# Many Stories - One Voice AAC Story Collection 2008

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# Australia John Rynn Age 53

# MY RIDE WITH AAC

by John Rynn

I live in Australia, I am an artist, a sailor, a trainer, a poet/writer, I am even a published writer.

Right now I am on a train to Bowen, the train is taking ages, but I am enjoying myself, I can look back at my life, and I see how similar this trip is to my life with AAC, both are slow and take ages.

In 1966 I got my first AAC talking board, I could talk to anyone at any time, but I had no idea where it would take me, in 1970 I started to write poetry, I self published a book of my poems, people enjoy reading my poems, so I keep writing them.

In 1995, I co-write a paper with my Speech Patholagist, she asked me if I would like to present a paper overseas, I accepted, since she was so good looking, how could i refuse, when the time came for our paper to be picked, I was over the moon when our paper was finally picked. With my liberator, I could do the presentation all by myself, I even give talks at Universities, and TAFE's.

In 2002, I had to get a PEG, my Speech Pathologist asked me to talk to poeple, that had already had PEG's or were thinking of getting one, I also wrote two papers about it. In 2004 I wrote a paper called "On The Rocky Road From Oral To Non Oral Feeding", this paper was published in the GISS newsletter (newsletter for Gastronomy Information and Support Society). I also presentated this papper with my speech pathologist at the 26th world congress of the international association of logopedics and phoniatrics, in brisbane My speech pathologist and I are co-writing a paper about our training, our training involves talking to people who are about to get a PEG, and what is involved in living with one, come August we are both heading over to Canada, to give a presentation about what we do. In my free time, which at the moment is very limited, I am writing a book about my early life in Bowen and Brisbane

my writing has taken me far, I never knew how far it would take me, if you love writing you never know just how far it will take it you

the train will stop in Bowen soon, so i need to finish up my story, before i go id just like to say that without AAC none of what I have done or been asked to do would of been possible, I am gratful that AAC is a part of my life, every single day.

# Canada

# Brett Reynolds Age 36 Canada

I wrote my story in my room about ten years ago as I was home a lot with nothing to do. I wrote a few short stories for children. This is my longest story. I had an electric typwriter and used that. Later on when I got a computer I put it onto that. I enjoyed making up the stories to tell a message. As I can't talk, I'm hoping that my story will help children to understand that a person who has got non verbal communication is still saying something. I use a communication book or a Dynawrite to communicate. As my spelling and grammer is not too good, the computer is a lot easier and quicker to work with.



# THE WISH THAT ADAM WANTED by Brett Reynolds

On a summer night Adam was in his wheelchair watching television with his girl friend Mary. Adam said to her, "I wish I could go into space and see what it would be like to be able to walk around by myself Mary." "I know you would like to go into space one day" she replied.

Would you like to go for a walk with me to the shop?" asked Mary. "Oh, yes lov" replied Adam looking at Mary. She went to shut the back door but when she got there Adams father Peter was coming in and asked, "Are you going home now Mary?" "No. I was going to shut the door because I am going to take Adam for a walk to the shop". Peter went to the lounge room to talk to Adam, but he didn't hear him because he was watching the News on Channel Six, and the news man was interviewing Colonel Bligh about getting ordinary people to go on the next space flight. Adam asked his Dad, "Can I write a letter to Colonel Bligh and ask him if I can go?" "Yes you can tomorrow, but now go for your walk." So off they went. Peter went to get a beer and sat down at the kitchen table to read the newspaper. As Mary pushed Adam down the street he said "I'm lucky to have someone like you as my girl friend Mary." She stopped walking and said to him, "Look Adam, I love you and I know you have Cerebral Palsy and I don't love you because you are disabled. I love you because you are you. I can understand you without your communication board." "Can we go to the shop before it shuts?" asked Mary. "Yes" replied Adam with a happy face. When they got there, they saw George and Mark sitting at a table. When George saw Adam and Mary coming George yelled out "Hello" to them. When they got to the table Mark asked them, "What are you two doing here?" "I have to buy some cream because we are making an Apple Pie for supper tonight" said Mary. She went to the shop while George and Mark had a chat with Adam. George got Adam's communication board out for him. "Did you watch the Channel Six News before you come here?" asked George. "Yes, I did and tomorrow I am going to write a letter to Colonel Bligh" said Adam on his communication board. "Would you like some help tomorrow to write your letter Adam?" asked Mark. "Yes" replied Adam. He pointed to "Please turn over" on his communication board. Adam pointed to "10 and 30." "Do you want me and Gorge to come to your house tomorrow at 10.30?" asked George. "Yes" said Adam. Mary came out of the shop with some cream and asked Adam "Can we go back to your house now?" "Yes we can go home" replied Adam and said "Good bye" to the others and they went home. At home Adam told his family that tomorrow morning Mark and George are coming over to help him to write to Colonel Bligh. "What time are they coming?" asked Wendy. "They are coming at 10.30" replied Adam. After tea they went to watch the television so Mary said "Good bye" then went home.

At 10.30 the next morning there was a knock on the door. Peter went to the door to see who was there and there was George and Mark. "Hello. Is Adam awake yet?" asked Mark. "Yes, he is in his bedroom" replied Peter. Adam was sitting at his desk reading about going into space. He shut the book because he could hear Mark and George coming; he then went to his door to meet them. When Adam saw them he said, "Good morning" to them and Mark and George replied "Good morning." When they were in his bedroom Adam shut the door. All day long Mark and George were busy helping Adam write a letter to Colonel Bligh. At 4.30 Peter and his wife Andrea were in the kitchen talking to Wendy when Mark, George and Adam come to the kitchen and Adam said, "I have finally finished the Wendy asked "Can I read it?" "No. I want George to letter." read all of you". to

"Dear Colonel.

I am writing to you because I saw you on the news the other night and I thought to myself "I would like to be the first disabled person to go into space. I have Cerebral Palsy because when I was three my Mum and I were walking to the shops and we had to cross the road at the lights, there was no cars around and the walk sign was on so Mum held my hand and when we were stepping off the footpath a car came and hit me and I went to the hospital and my doctor [Dr. Bert] told my Mum and Dad that I had brain damage." My address is 1547 Fred Street, Los Angeles and I am 24 years old. I want to go into space because I would like to see what it's like to walk on my own and to see what space is like. In 20 years time it might be possible to let disabled people live in space. My phone number 6397

26800 but I can't speak. Please leave a message and I will hear it on the phone intercom. I am waiting in hope for your reply.

Yours Adam."

After George finished reading the letter Peter told him that "It was a good letter and I will help you if they say no." "Thank's Dad" replied Adam. Andrea smiled at Adam and said, "I am happy that you want to go into space and see what it will be like and I hope you do it one day." "Thank you Mum" replied Adam. Wendy went over to him and hugged him and said "I hope you go into space and I will help you if they say no Adam." Adam put his arm around her and said "I love you too sis." There was a knock at the door and Wendy went to see who were there. Mary was standing there and said "Hello Wendy." "Hello Mary, do come in" replied Wendy. When Mary saw Adams face she asked him, "Have you finished the letter?" "Yes, do you want to read it Mary?" asked Adam in a happy voice. "Yes, I'd like too". When Mary finished reading it, she told Adam "I hope you go but if they say no I will fight with you to go into space." Andrea went to get an envelope and when she came back she helped Adam to put the address on the envelope. When the letter was in the envelope, Mary asked "Do you want to post it today?" "Yes" replied Adam eagerly. So off they went.

Two weeks went by; Adam saw a letter in the letter box so he asked his Mum to get the mail. When Andrea came back in she showed the envelope to Adam. He asked, "Will you open it and read it to me, mum?" "Yes O.K." she replied. She opened the letter and went on to read it to him.

"Dear Adam,

My name is Colonel Bligh. I was very happy to hear from you and I would like to see you next week to give you some information about when we are going into space. I would like to help with you idea to let disabled people go into space and live there. I hope to hear from you soon From Colonel Bligh."

Andrea looked at Adam and he was happy, he made a big smile on his face. That night Adam had a party with his friends to celebrate going into space. In the next two weeks Adam was very busy because he went on the radio and television, all around the world, because he was the first disabled man to go into space. After six week of party's and being on television and on the radio and doing some training.

The day had come for Adam to say "Good bye" to everybody. It was a great day for Adam, but it was also a sad day for Adam too, because he didn't know when he would see his family and friends again. All of his friends were at the space gate where Adam hopped into the space ship, his Mum and Dad came in to see if he was right in his seat, he was very happy, so they said "Good bye" to him and Andrea started to cry, when they went out Peter hugged Andrea and then went inside the office because it had a big television screen. Wendy, Mark and George were the next to say "Good bye." When they left, Mary went to say "I hope you like it up there and enjoy your time. I will be waiting here for you to return. I love you." They hugged each other and Mary went inside to watch the big screen.

In the space ship were Major Tucky, Flight Lieutenant Cobly, Colonel Bligh and Adam. "Are you ready to go into space Adam?" asked Major Tucky. "Yes" said Adam with a happy face.

In the space office Lieutenant General Smart was at the microphone and asked "Are you ready to begin the countdown?" "Yes" replied Major Tucky. "O.K. Let's go. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and take off" replied Lieutenant Smart.

When the space ship was going up into space Adam had his eyes closed and when he opened them, he saw he was in space and said out loud "Oh Wow, this is fantastic." The others smiled at Adam and Colonel Bligh said to him, "You are the first person to go into space with a disability." "How do you feel Adam?" "Great" said Adam. "Would you like to take a spin around earth?" asked Colonel Bligh. "Yes Please" replied Adam. So they went around once then headed for Mars.

On the planet Mars there was a little green man. He was sitting on a rock eating his dinner, when he saw the space ship land. In the space ship Major Tucky was helping Adam to get into his space suite and then they put Adam into his specially made wheelchair to go out into space.

While they were helping Adam, outside the little green man got up and went to look at the ship but he could not work out where it came from so he went round to the other side of the ship and yelled out a noise and ran to hide because he wanted to see what would happen next. Nothing happened for a while so he went to finish his dinner.

In the space ship Adam asked Major Tucky, "Did you hear a noise outside?" "No. I think you're just imagining things" replied Major Tucky.

When Adam was ready they lowered the platform so he could drive outside. "Mars was barren but strangely beautiful" thought Adam. When the little green man saw them he was very astonished and he yelled again and he jumped to his blue feet. "What was there?" asked Major Tucky. "I don't know. I will go and see" said Flight Lieutenant Cobly. As he turned around he saw the little green man but the little green man didn't see him. So Flight Lieutenant Cobly went back to tell Major Tucky and Adam but they didn't believe him. "Why don't you come with me and see for yourself?" asked Flight Lieutenant Cobly. "All right, we will go and see the little green man" said Major Tucky in a mad voice.

