

Students can be actively engaged in learning with or without being physically active.

Connecting New to Known

New knowledge stays in a your short-term memory until you find a place to make it fit into your long-term memory, or you forget it. Our job is to help students find ways to connect new knowledge to the things they already know. In the research, the word “schema” describes the ways you organize your knowledge. When students can work through their thoughts with others, they get better at schema development. Then, they can learn more and develop more complex thoughts.

Schema Development with AAC

When students rely on AAC to talk about their thinking, they are often limited by their access to vocabulary. We need to find ways for them to imagine, wonder, and work through their thinking through conversation. If we limit their opportunities to think aloud, we limit their schema development. Be sure to make staff and peers aware of how to have a conversation with someone who uses AAC. Think about ways to encourage all students to express their ideas, thoughts, and opinions.

Instead of this...	Try this...
Did you like the book?	Can you tell me about a time when you went to a new place like Joe did? What did it look like? How did it make you feel? Would you go there again if you could?
What is $2 + 2$?	Would you rather eat 2 grapes or 12 grapes? Why?
Is a frog a reptile or amphibian?	Have you ever seen a frog? What did it look like? Which other animal is similar to a frog? Tell me the pros and cons of having a frog for a pet.
Colour in a picture about an historical event	Direct your partner to search Google Images by using words from your device, then choose the images you want to use to describe how you feel about the historical event. Direct your partner to create a collage with your images. Tell someone else about the collage.
Find a word that starts with the letter “G”.	Using any combination of letters, words, and phrases, write a letter to the principal explaining something you like (or don’t like) about school.
Hit the switch to turn on the power to the electric mixer.	Taste the food cooked by your classmates. Decide which one you like the best and why. Give each group some encouraging feedback about their cooking.
Which block is taller?	Would you rather be as tall as a giraffe or as small as a mouse? Explain.