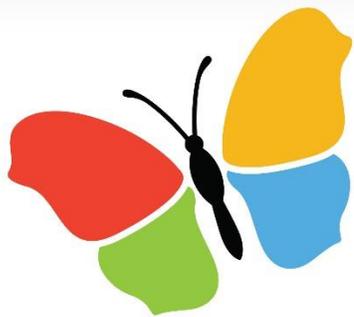


Learning
Guide



Take **Flight**

Empowering educators and
equipping learners with ASD to soar



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Functions of
Communication

Functions of Communication

Communication involves:

- Sharing attention with another person.
- A social exchange where we are focused on the same things together, taking turns as listeners and speakers.
- Talking about things that are happening right now, things that happened in the past, or things that we expect or wish to happen in the future.
- Using gestures, facial expressions, and even body posture.

There are different ways of thinking about communication:

1) Receptive and Expressive

Receptive language:

- Is about understanding what is being communicated by someone else.
- **MAY** require the listener to make some type of response OR may be just about obtaining and understanding information.

Expressive language:

- Involves using words and sentences to express our needs, wants, thoughts, ideas, and opinions in ways that other people can understand.
- Also includes the facial expressions, gestures, and other body language and non-verbal cues that we use to convey our messages.



Some Functions of Communication

Requesting

Examples:

- Asking for a glass of water when thirsty
- Asking for an object, an action or activity, some information, or to get comfort
- Saying, “No” to get something to stop or someone to go away

Labeling

Examples:

- A learner saying, “Blue,” when shown a photo of a beautiful blue sky and asked, “What colour is it?”
- A learner saying, “Sleeping,” when an adult points to a baby sleeping in a stroller and asking, “What is that baby doing?”
- Seeing a dog walking with its owner in the park and saying, “What a cute puppy.”

Imitation

Examples:

- Letting someone else order off a new, complicated menu first and then ordering the same thing.
- A young child repeating the words of an adult when learning to speak

Responding as a speaker

Examples:

- Responding, “I had dinner with a friend,” when asked, “What did you do last evening?”
- A child saying, “Star,” when an adult sings, “Twinkle, twinkle, little _____.”

Responding as a listener

Examples:

- A learner getting out the glue when the teacher says, “Okay everyone, get out your glue.”
- A learner going to get their shoes when an adult asks, “Where are your shoes?”





The Autism in Education (AIE) Partnership is an inter-provincial collaboration of the Departments of Education & Early Childhood Development / Early Learning & Culture of the four Atlantic Provinces. Created as an initiative of the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) in 2010, the AIE Partnership provides support to educational personnel working with students with ASD across the Atlantic region and facilitates the sharing of information and expertise among stakeholders. Priorities of the AIE Partnership include:

- Research to clarify and articulate standards of practice in the area of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Dissemination of information and current research on issues of concern among the four Atlantic Provinces
- Professional development and learning opportunities for educational staff, partner professionals, and families



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