When they got there, Adam and Major Tucky looked and saw him, so they yelled out "Heavens above! What is this?" The little green man looked up, saw them and went to meet them but Major Tucky, Adam and Flight Lieutenant Cobly couldn't move and the little green man went up to them and said, "Hello, my name is Namuk, this is my home. Over the years I have learned your language because I can listen with my antennae to your space ships when they come close to Mars." "Hello Namuk, we are from Earth and my name is Mr. Cobly and with me is Mr. Tucky and Adam" said Flight Lieutenant Cobly. "Why is Adam in a chair with wheels on it?" asked Namuk. Major Tucky explained to Namuk what a wheelchair is and why Adam was in it. "Can I get Cerebral Palsy if I shake his hand?" asked

Namuk. "No. You can't get Cerebral Palsy if you shake hands with Adam" replied Major Tucky.

While Major Tucky, Adam and Namuk were talking, Flight Lieutenant Cobly went back to the space ship to see what Colonel Bligh was doing and to get Adams communication board. When he saw Colonel Bligh his face was flushed, he wondered what was wrong, and he was talking to Earth. "Lieutenant General Smart had just told me a meteorite is going to hit Mars in about five hours" replied Colonel Bligh in a hasty tone. When Flight Lieutenant Cobly heard this, he thought of what had happened today and he decided to tell Colonel Bligh what Adam and Major Tucky were talking too. He decided to go outside and see if it was true. When Colonel Bligh saw the little man, he didn't believe his eyes.

Namuk turned his red eyes to the space ship and asked "Who are you and where did you come from?" When Colonel Bligh came to them he introduced himself to the little green man. And Namuk introduced himself to Colonel Bligh. "Is everything all right?" asked "No. We have an enormous problem because a Major Tucky. meteorite is heading this way" replied Colonel Bligh. "How long do we have Colonel Bligh?" asked Adam. "Less than five hours" he "What about Namuk?" asked Adam looking at Colonel replied. Bligh. "I'm all right Adam. I have my hut over there" said Namuk. The others looked at Namuk and Flight Lieutenant Cobly said to Namuk, "Don't be stupid Namuk. If you stay here you will be killed." "Will I live on your plant called Earth?" asked Namuk. "What do you live on?" asked Colonel Bligh. "I live on oxygen" said Namuk. "You will be fine on Earth because we breath oxygen too" said Major Tucky with a happy face. The others were happy to hear that Namuk could breathe oxygen too. "All right. I will go with you" said Namuk in a sad voice and blue water came out of his eyes. "What is coming out of your eyes?" asked Adam. "I'm crying" said Namuk. "Let's go into the space ship and get ready to go home before a meteorite drops on us" said Colonel Bligh.

They all got into the space ship and went about their business. Colonel Bligh showed Namuk how to use Adam's communication board and Namuk asked him, "Do you want me to help you to work

out how to let disabled people to go into space and live there?" "Yes please Namuk" said Adam. Flight Lieutenant Cobly was talking to Lieutenant Smart. There was ready to go home.

On Earth everyone was watching the meteorite getting close and Lieutenant Smart asked in a hurried voice "Are you ready to take off?" "Yes" replied Flight Lieutenant Cobly. The meteorite was getting faster and Lieutenant Smart told them "When you take off in five seconds you will hear a bomb go off. Don't turn your eyes to look at it because it will blind you. Prepare to take off." In the space ship everyone was ready to go home. Lieutenant Smart began the count down, "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and take off." So after five seconds they heard a bomb go off and Adam looked at Namuk who had a sad face.

Two hours later they land back on earth. Major Tucky and the Colonel put Adam into his wheelchair and with Namuk went out; as they walked out they hear lots of voices. Colonel Blight opens the door for Adam and Namuk and there are lots of people waiting for them and said together, "Welcome back Adam and welcome to Los Angeles Namuk." Namuk looked surprised and asked, "How do you all know my name?" "We have microphones in the space ship so we can hear everything you say" said Flight Lieutenant Smart and took him over to see the microphone.

After Namuk saw the microphone he asked the Lieutenant, "Can you show me around this space place?" "Yes of course we will" he replied. So off they went around the place. After, Namuk asked, "Can I get a job here?" "Well. Yes you can but not now. I think Adam is ready to go home now" said Flight Lieutenant Smart. Adam asked Namuk, "Are you ready to see your new home Namuk?" "Yes I'm really excited to see my new home" said Namuk. So they went home to Adams.

That night Namuk said, "I like this place" in a happy voice. A few days later Namuk started to help Adam with his dream.

The next three weeks went very fast for Namuk and Adam because they went to meet lots of Adam's friends. When Adam showed Namuk around the town, everybody stopped to them. Adam was happy too because he got to meet lots of people and make new friends.

To be continued......More adventures are on the web site.

In Fred Street, Adam was at home watching television with Namuk and he asked "Do more people have a disability like you?" with a happy face. "Why?" asked Adam. "Because if you want to make a place in space, you have to a meeting together and talk about getting a place in space for disabled people" replied Namuk. "There is a disabled school over the other side of Los Angeles. When Dad gets home, I will ask if he will ring them" replied Adam. There was a knock on the door and Adam yelled out, "Come in" the door opened and Mary came in with a letter. When he saw the letter, he asked Mary to read it to him. "Yes I will" replied Mary. So Adam and Namuk listened to Mary and the letter read this.

"Dear Adam. My name is John Young from Channel Six News and I would like to interview you with your group about going into space last month? It would be great if Namuk could come and be interviewed too. If you please ring me by Friday on 2222 45544, if you want to be interviewed next week? From John Yonng." Adam looked at Namuk and asked, "Would you like to be on television next week?" Namuk said to Adam, "Yes I would, we could talk about what we want to do in space for disabled people" with a smile on his face.

The front door opened and in come Wendy, Andrea and Peter with lots of shopping bags, Andrea came to sit down by Adam and said, "When we were shopping, we met Major Tucky and Flight Lieutenant Cobly, we had a chat and decided that we could have dinner together tomorrow night" the others went to sit down. "I want to see them because I got a letter from John Yonng from Channel Six today and handed it to his Mum and she read it out. When Andrea finished reading it Peter asked Namuk if he was going on the show too. "Yes. If he is going on the show" said Namuk. Everybody was looking at Adam waiting for a yes or no from him, finally he said, "Yes. I would like too but I want to ask Major Tucky and Flight Lieutenant Cobly if it's O.K" with a happy face. "Do you think Peter that Adam may need help with his communication board on his show?" asked Mary sitting next to Adam.

"It's up to Adam if he wants any help and who he wants" replied Peter looking at Adam. He looked at Mary and Wendy and thought to himself for a second to work out who to pick, then asked Mary if she will mind if my sister help me? Mary held his hand and said, "No. I am happy to hear you want your sister with you." The phone ring and Peter went to answer it. When he finished talking, he went to Adam to put the phone to his ear because Colonel Bligh was on the phone, "Did you get a letter from John Yonng?" asked Colonel Bligh. "Yes" replied Adam. "I rang Flight Lieutenant Cobly and Major Tucky to go on the show with Namuk and you instead of me because I am going to Hong Kong for a meeting all next week" said Colonel Blight. "Well. Its fine" replied Adam. "What did Major Tucky say to you when you asked them the same question?" asked Colonel Bligh. "I haven't asked them yet but tomorrow night they are coming to have dinner with us so I will wait to ask them about it" said Adam. "Well. Good bye Adam" said Colonel Bligh and Adam replied in the same way. Peter went to talk to Colonel Bligh and asked about coming to dinner tomorrow night. While Peter was talking to Colonel Blight. Mary got up to go home when a knock sounded on the door so Mary opened it and there was Mark and George "Do come in. I have to go now. Bye" said Mary. When Mary had left Adam said "Do sit down because I have some news for you" looking at George and Mark. "What?" asked both together. Andrea told them and they were happy. Peter got off the phone and said Colonel Bligh will be coming tomorrow night for dinner". Andrea told George and Mark what all this was about and George went over to Adam to say "You are a great guy so after the interview remember me and Mark so if you meet Shrean Lee please give her our phone number Adam" with a smile on his face. "Why don't you take Adam and Namuk for a walk? It's a lovely day outside and Namuk will think you just sit inside all day long and only go out at night" said Andrea. So the four of them went off for a walk to the shops and Namuk looked into each window, he was so interested, he asked Mark about everything.

The next day Peter rang up John Yonng about Adam going to have an interview with him sometime next week. "Is Namuk going to come on my show with Major Tucky, Flight Lieutenant Colby and Adam" asked John Yonng. "Yes they are" replied Peter into the phone. "Oh good" replied John. "What day and what time because we are having dinner together tonight?" asked Peter. "What about next Wednesday about

Three thirty in the afternoon Peter?" "Can I get back to you tomorrow?" asked Peter. "Yes" replied John Young and hung up.

That night everyone had a great night so Peter asked everyone about the interview and everyone was happy with it, so the next day he rang back to say it was fine.

The big day came for them so Peter drove Adam, Wendy and Namuk to the Channel Six Studio, when they were going inside Adam looked around to see if he could see the others there and Major Tucky yelled out, "Hay there, wait for us" with a happy voice. They all went in together. Inside, they saw John Yonng waiting for them at the front desk. Adam said, "Hello my name is Adam Hut" in a happy voice. "I'm John Yonng and it's good to meet you. And where is Namuk?" Namuk came to John Yonng with his hand out to shake hand so John Yonng asked, "Who is this green man?" with a surprised tone in his voice. "This is Namuk and the other people are Wendy my sister and she is going to help me with my communication board, Major Tucky, Flight Lieutenant Cobly and this is my father" replied Adam. "Great to meet you all and please follow me" so they followed him to the news studio. When they were all in the studio, John Yonng shut the door and sat down, he told everyone what to do when the interview began.

"Welcome. Tonight we are going to meet the people who went into space with a disable person. With me tonight are Adam, Wendy, Major Tucky and Flight Lieutenant Cobly" said John Yonng. "It's nice to be here" said Major Tucky. Before John Yonng asked the first question, he told everybody about why Adam was in a wheelchair. "Adam. Could you now tell us how you felt when you were in space and what you saw?" Wendy held Adam's communication board and she told that he was very excited and surprised when he saw lots of rocks. John Yonng asked, "How was Adam when he was in space also what did you do in space?" looking at Major Tucky. "Well Adam was great, after a tour around the ship, we decided to walk a little further away and we found a little green man eating his dinner, after a while he decided to came to meet us and we became friends. The next thing we heard was that a meteorite was coming, we had to go back home so we asked the little green man to come too, at first he was unsure then he said yes after thinking about what would become of him if he stayed. When we were

going home we heard a big noise and it was the meteorite hitting Mars" replied Major Tucky. "Well you are certainly lucky to be here today" said John Yonng. "Yes we know" replied Flight Lieutenant Cobly. "Does the little green man have a name Adam" asked John Yonng. "Yes he is called Namuk and he can speak to us the same was as we do. When we saw him. He looked at me with a look like he thought "I am crazy to be in a chair with wheel on it." But now Namuk know me."

At the end of the interview Namuk came to meet everybody. He went straight over to John Yonng to shake his hand and asked "How are you?" "Good Namuk" said John Yonng. He replied by asking the same question so he replied by saying he was great because for the last twenty years he wanted to come to Earth and see what it would be like. John Yonng asked Namuk, "How do you know to speak our language Namuk?" So he told him that he has antennae to listen to different nationalities around the world by using them when a space ship comes near Mars. "I would like to know how you breath oxygen in space?" asked John Yonng. "It may sound funny to you because we just don't know yet but we are looking it" replied Namuk. "How many of you are in space?" asked John Yonny. So Namuk told them, over five million of us but we don't live with each other but every three years we move to a new spot to live so we might see each other then. "I came back with Adam to help him with his plan to make a space station on Mars for disabled people to come and live on Mars. Disabled people can do more things than they can on Earth. It would be a great place for a holiday. They can try things they couldn't do on Earth" said Namuk. John Yonng looked and said to Namuk, "It was good to meet you Namuk and good lucky for the future" so Namuk went off and John Yonng asked a few more questions to the others and the interview finished. They night they were on Channel Six Nightly News.

A few days later Namuk and Adam went to a disability school for an afternoon to ask them if they wanted to go into space to visit and maybe in the future you could live there or have a holiday in space. They were all very excited and Namuk asked for ten people to help them to make a plan and ten students put they hands up so Miss Jackson write down the names, they were in wheelchair and they could use they hands. A few weeks later they started to do the plan with some help by Major Tucky and Flight Lieutenant Cobly. When they were finished Major Tucky asked Namuk if he could go to space and fix up a place for disabled people, so Namuk went back to start work.

After five weeks of hard work Namuk came back and said, "It was a great place and lots of people helped me and when disabled people come to space they will welcome them. Also we can see more of each other." He went to Adam to shake his hand and say "Thank you" because if Adam didn't came to space maybe Namuk will be killed or sitting on his own on Mars.

A few months later the first trip was made. It was a great place for people in a wheelchair to go too. As well as going into space disabled people had a job to go too, a committee was made and Adam was the boss!!!

THE END

Chelsea Hagen Age 11 Canada

# HAMSTER GETS A VANGUARD

Janet is a crazy kangaroo. She thinks that Hamster should have a Vanguard. Hamster is in a wheelchair. He has cerebral palsy. He can't speak. She has two friends, Hamster and Camel. Camel is a slow and silly camel. Camel has an idea. We are going to make treats! Camel asked Janet "why do you want a Vanguard?" I am going to make Hamster happy. Hamster wants the dancing school to get new tutus. My new Vanguard is

going to help us. Camel has new jewelry. Kangaroo made treats. Hamster made a stand. Camel made a crazy sign and put it on the box. The people bought everything! The kangaroo went and bought Hamster's Vanguard. Hamster had lots of ideas! Hamster and his Vanguard are going to open a lemonade stand. His Vanguard is magic. Hamster is making orange lemonade! The people try the orange lemonade. It was very

delicious! The people gave him \$39.00. Kangaroo was excited! He bought the seventeen tutus. The next day, Janet got the school to have a congratulations party, and they got a stomachache.

By Chelsea Hagen
Breton Elementary School
Grade 5
Breton, Alberta Canada

# Denise Landry Canada

The Dancing Dolly by: Denise Landry

Long ago at the Dolly Store, all of the dollies in the store came alive each night. They would come together and play and laugh until the store opened again in the morning. The fun always was led by the pretty doll, Annabelle and her floppy, rag doll friend Ragmop.

One night, Annabelle saw a new dolly in the store. She and Ragmop went to introduce themselves to her.

Hello, I am Annabelle, and this is Ragmop, she announced. What is your name?

The dolly's name tag said: Calliope but the dolly said nothing to them.

Look, Calliope has a pull string in back. Maybe it helps her talk, noticed Ragmop. Pull it, Annabelle!

Annabelle pulled the string. Calliope got ready to talk, but still said nothing.

Her voice box must be broken. Let's go, Ragmop. Annabelle said.

Calliope can come play with us? suggested Ragmop.

Annabelle walked away, Can't see how. She can't talk to us.

I'll come see you later Calliope. Ragmop whispered, flopping behind Annabelle.

When Ragmop came back, she helped lonely Calliope to her feet and they went walking around the store. Soon, they came upon a table with toys. Calliope found a toy, talking computer. She started to dance on some computer keys, making the computer spell and say, Hello.

Wow, Calliope! You found a way to talk! Ragmop cheered. We got to show Annabelle. Ragmop ran to get Annabelle. Suddenly, she flopped off the table and fell into a cardboard box.

Calliope rushed to get Annabelle's help. She found Annabelle asking some dollies, Has anybody seen Ragmop lately?

Calliope started pulling Annabelle1s arm, trying to make her go with her.

What do you want?! complained Annabelle. Calliope kept pulling, so Annabelle finally said, Ok I'm coming!

Annabelle followed Calliope to the table and talking computer. Calliope began dancing on computer keys, confusing Annabelle.

Ragmop fell into the box. Calliope typed out, pointing down.

Annabelle looked down and saw Ragmop waving up at her inside the box. Annabelle found a big jump rope, and her and Calliope pulled Ragmop out.

Thanks for the rescue, Calliope Ragman and Annabelle both said.

You're welcome. Calliope spelled out.

Great idea, using the computer to tell Annabelle what happened, said Ragmop. Maybe you should show the other dollies your computer.

Annabelle agreed, Yeah! I'll help you push your computer over to our friends!

They all pushed the computer towards the dollies. Dollies saw them and gathered around with wonder.

Hello everyone! I am Calliope! Calliope danced out.

Everybody cheered and started to talk to Calliope all night. And every night after that the dollies continued having fun and laugh with friends Annabelle, Ragmop and, Calliope happily dancing her talking computer.

The Dancing Dolly by: Denise Landry

# Douglas Ogar Age 47 Canada

My story begins at OCCC (Ontario Crippled Children's Centre) which is now the Bloorview MacMillan Centre. I had just turned 19 and was communicating with another speech generating device.

Writing my story was a long and tedious task using a spelling board but it worked!

Hi there, my name is Douglas Ogar, and this is my story.

I am one of the pioneers from way back when the AAC Clinic (Augmentative Alternative Communication) first opened. I had the privilege of using the prototype to the talking computer which was known as a Handy Voice.

There were approximately a thousand different phrases, each one represented by a combination of numbers. Then when I came to West Park, I was introduced to Morse code with the help of my brother Herb. I learned that sucker from A to Z in a matter of several weeks. I also wrote my first poems with the use of a single switch placed on the floor, with which I painstakingly wrote each one letter by letter. Then in 1985 I was introduced to yet another method of input. I used the alphabet system to communicate still with the use of a single switch attached to my left arm rest, still writing my poems letter by letter. In 1999 I became miscommunicated (taken out of action) from the AAC, until recently, when I got back in the loop. Now I only have access to a VOCA (Voice Output Communication Aid), and my face-to-face partners, with communication on an alphabet board.

With the use of my alphabet board I have written a couple of new poems. The first one had a strange origin. You won't believe how I came to write the words. My feeding pump was making noises that seemed to be like words. With the help of Andrea, a music therapist at West Park, I wrote music to this poem and with her help I hope to write music for the second poem.

# So here is my first poem:

# LET ME BRING THE SUNSHINE BACK INTO YOUR LIFE

#### **CHORUS:**

Pretty Little Blue Eyes
Out there crying in the rain.
Let me take away your sorrow
Let me take away your pain.

I will be there in the cold dark nights
I will be there always in your sights.
I will be there in the morning lights.
When you wake up and your eyes meet mine.

## CHORUS:

I want to be there in the pale moonlight
I want to be the one that you kiss goodnight
I want to be there in the morning light
When you wake up and your eyes meet mine.

#### **CHORUS:**

I'll be the one who will hold you tight,
I will be there in those cold dark nights,
I will be there in the morning light
When you wake up and your eyes meet mine!

Here is my second poem:

# A RECLINED STATE OF MIND

Sometimes I feel inclined to remain in a semi-reclined state of mind, But then I find that I just ain't got the time.

Sometimes my mind wanders, and I don't feel so inclined,
But then I find that I just ain't got the time.

Some people call me lazy and laid back, So I just right myself and give them a bit of positive feedback

Sometimes I feel inclined to remain in a somewhat semi-refined state of mind,

But then I find that I just ain't got the time.

Sometimes I don't feel so inclined, and then I have to clear my mind.

Ya, but then I find that I just ain't got the time.

Some people call me lazy and laid back, So I just right myself and give them a bit of positive feedback

Sometimes I feel inclined to remain in a semi-reclined state of mind, But then I find that I just ain't got the time.

I hope you will appreciate the sentimental feelings around the first poem I wrote. I had lost my father around the same time of the year. His eyes were the prettiest shade of blue, and I never once saw him cry, but I know he must have.

My poem "Reclined State of Mind" came into focus one afternoon when I got fed up with the nurses leaving my chair in a reclined position, because I am the type of person who likes everything straight up.

# Jeffery MacDonald Age 8 Canada

I go to Westwind School in Richmond, BC Canada. I use a Vantage. I am 8 years old. I wrote the story with my friend Eric. First we thought of some ideas. I thought about the tree houses. Eric thought about a gun. I thought about no mom, no dad. Eric thought maybe they were attacked by a wild animal. I thought maybe they got eaten by an octopus. Ms. Blockberger thought it must have been a mutant octopus, because regular octopusses don't crawl out of the ocean and eat you.

After we thought of our ideas, I figured out how to program the story into the notebook area on my Vantage. Ms Blockberger helped me. Then Eric and I drew the picture. Then we told our story to our class. Everybody thought it was good.

# The Attack of the Mutant Octopus

# By Jeffrey and Eric

My story is called the Attack of the Mutant Octopus. My name is Jeffrey. I live in a tree house. My brothers live in tree houses too. We live in tree houses because a mutant octopus ate our mom and dad. We climbed trees to get away from the octopus.

One day, I was in my tree house cleaning my gun when I accidently shot myself in the hand. I fell out of the tree. My Vantage fell out of the tree too. The octopus came out of the

ocean and attacked me. I screamed. I said "I need help." I had to turn it up really loud so my brothers could hear. I said Octopus! Octopus!

My brothers came and blew up the octopus.

The moral of the story is that you can count on your brothers if you really need help.





# Kaysha Robinson Age 7 Canada

Kaysha is a spunky, fun-loving girl who arrived at our school 2 years ago following her stroke and before her transplant. She received her Vantage almost 5 months ago. She has recently begun to spontaneously use it as literacy support in her Grade 1 classroom. She creates 2-4 word utterances and then copies them into her journal. To relay experiences or role play stories, she combines these utterances with a wealth of gestures and body language to get her ideas across. For this particular story, she also used props (2 dolls and a mini Vantage) to relate the events while I typed them on my computer. She invited her EA to play the role of the nurse. This is the longest story she has ever written and she thought it was pretty hilarious.

#### The Broken Tooth

Kaysha says "I'm hungry" with her Vantage. Aaron says "I'm hungry too" with the Vantage. Kaysha and Aaron walk to McDonalds.

Kaysha falls. Kaysha breaks one tooth. Aaron falls and gets a broken tooth too. They go to Children's Hospital. They are crying.

Ms. B. is the nurse who helps them. Kaysha uses her Vantage to say "broken tooth". Aaron uses the Vantage to say "broken tooth". Kaysha says "broken tooth at the park" using her Vantage.

The nurse gives them 2 balls to throw. They feel happy now. The kids say "I love Ms. B." with the Vantage.

# Marshall Hohmann Age 16 Canada

Marshall is a 16 year old with Cerebral Palsy. He uses a Dynavox 3100 with visual scanning and one head switch to access his Dynavox. He is in process of upgrading to a Vmax. For writing, Marshall uses a laptop with Kurzweil and WiVik as an onscreen keyboard for scanning with his switch. Marshall is finishing grade 9 in a mainstream high school where he completes his course work with the assistance of an educational assistant. Due to the physical demands of completing his school work through scanning, single switch access... etc, he also works at home alot with his mother, siblings and support workers to complete his school work. This poem was one he wrote as part of his grade 9 academic level English course.

Respectfully submitted by Janet McAuley-Oliver

Speech Language Pathologist

## Marshall: An Inventory of Being

I am Marshall.

I like to play hockey and skate. I am a good writer. I like to write action stories in my free time.

I like ice cream but I don't like Hot dogs.

I love God.

I want to go to Germany but I will never set foot in the Sahara desert because it is too dry there.

I have a puppy named Buddy and he is cute.I don't like hearing the orchestra play.I like going to the zoo.

I like going to the eye doctor and visiting the dentist but I won't wear my reading glasses.

I don't have wisdom teeth yet.

And I hope that I will never get them.

I like running.
I like playing video games in my spare time.

I am 16 years old.

I love my computer. I hate when it freezes. I can drive a power chair.

I like monkeys and baboons.
I like going in my walker to get coffee.
And I like to drink it.

I like jazz because it is cool.

Let's move on.

I like spitting oatmeal at my mother.I like riding my bike.I want to be a computer technician and a songwriter.

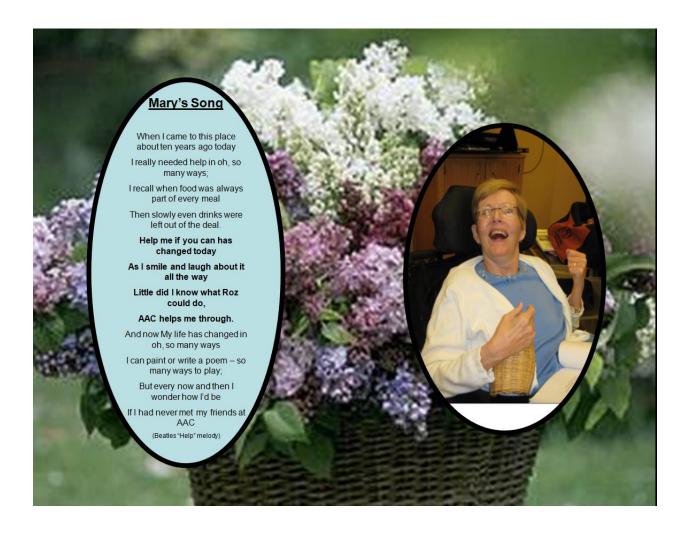
I get annoyed when people talk to me right in my face. I had that today.

I have an older brother and a younger brother as well as a sister who loves me like crazy.

I am a big fan of the Toronto Maple Leafs, even though they didn't make the Playoffs.

My name is Marshall and I am a Christian.

# Mary's Song Canada



# Melinda Rundle Age 35 Canada

I use morse code and the wordsPlus E Z Keys program on a desktop. I do morse code by activating switches by my head and Basically just rock my head from side to side.

#### My Parliament Experience

Being the AAC representative for ISAAC Canada has been one of the most rewarding jobs I've ever had. Not only have I had wonderful colleagues to support and teach me everything I know about AAC, but it's given me the confidence to be an advocate for my fellow AAC users and to develop my skills in self-advocacy. But addressing the Liberal Caucus with my communication device in Victoria on May 7th as the AAC representatives made my confidence level hit the ceiling.

It all started later that morning. My colleagues Susan and Jeff from ISAAC Canada, another guy who used a communication device named Peter and I addressed the MLAs of the Liberal Caucus to ask them to provide funding for devices for adults of all ages instead of putting an age limit on it. Peter and I did individual speeches explaining how vital our communication devices are to our lives and, even though I was really nervous, I tried to relax so nobody could notice. Obviously this method paid off because my speech went really well and, not only did some people cry, but one of the officials said it was the first time the Liberal Caucus had ever clapped after a speech! After our presentations it was like the MLAS didn't want us to leave because they kept calling us back so they could take more group pictures of us whenever we tried to walk toward the door!

After my group and I had lunch with the officials, we were introduced to the House during Question Period as representatives of ISAAC Canada. This part was really amazing for me because I studied politics and law in high school and it always fascinates me. The subjects of their discussion ranged from the birth of a MLA's grandchild to the security at thesky train stations in Vancouver. Some of it was really interesting and some of it almost put me to sleep, but it was definitely an experience I'll never forget.

To top of our wonderful day we had a private meeting with the Honourable Claud Richmond, Minister of Finance. His office looked like a beautiful living room because it had a gorgeous couch, chairs and even a TV! And we had a good conversation with him, especially peter and I, in a relaxed and informal setting.

Until I took my position as AAC representative for ISAAC Canada I relied on other people to do my advocating for me. And the thought of being my own advocate used to frighten me because I was afraid of failing. But this job has helped me build up enough self-esteem and confidence to realize that I'm capable of advocating for myself as well as my fellow AAC users. I'm not perfect at it but, whenever I make mistakes, I learn from them and keep trying until I succeed. If I can do it, my fellow AAC users can too!

Nicky Scarr-Crosmas Age 8 Canada

# **Nicky's Story**

My name is Nicky. I am in Grade 2 at Spring Valley Public School in Brighton, Ontario. I have three brothers and we were all born on the same day! This is a story about how I use augmentative communication every day at school.

I like to be the teacher for Daily Physical Activity (DPA). I use my Tech Talk 8 to tell the class what to do. If I push the picture of my teacher, the kids have to march their feet and raise their hand up in the air. When I push the recess button, they have to run on the spot. I like to push the field trip button, the kids have to move up and down and sing "The People on the Bus Go Up And Down" song. The kids like it when I push the library picture, because they have to sit quietly and pretend to read a book. It's like a break for them! I laugh and we all have a lot of fun. I even did the DPA for the school assembly. I did it for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 classes. Then I led the older classes too. They thought it was a lot of work and lots of fun! My Dad came to the assembly also. He liked the DPA. It was lots of fun!

I also use my Tech Talk 8 for spelling. I help my friends with spelling.

It's great that I can use my Tech Talk 8 to fill

in the rhyming word when the students are doing the "Making Connections Chant"! It is nice to be a part of the activity!

During music, I use my blue switch to turn the music on and off. My friends like it when I turn the music off because they get to "freeze".

During story time, I use my Daisy Player to read the story to the class.

During math and language I use Classroom Suite and Writing with Symbols on my computer. Most of the time, I use my joystick and my yellow switch. Sometimes, I use my Intellikeys Board to use my computer.

At recess I like to play Go Fish and UNO card games with my friends. I also like to play basketball. I hold the ball on my tray and move my wheelchair to the end of the gym. My friend Tyler shoots the ball in to the basket for me. We have a lot of fun! I also play soccer. I like to be the goalie.

I like to use all of my devices at school. It makes the work easier and it makes the activities - especially being the teacher - a lot of fun!

# Rabin Betkhoodo Age 32 Canada

My name is Rabin Betkhoodoo and I am 32 years old. I came to Hamilton, Ontario, from Iran in 1989. I am Assyrian and my first language is Aramaic. I was born with spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy and I am non-verbal. In Iran people with disabilities were not allowed to go to school and I did not have any assistive technology, not even a wheelchair. I use a Dynavox 3100 to communicate, but soon I will be getting a Dynavox V. I love working on my computer with my Dynabeam, which sends my words from the Dynavox to the computer. This means I can write emails, chat with friends, and write stories and essays. I even play backgammon on the Internet. I also have a Mini-Dialer Phone, and can make phone calls using it and my Dynavox so I can talk to whomever I want! My Speech-Language Pathologist encouraged me to send my stories, and helped me with the proper English grammar and spelling. But, all the ideas are mine!!! I will be very happy to read the Collection of Stories.

# A Hatful of Money

By Rabin Betkhoodoo

Rabin here. I'm not sure if you remember me. I'm a great-looking guy who is smart, funny and modest! I also have Cerebral Palsy, and have a power wheelchair. I use my foot for talking on my Dynavox. This causes lots of problems because I need to have my shoe off to talk!!!

One day, I went to Path Employment, and got a bit lost. No one knew me, but a lady asked, "How can I help you?" I took off my shoe, and spoke with the lady for a minute, said "hi" and "bye" and asked for help finding Path. She gave me the address on a slip of paper, helped me put my shoe back on (Thank God!), and went on her way.

I was too early for my DARTS bus, so I sat in the mall. Then I noticed that the paper had fallen out of my pocket onto the floor. I tried to point with my hand, but people walking by didn't understand me. I didn't want to take my shoe off to talk in case I would lose it, so I had a brilliant idea. I threw my hat on the floor beside the paper, thinking someone would notice and then pick both things up for me.

Well, people saw the hat all right. One lady threw \$5.00 in the hat! I laughed and laughed, and because I was laughing so hard, I was shaking from my head to my legs, so people thought I was crying!!! Many more people threw money in my hat – it was full of money!

I was afraid that a friend of my family would see me begging for money, and I would get in trouble. So, I took my shoe off, and said, "Please give me my hat and that piece of paper". An old woman picked up my hat and the paper, and said, "Be careful; don't lose your money!" I raced out of there, and my shoe fell off my chair.

Finally, my DARTS bus came to pick me up. All the way home, I was thinking how I would tell my parents about the \$40.00 in my hat! I certainly couldn't tell them the truth – they would be crazy! So, another bright idea – I decided to tell my mom I sold my shoes!

On the way home, I asked the bus driver to throw my other shoe in the garbage. I ran off the bus, because I didn't want my mom to talk to the driver. I said, "Hi, Mother – guess what? I sold my shoes for \$40.00!

She said, "What?"

I showed her my hat. She was surprised and confused. "Who would buy old shoes?" she asked.

"There was an old man who loved my shoes, so I sold them to him!"

My mom, shaking her head, went to find my father to tell him what I had done. "That boy - another day, another pair of shoes".

### One Night at Mohawk

By Rabin Betkhoodoo

Rabin here. As you know, I am a modest person, extremely funny, and so smart I could read all books in the library in one hour! I also have Cerebral Palsy, and use a power wheelchair to get around. I'm the guy who talks with my foot on the Dynavox. I can't wear a shoe when I'm talking, so I'm often to be seen wandering around, shoeless.

During exams at college, I was working late at night with my educational assistant, John. I was writing an exam, using my Dynavox hooked up by cable to the computer. However, even though I am very smart (and modest – did I say that already?), I am not fast, so everyone else had gone home. When I was just about finished my exam, John decided to go out for a drink of water. He left, and the door closed and locked behind him, so he was out in the hall, and the key was inside, on the desk!

I had to get the door open, or be shut in for the night! Using my superior problem solving skills, I wiggled around, wedged my feet under the box holding my Dynavox, and lifted it off with my superhuman strength (did I mention that I also have 'superpowers'?). Letting John in, he apologized profusely for being an airhead, and we finished the exam.

Once we packed up, we went out into the hall to make our way to the front exit. The halls were empty, and only the exit signs were lit. It was very dark and a bit creepy. All of a sudden, out of nowhere, a bat came flying – almost dive-bombing John!! He screamed, "RUN!" (forgetting of course that I was in a wheelchair!). I turned and swerved around, trying to manoeuvre away from the bat and, during one of the sharp turns, my shoe fell off of my chair. John yelled, "Forget it!" so we left it behind. We made it to the door, got on the bus, and I got home safely.

Until, that is, my mom noticed my foot. "Where's your shoe", she asked? I didn't want to admit that I left it at college on purpose, so I told her that the janitor put it into the garbage while I was writing the exam. "Oh well, back to the shoe store!" said mom.

#### Rabin on the Lam

By Rabin Betkhoodoo

Rabin here. Maybe you remember me. I'm a happy-go-lucky guy who happens to have Cerebral Palsy, and I use a power wheelchair to get around. I'm the guy who talks with my foot on the Dynavox. This causes lots of problems because I need to have my shoe off to talk!!!

One day, I was on my way to TAC, but the bus driver made a mistake and left me off at the wrong building at the hospital. Because I had my shoe on, I wasn't able to tell her she was wrong. She made me get off of the bus, and then left. I didn't exactly know what to do, so I went inside and sat in a room for a bit while I planned my next move. I looked around for someone to help me, but couldn't find anyone, so I decided that I would just wheel over to TAC – how far could it be?

As I left, I heard a nurse yell, "STOP – a patient is running away!" I didn't pay any attention to her because I couldn't see anybody running. I carried on my merry way, happily wheeling at top speed because I don't often get a chance to check out the power on my chair! A minute or so later, I heard an announcement on the intercom saying, "Code YELLOW – Ward 37!" I didn't have a clue what that meant, but I knew it was serious when a few minutes later I heard sirens and saw police cars.

When I was almost at TAC, I realized that the police and a bunch of nurses and other people were actually chasing me! I started laughing, and just as my Speech-Language Pathologist and Occupational Therapist asked me why, the police burst in yelling, "This man ran away from the hospital!" I don't think the police thought it was as funny as I did – they need to lighten up a bit, don't you think?

Riley Koyanagi Age 10 Canada

### Tim and Pirate Redbeard

By Riley Koyanagi

Tim, a boy who uses AAC, wanted to work on a ship. Redbeard, a pirate, had a ship. The only thing they eat on this ship is sushi. The only thing they drink on this ship is root beer. Redbeard said "Do you like sushi?" Tim said "I like sushi". Redbeard said "Do you like root beer?" Tim said "I like root beer." Redbeard said "You can work on my ship".

Everything was fine until one day when they were eating lunch.

Everybody worked so hard that day. And everybody was hungry.

There was only 1 piece of sushi left. Redbeard tried to grab the sushi and Tim tried to grab the sushi at the same time. They got into a terrible fight. Suddenly, Tim's necklace broke! Tim was sad -

very, very sad. Redbeard said "I'm sorry. You can have the sushi".

Tim was happy, very very happy.



# China Zhang Longlong

# 大 爱 无 边 ——生命中的感动

我是一个先天性残疾患者,自出生便于正常人相异,手脚不灵便, 生活常不能自理。但有幸遇见善良、朴实、厚道的父母,在他们的 爱抚下,我健康、开心地生活了十九年。时至今日,我也从没抱怨 过命运的不公。因为我深知"自己永远都不是最不幸的人,我身边 还有一群爱我的人和我爱的人"。

中国神话寓言中说:远古女娲用泥土捏制了五千个男男女女,但女娲精力有限,在捏制到大约四千人时,她的精力即将耗尽,为完成原有的计划,女娲撒出大把大把的泥团,由此造成部分人出现先天性残疾,如腿脚不灵便、口齿不清晰、脑子不灵光等。我就是他们中的一员。

一九八八年的冬天,雪特别多。柔柔的雪花带来了冬的讯息,也捎来了河南一个小城中一普通家庭中的一员,一个新的生命就此诞生。呱呱的坠地声让一家人欢欣鼓舞,然而停留片刻的微笑便被阴云替代。残疾儿、残疾儿、残疾儿······哀号充斥着整个房间,母亲的眼角挂着泪痕

,父亲闷着头坐在墙角,一双双渴求的耳朵在等待着声音的响起。 沉闷、死寂、窒息·····微笑--沉闷--微笑--死寂--微笑--窒息--微笑····微笑? ···不···对,微笑,婴儿的微笑,天真的、无邪的、纯洁的微笑,母亲释怀了,父亲的额头舒展了·····

今天的我无法想象当年的父母是如何下定决心要抚养我长大的?但 我深知抚养一个残疾儿长大的不易。现在的我还不能为父母做些什么,谨以此文来感怀我的父母。

> 张龙龙 2008年6月1日

# Zhang Longlong China

#### **Great Love is Boundless**

#### -- from the bottom of my heart

1 June, 2008

I am a congenital disabled boy. I was different from others at my birth: my hands and feet were inflexible. I can not do my activities of daily life. Fortunately, I have had very kind, caring and gold-hearted parents. They have taken care of me and made my last 19 years a healthy and happy one.

In our Chinese fable, at the beginning of our world, NÜWO, the creator of the earth, planned to make 5000 people with her hands using mud. That was quite a hard and tedious work. When she finished the first 4000, she was exhausted but wanted to accomplish her goal. So she threw the dough of mud in pieces and deformed creatures appeared: extremity-deformed; speech-disabled and mentally-retarded. I am one of them.

In the winter of 1988, with soft snow flakes falling, a disabled small creature was born in Henan province, China. The first cries made the family thrilled, but a moment later the atmosphere changed abruptly. A deformed, deformed, an anomaly. The mother cried with tears dropping and the father sat at the corner in silence. People were waiting for the next responding sounds. Silence, asphyxia, deadly silence...smile, deadly silence, asphyxia, smile...Smile? The newborn's! The newborn's smile, a simple, pure smile. Now mother relaxed and the winkles on father's forehead smoothed.

Now I can not imagine how my parents made the decisive determination to not abandon but to raise me. Everyone knows the hardship of taking care of and raising a disabled child. Now I am still incapable to help my parents in any aspect, but I want to write this humble article to thank my beloved parents.

# Zhang Xuyang China

#### 回家的旅程 张旭洋

二00八年四月三日

想家了……我有两个月都没回家了。明天正好是清明节,我准备下午坐那趟三点十七分的火车回家。 这是我有生以来第一次,独自一人坐火车,看来我是真的长大了。

到了火车站,阿姨去帮我买票,但没有座位票。上车后,我看见有个空坐位刚想坐下,有一位大哥问我:"你有票吗?",我看了他一眼,然后往前走了几步站在那,心想他可能是害怕我精神上有问题吧?所以才会拒绝我。后来在列车员的帮助下,我正好坐在那位大哥的对面。而后母亲发来短信,我就拿出手机给母亲回短信,坐在旁边的人看我发短信,似乎觉得很不可思议。他们开始问我一些问题,我就用手机一一做答,于是我们就开始聊天。看来交流非常重要的,要不是那位列车员把我安排坐那与他们交流,他们现在还以为我有神经病呢。火车快到站了,我给旁边大哥说:"一会儿到站了,帮我扶下车。"他连忙答应了。

我在想:如果在我没给他们交流的前提下,我突然拿着手机让他们看短信,那会是什么样子的?他们如果看了手机上的字,或许他们还能认为我的精神上没有问题。如果他们没看见手机上的字,他们肯定还以为我有精神病呢。这两种结果,如果是第一种的结果,他们肯定会与我交流,就跟上面所说的一样,我们会成为朋友。如果是第二种结果,他们或许会害怕我,会骂我,说严重一点他们还去找列车员,让列车员来把我带走,如果这样的话,误解会更大了。

我在想,如果手机厂家能考虑到我们的难处,设计一款能读短信的手机,我们的语言难题不就解决了吗!

总的来说,我这次回家还算顺利,虽然刚开始的时候,被人误解,但是最后经过一番交流,他们了解我,我们成为朋友。这次独自回家,为我以后走向社会竖立了信心,在这个社会中我会成为一个有用的人

二00八年四月三日

#### **Going Back Home**

#### **Zhang Xuyang**

I missed my family...for almost two months I have not been home. Tomorrow will be an ancestor-worshiping day and I planned to ride the train to my hometown. This was the first time I would go on a train by myself. I am really a grown-up person now.

At the railway station, the one who would show me off went to the booking office and bought me a ticket, a ticket without a seat number. When I was in the carriage, I saw a vacant seat and I went there just wanting to sit. An older boy asked me: "Do you have a ticket?" I gazed at him and stepped forward and stopped, just standing there. He might think that I had a mental problem, otherwise why did he refuse my sitting there? With the conductor's help, I sat facing that older boy. My cell phone rang and my mother sent a short message to me and I replied to her in writing. The people that sat around me were astonished and they maybe thought that it was incredible for me to use a cell phone writing messages.

They started to ask me questions. I replied to their questions with the short message function of the cell phone. If I was not capable to write a message and use the phone, they might still think I was insane. We had a good time. The train was approaching my destiny and I wrote to the older boy: "I will arrive at my hometown. Please help me drop down to the platform when the train stops." He helped me.

I think: if we did not have that communication, what would have happened? Maybe they would have presumed I was insane. But after they saw the words of the short messages I wrote on the phone, they must think that I am alright and do not have a mental problem.

The biggest problem for people from different countries of the world in communication is language. Not understanding each others language, there will be no communication. A language interpreter could be invited to help. But for one like me, there is an obstacle in language. I can perceive and understand other people's uttering, but I can not export my thought through a voiced language. Fortunately, I have a kind of interpreter, the cell phone, but I still suffer from this handicap somewhat...

I hope that inventers will make cell phones which can read my short written message aloud to represent my own speaking. Then the problem of me and of other similar speaking difficulties will be solved completely.

In general, I arrived home without problems, though I was misunderstood and mistreated at the beginning. Through our discourse, my train mates and I became friends. Through this trip alone, my confidence about going into the society is strengthened. I will now be a more useful man in this society.

# Zhang Xuyang China

#### 无意中的耻笑 张旭洋

2008年1月9日星期三

尊老爱幼是中国的传统美德。不错有大多数的人都做到这些,可是有极少数的人没有做到,他们打小孩骂老人,甚至还有人打老人。今天的主题是中国缺少一项教育,那就是正常人对残疾人耻笑。

一二年级的小学生耻笑我们残疾人,我们可以理解,因为他们还小不懂事,但是有些成年人还耻笑我们,这我们难以理解,我相信他们都是无意中笑话我们的,但是这无意中的笑话已经伤到我们的自尊。

举个例子:一天,我去商场买东西,走到柜台边,有位营业员就笑话我,我记得旁边还有人不让她笑。当时我看她一眼就走了。后来我给她写一封信送去,信上写:我虽然是个残疾人,但我跟你一样有自尊,你这样做,我会很伤心的。即使这样也消不掉她对我的伤害。

中国就是缺少对中小学生尊重残疾人的教育,正是缺少这一点,才使他们不知道去尊重残疾人。中国 残联出台了不少残疾人优惠政策,有些企业也帮助残疾人解决生活上的问题,但我想我们残疾人不光需要 经济上的支持,更需要的是心灵上的安慰。我希望国家教育部能出台一套新的教育方案,那就是如何尊重 残疾人。

2008年1月9日星期三

# Sneering unintentionally? Zhang Xuyang

9 January, 2008

Respecting the elderly and caring for the young is a traditional virtue of our Chinese. No doubt, many people are already doing these, but also there is no doubt that some, even though not many, are doing just the opposite. Some are beating children, scolding the elders; the worst ones even beat their old family members.

Now I want leave those mean behaviors and turn to another one which is also quite frequently happening. Some are sneering at our disabled!

Young children laugh at us. We can understand. They are too young to know anything. But why do those adults also laugh and sneer at us? I hope they do it unintentionally and subconsciously. They do not know that their behaviors already deeply hurt our self-esteem.

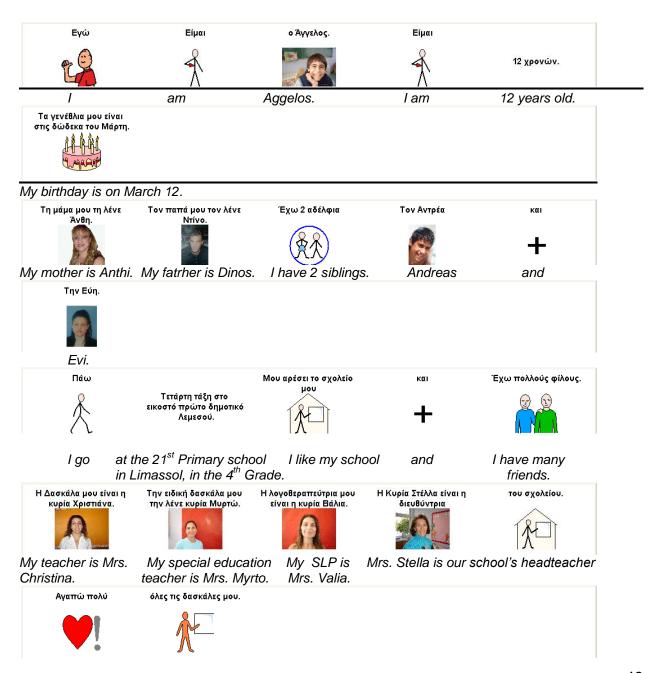
I can tell you a true experience of mine. One day when I went into a store and approached a counter, the saleswoman laughed and sneered at me. Bystanders made gestures and said some words to stop her but she still behaved that way. I turned my head after I gazed at her and then left. Later, I wrote a letter and sent it to her, mentioning that though I am disabled I have self-esteem just as you do. With your manner, you hurt me and made me very sad. The hurt she afflicted on me could not leave me!

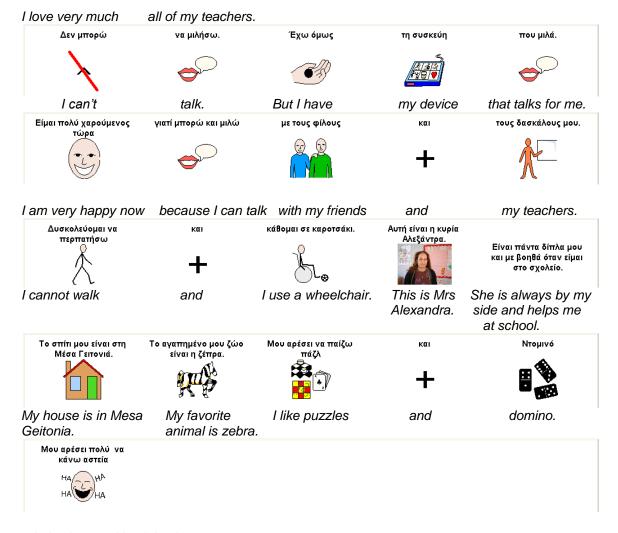
China does not have a program of educating the young pupils in kindergartens and primary schools to pay respect to the disabled. China Disabled Persons' Association has terms about how to help the disabled financially and some businesses are observing those terms. But we disabled not only hope that financial support can be a reality, we need more of a comforting treatment for our souls. I hope that our government will put respecting the disabled as a part of educational thought.

# Cyprus

Aggelos Neophytou Age 12 Cyprus

# Ο Άγγελος: Η ιστορία μου Aggelos: A story about myself





I also love making jokes!

#### Notes:

Screen shots copied from the user's device (from the symbol bar output)

Original language: Greek

Translation in English: in italics – by the teachers.

A great thank you to my SLT for her support not only for this story but for everything!

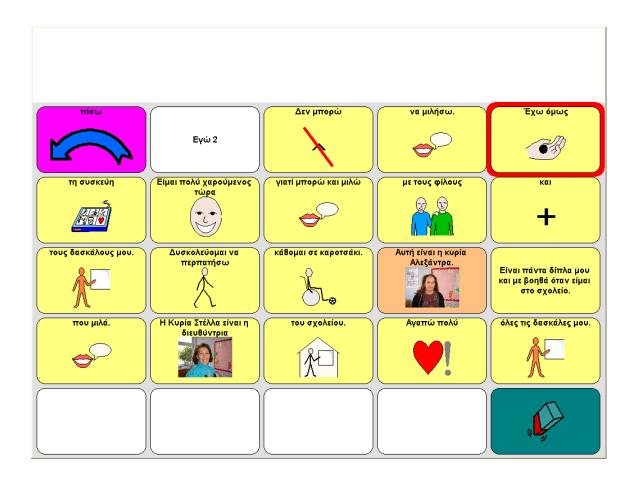
Η εργασία αυτή έχει γραφτεί από τον Άγγελο Νεοφύτου, μαθητή της Δ3΄, με τη συσκευή επικοινωνίας του.

This story has been written (told) by Aggelos Neophytou, who attends the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, by the use of his communication device.

By Aggelos' speech and language therapist and the assistive technology specialist that work with hime:

Aggelos is an adorable twelve year old boy diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy-Athetosis (Tetrapledgic), with no verbal communication. He uses a wheelchair with the help of an escort. The Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus, has provided him with a communication device last year. Since then Aggelos is using it to communicate with his classmates, his teachers and the rest of the school staff. The boy is very happy to communicate with people and has a good sense of humour. The devices has been set up by a company in Cyprus, and it is a non-dedicated communication device, which proved very effective for Greek script and voice. After all there are no dedicated AAC devices supporting Greek. So, Aggelos uses his device with the software The Grid, and the Widgit Literacy Symbols set. Since the use of the AAC device Aggelos has become not only very communicative but also literate. He is now in the position of composing his own sentences, with simple words and symbols. For time saving purposes most of the times grids and cells of the programme are set up in complete phrases. Here are some screen shots:





We are all very happy for this progress in Aggelos life. It totally gave him a new perspective!!!

### France

# Jérémy Montalti, 16 ans, France

#### DES DIFFICULTÉS POUR PARLER

Ça me fait de la peine quand on ne me comprend pas.

Je veux être compris.

Par exemple, on ne me comprend pas à la boulangerie, au téléphone ; quand je croise les gens dans le couloir, et à table, et même dans la rue ou dans les magasins. Quelquefois, même avec Papa et Maman.

Normalement, je parle comme les autres.

Quelquefois, on ne me comprend pas. Il y a des mots difficiles à comprendre pour les gens.

Je ne sais pas pourquoi on ne me comprend pas.

Quand je ne suis pas compris, je prends mon tableau de lettres, mais au téléphone, ça ne marche pas.

Mon ergo m'a expliqué que ça existe les téléphones qui parlent ; j'aimerai en avoir pour être compris quand on ne me comprend pas, et quand je suis au téléphone avec Papy, Mamie, Tonton, Tata et même avec mes copains.

J'ai des copains qui ne parlent pas comme Tahina et Sofia.

Jérémy Montalti, 16 ans

Juin 2008, FRANCE

# France



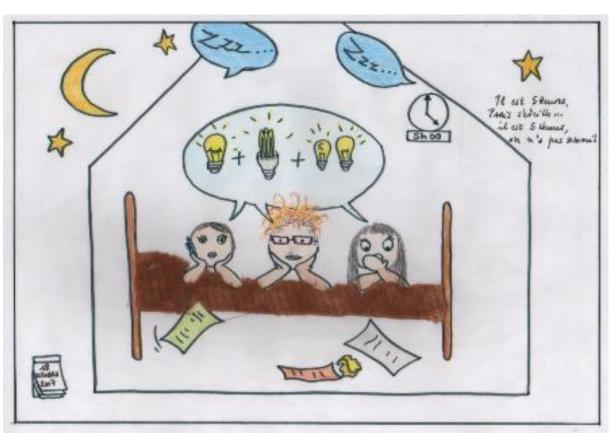








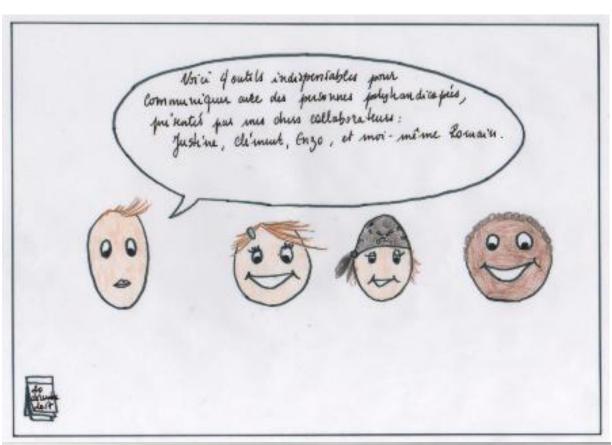


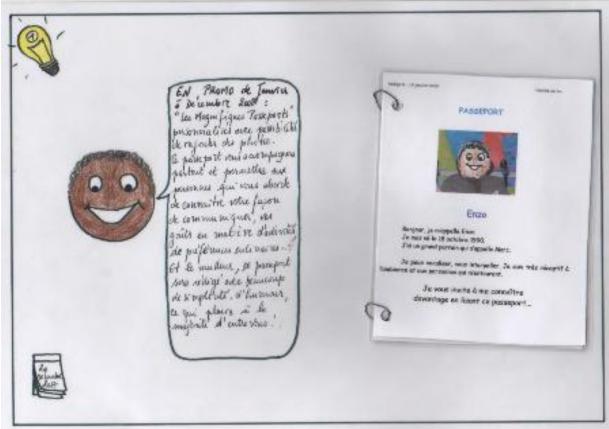




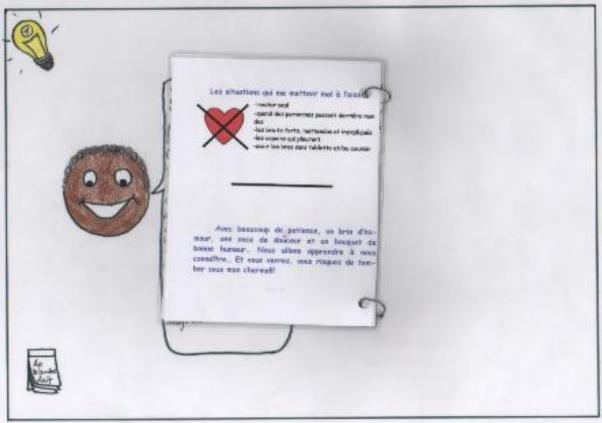


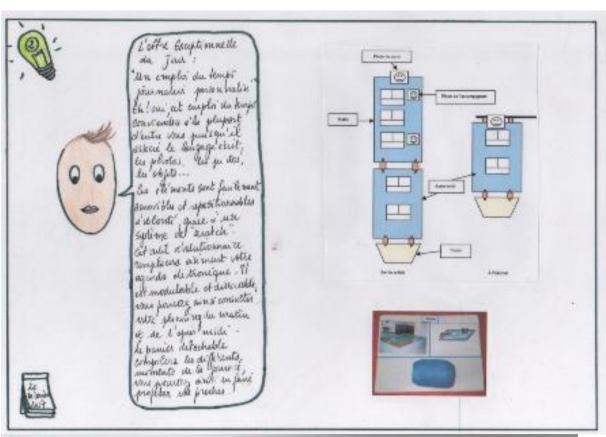


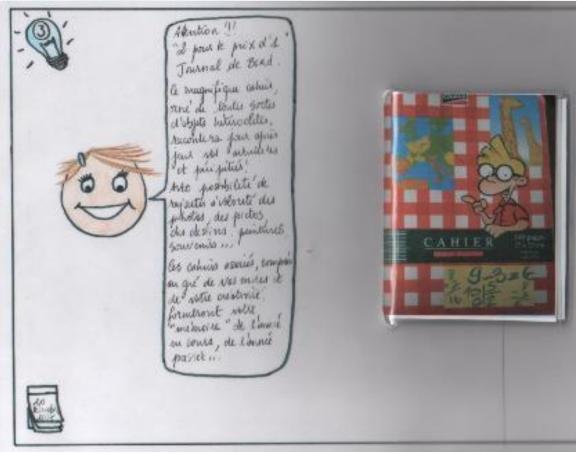




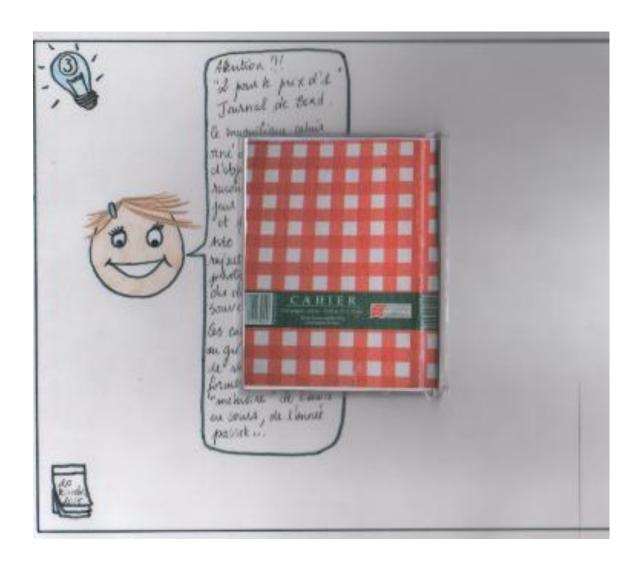




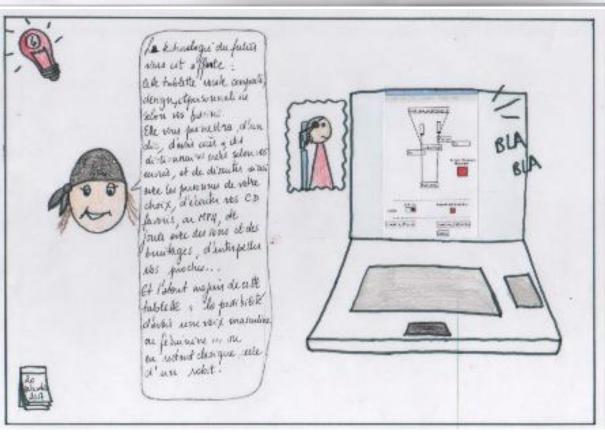
















# India

# **WINNING SUBMISSION**

# Barsha Bhattacharya Age 26 India

I am a 26 year old woman with cerebral palsy. I have Spastic Quadraplegia. I am a member of Ankur, Advocacy Group and attend the Adult Day Services at Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy. I teach on AAC courses for doctors, caregivers, B.Ed students. I love writing stories and poems in Bengali. I use an alphabet board to express my thoughts and ideas to my teachers and they write for me. I have access to a computer and use a software called Sanyog to compose independently. I composed this story on the alphabet board and my teachers wrote it for me. I have learnt a lot about writing short stories while composing this story.

#### Aparajita (The Undefeated)

It was the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the Bengali month, Baishak. The atmosphere of Bengal is filled with music. Welcoming the music and lighting up the house Shankarbabu's first born girl child arrives. With many a dream and hope Shankarbabu names his daughter Labanya. Seeing her sweet face Labanya's parents believed that their daughter would grow up to talk sweetly and softly.

With her parents immense love and affection Labanya grows up fast physically, but sadly she cannot utter a word. Parents start worrying and get anxious to hear her voice speak. Several tests and treatment begins. At the end of it the doctors come to a decision that Labanya will not be able to talk at all.

Labanya, now six, has learnt a lot. Parents and people around her are happy. It is now time for Labanya to go to school. Her parents had earlier introduced her to Bengali and English alphabets. Her first day at school is a painful experience. The Headmistress refuse to admit her explaining that the school is not equipped to educate such a child because of the lack in the educational system in our schools.

Since Labanya's father is well connected, she gets an opportunity to be admitted in the local primary school. Her journey, thus begin. Except for Nabin and Protima no one else is interested to make friends with her. Labanya grows fond of Nabin and Protima and their friendship strengthens.

Overcoming many hurdles Labanya with help and support from many, finishes school securing a first division in her Madhyamik examination.

During the holidays after the exams Labanya realises an inherent talent in her when she starts writing poems in her diary. In the local puja committee newspaper her first poem gets published. She is soon invited to attend a 'Poets Meet' from a well known puja pandal. When Labanya appears at that Meet wearing a white cotton sari with Juin flowers in her hair, she immediately wins many hearts. Nabin is present in the audience, his eyes filled with questions and gazing at Labanya. Labanya's beautiful presence charmes everyone. She is then asked to read out her poem. Labanya gestures her mother to come up on stage and read her poem to the audience. Labanya is overwhelmed with the response and support of the people present there.

This is the time Labnya realises that she stands out from the others.

Labanya continues with her studies while writing and penning her poems down. Her poems keep appearing in various magazines. They become the symbol of her inner thoughts. Rabindranath Tagore's "Suva" finds a new interpretation in Labnya's poem.

Nabin is memorized by Labanya's poetry. He starts spending the evenings with Labnya. She on the other hand continue with her new compositions. Labnya finds her inspiration in Nabin. Her parents are fully aware of the situation. Nabin feels proud of Labanya's success which is widely appreciated and spends more time with her.

At this point Labnya meets Sushil and they get friendly. Sushil, like her has no speech. But his style of writing fascinates Labnya. She likes spending, time with Sushil. She sees in Sushil's eyes the deep respect that he has for her.

In the 'Spring Meet of the Poets' Sushil expresses his wishes through his poetry to make Labanya his life partner. Sushil with the permission of her parents proposes marriage to Labanya. Labanya too tells her parents about her wish to get married to Sushil. Her parents are in a dilemma knowing this she writes to her parents —

Love is not sympathy
Love is a journey together
Love is respecting each other

Labanya also writes to her father –

'This is our battle

We will first embrace each other only then the society will accept us. This will be our victory.'

#### অপরাজিতা

দিনটা ছিল পাঁচিশে বৈশাখ। বাংলার আকাশ-বাতাস ভরে উঠেছে সুরে। সেই সুরকে আয়ান জানিয়ে ঘর আলো করে এ পৃথিবীতে জন্ম নিল শঙ্করবাবুর প্রথম কন্যা। অনেক আশা স্বপ্ন নিয়ে শঙ্করবাবু তার মেয়ের নাম রাখলেন লাবন্য। লাবন্যর মুখের মিষ্টতা দেখে তার বাবা-মা ভাবতেন যে, সে মিষ্টভাষী হবে।

বাবা-মার অফুরন্ত মেহ-ভালোবাসায় বড় হতে থাকে লাবন্য। লাবন্যের শারীরিক বিকাশ দ্রুতগতিতে হতে থাকলেও তার মুখ থেকে ফোটেনা কোনো শব্দ। মা-বাবা চিন্তিত হযে পড়েন এবং তার আওয়াজ শোনার জন্য হয়ে ওঠেন অস্থির।তারপর তার চিকিজ্ঞা শুরু হয়। চলে অনেক পরীক্ষা-নীরিক্ষা। সবশেষে ডাক্ডারেরা এই সিদ্ধান্তে পৌঁছান যে, লাবন্যর পক্ষে কথা বলা অসম্ভব।

দুবছরের লাবন্য সব করতে শিখেছে,কোখাও কোনো ঘাটতি নেই। বাবা-মা সবাই খুশী। এরপর এল তার স্কুলে ভর্তি হওয়ার পালা। অবশ্য তার অক্ষর পরিচয় হয়েছিল বাবা-মার হাত ধরেই। সে বাংলা ইংরেজি অক্ষর সবই চেনে। স্কুলের প্রথম দিনটা তার জীবনে প্রথম আঘাতটা এনেছিল। প্রধান শিক্ষক জানালেন যে, এরকম শিশুদের ভর্তি নেওয়া সম্ভব নয়, কারণ আমাদের যা শিক্ষা পদ্ধতি সেই পদ্ধতি অনুযায়ী তাকে শিক্ষা দেওয়া অসম্ভব। লাবন্যর বাবার সমাজে প্রতিপত্তি থাকার জন্য সে পাড়ার প্রাইমারী স্কুলে ভর্তি হওয়ার সুযোগ পেল। শুরু হল তার পথ চলা। ক্লাসে তার কোনো বন্ধু ছিল না। তাকে কেউ সঙ্গী করতে চাইতো না। ক্লাসে নবীন ও প্রতিমা তাকে মাঝে মাঝে সঙ্গ দিতো। লাবন্যও ওদের বেশ পছন্দ করতো। তিনজনের বন্ধুত্বটা ছিল গভীর। এভাবেই পেরোল তাদের প্রাইমারী স্কুলের গণ্ডী। অনেক বাধা-বিপত্তি কাটিয়ে, কারোর সহযোগিতা, কারোর সহানুভূতি নিয়ে লাবন্য মাধ্যমিকে ফাষ্ট ডিভিশন নিয়ে উত্তীর্ন হল।

পরীক্ষার পরের ছুটির সময়ে লাবন্য আবিষ্কার করে নিজের এক নতুন রূপ। তার ডায়েরির পাতা ভরে উঠেছিল নানারঙের কবিতায়। স্থানীয় পূজো পত্রিকায় তার প্রথম কবিতা ছাপা হল। তার নিমন্ত্রন এল বেশ নামী এক পূজা প্যান্ডেল থেকে কবিসভার জন্য।

সাদা তাঁতের শাড়ি পড়ে, মাথায় জুঁই ফুলের মালা পড়ে লাবন্য যখন সভায় উপস্থিত হল তখন সে অনেকের মন কেড়ে নিয়েছিল। দর্শকদের মধ্যে উপস্থিত ছিল নবীনও। নবীন চোখ ভরা প্রশ্ন নিয়ে তাকিয়ে ছিল লাবন্যর দিকে। লাবন্যের রূপ যেন ভেসে ভেসে বেড়াচ্ছিল বাতাসে।তারপর লাবন্যকে তার কবিতা পাঠ করতে বলা হয়। তখন সে ঈশারা করে তার মাকে ডাকে কবিতা পাঠ করার জন্য। সেইসময় লাবন্যর চোখ থেকে বইতে থাকে অশ্রুষারা। দর্শকের কাছে কবি লাবন্যর ফুটে ওঠে অন্য এক পরিচয়। লাবন্য সেদিন লক্ষ্য করেছিলো আরো কিছু, সবার চোখে দেখেছিল সহানুভূতি। সেদিন থেকেই লাবন্য বুঝলো সে সাধারণের থেকে আলাদা।

এভাবেই পড়াশোনার পাশাপাশি চলতে থাকে তার কবিতার চর্চা। একের পর এক কবিতা ছাপা শুরু হয় বিভিন্ন পত্রিকায়। কবিতায় ফুটে ওঠে তার মনের কখা। রবীন্দ্রনাথের-সুভা- লাবন্যর কবিতায় নেয় এক নতুন রূপ।

নবীন লাবন্যর কবিতায় মুগ্ধ হয়ে যায়। সে প্রায়দিন সন্ধেবেলা লাবন্যর সঙ্গে কাটাতো। আর লাবন্য রচনা করতো নতুন নতুন কবিতা। লাবন্যের কাছে নবীন হয়ে ওঠে অনুপ্রেরণার স্বরূপ। এই অনুপ্রেরণা লাবন্যর বাবা-মার চোখেও ধরা পড়ে। চারিদিকে লাবন্যর খ্যাতি ছড়িয়ে পড়তে থাকে। তাতে নবীন বেশ গর্ব বোধ করে। সবসময় সে লাবন্যকে সঙ্গ দিতে থাকে। এই সময়ে লাবন্যর সঙ্গে সুশীলের বেশ বন্ধুত্ব গড়ে ওঠে। সুশীল তার মতই কথা বলতে পারে না। কিন্তু তার লেখার ভঙ্গীমা লাবন্যকে বেশ আকর্ষণ করতে থাকে। লাবন্য সুশীলের সঙ্গে সময় কাটাতে বেশ পছন্দ করতো। লাবন্য সুশীলের চোখে তার প্রতি সম্মান দেখতে পায়। বসন্তের কবি সম্মেলনে সুশীল তার কবিতার মধ্যে দিয়ে বোঝায়, সে লাবন্যকে জীবনসঙ্গী হিসেবে পেতে চায়। নবীন তার বাবা-মার অনুমতি নিয়ে লাবন্যকে বিয়ের প্রভাব দেয়। কিন্তু লাবন্য তার বাবা-মাকে জানায় যে সে সুশীলকে বিয়ে করবে। লাবন্যর বাবা-মার মনে অনেক প্রশ্ন জেগে ওঠে। তখন লাবন্য তার বাবা-মাকে লিখে জানায়-ভালোবাসা মানে সহানুভূতি নয়, ভালোবাসা মানে একই পথের সঙ্গী, একে অপরের প্রতি সম্মান।শেষে লাবন্য তার বাবাকে জানায়-এ আমাদের লড়াই, আগে আমরা আমাদের গ্রহণ করবো, তবেই সমাজ আমাদেরকে গ্রহণ করবে। এভাবেই আসবে আমাদের জয়।

নাম- বর্ষা ভট্টাচার্য বয়স-২৬ বছর এডাল্ট ডে সেন্টার

# Putul Biswas Age:38 yrs. India

I am a 38 year old woman with cerebral palsy. I have Spastic Quadraplegia. I am a member of Ankur, Advocacy Group and attend the Adult Day Services at Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy thrice a week. I teach on AAC courses for doctors, caregivers, B.Ed students. I use an alphabet board for communication. I have access to a computer and use it to compose letters and messages.

I wrote this story at the Centre with the help of my teachers. It took me three days to complete my story. I would have liked a little more time.

# A Promise (291 words)

Pratik an AAC user was searching for a job in various offices.

One day he came across a job advertisement in a newspaper. He went to the office to meet up with the officer and said, "I need a job."

"How will you be able to work?" replied the officer.

"Sir please test me and see how I go about doing my office work."

The officer did not consider his request. At that moment another high ranked officer agreed to see Pratik's work. Everyone at office was amazed at Pratik's efficiency.

Pratik was appointed in the office as an employee after that. Pratik put his heart and soul in his work. He reached office everyday on time and would leave office only after finishing his work. Since Pratik's behaviour was very good he made many friends at his work place and soon his seniors noticed his good work. He gained promotion within a few days. Slowly he became a senior officer at his workplace.

Now Pratik's parents asked him, "Who will look after you in our absence?" Pratik replied, "God".

His mother said, "Stop your nonsense. You will have to marry now." Pratik was now in a fix. How will he let them know what is in his mind? Using his communication board he explained to his mother that he loves Munni his next door neighbour (Munni had polio). Pratik's mother then said, "Munni herself has problems with her legs, how will she look after you?"

"At least she would be my soul mate. We have loved each other since our childhood and it can never fail," replied Pratik.

Pratik's mother, as per her son's wish arranged for his marriage with Munni.

After this both of them lived happily ever after.

#### প্রতিজ্ঞা

প্রতীক নামে একজন এ.এ.সি ব্যবহারকারী অফিসে চাকরি খুঁজছে। সেই মুহুর্তে পেপারে বিজ্ঞাপন দেখে সেই অপিসে গিয়ে সেই অফিসের অফিসারের সাথে দেখা করে বল্ল , আমার একটা চাকরি দরকার। স্বিফিসার বল্ল , ভুমি কি করে চাকরি করবে। স্বিফিসার বল্ল , ভুমি কি করে চাকরি করবে। স্বিফিসার বল্ল , ভুমি কি করে চাকরি করবে। স্বিফিসার বল্ল , ভুমি কি করে চাকরি করবে।

"আপনি আমাকে পরীক্ষা করে দেখুন, আমি কি ভাবে অফিসের কাজ কর্ম করতে পারি।"
অফিসার তখন তার এই অনুরোধ মানতে চাইল না।তখন ঐ অফিসেরই আর একজন উচ্চপদস্থ
অফিসার তার কাজকর্ম দেখতে রাজি হল।তখন তার পারদর্শিতা দেখে অফিসের সব কর্মীই অবাক হয়ে
গেল। তার পরে সে চাকরিতে নিযুক্ত হল।নিষ্ঠার সাথে সে তার কাজকর্ম মন দিয়ে করতে লাগলো।ঠিক
সময় মতন সে অফিসে আসত ও কাজকর্ম সমপূর্ণ করেই অফিস থেকে বেরোতো। প্রতীকের ব্যবহার
খুব ভালো ছিল বলে কিছু দিনের মধ্যেই অফিসকর্মীদের সাথে খুব বন্ধুতা হল ও খুব তারাতারিই
প্রতীক তার কাজকর্মের মধ্য দিয়ে অফিসারের চোখে পড়ল।কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই তার চাকরির উন্নতি দেখা
গেল। আন্তে আন্তে সে একজন উচ্চপদস্থ অফিসার হল।

এবার প্রতীকের মা বাবা তাকে বল্লেন যে-'আমাদের অনুপস্থিতে তোমাকে কে দেখবে?'' প্রতীক তখন তার উত্তরে বল্ল,-'ভগবান।''
মা তখন বল্লেন -'বাজে কথা রাখো। তোমাকে এখন বিয়ে করতে হবে।প্রতীকের তো মাখায় হাত-কি করে জানাবে সে মনের কথা। প্রতীক তার মাকে বোর্ড দেখিয়ে বল্ল, পাশের বাড়ীর মুন্নিকে সে ভালোবাসে। (মুন্নির পোলিও ছিল।) প্রতীকের মা তখন তাকে বল্লেন -'মুন্নির নিজেরই পায়ের অসুবিধা রয়েছে, সে তোকে কি করে দেখা শোনা করবে?''
প্রতীক তার উত্তরে বল্ল, মুন্নি আমার মনের বন্ধু তো হবে। মুন্নির সাথে আমার ছোটোবেলার ভালোবাসা, সেটা কখনো মিথ্যে হতে পারে না। প্রতীকের মা ছেলের কথা মতন মুন্নির সাথে বিয়ের আয়োজন করল।এরপরে ওরা সুখে শান্তিতে বসবাস করতে থাকল।

নাম- পুতুল বিশ্বাস। বয়স-৩৮ এডাল্ট ডে সেন্টার

# **Chandan Das**

Age: 19 India

I am a 19 year old boy with CP (Spastic Athetoid). I try to communicate with others, verbally but use my communication board if they do not understand me. I love writing stories and poems. At home my mother writes for me and at the Centre, my teachers. I thought about the theme of this story at home. At the Centre I used my alphabet board and my teachers wrote it for me.

# **Bhola's Life (247 words)**

Even if Bhola's family is small it has its share of joys and sorrows just like any other family. Bhola is an 18 year old boy, staying with his parents in a small hut. During the monsoons, water entered their house. There was no fan or light in their house. In the evening he studied by the light of a candle.

Despite so much pain and so much sorrow his life did not stop. He went on the path of light from that of darkness.

One day Bhola's father died. His mother was blind. Suddenly Bhola had to carry family responsibilities on his unformed shoulders. All of a sudden he met a man named Raja. He was a very good man. Hearing Bhola's sad life story his heart also ached. Raja asked Bhola, "Will you work with me?" Hearing this Bhola was taken aback. "I am not very educated. Will I be able to do the work?"

"You do not need to be very educated for this job. It is a work in a shop in Kolkata. In Kolkata you could continue your studies too alongside your job," replied Raja.

Bhola now works and also studies. With his first pay he took his blind mother to an eye specialist. Bhola's mother is a lot better now. Bhola's happiness too knows no limit. Now Bhola wants to do something for the orphans.

Let me tell you whether Rhole could achieve his dreams

Let me tell you whether Bhola could achieve his dreams or not in the next story.

#### ভোলার জীবন কাহিনী

ভোলার পরিবার ছোট্রো ঠিকই, কিন্তু সব পরিবারের মতই তার পরিবারেও আছে সুখ ও দুঃখ। ভোলা ১৮ বছর বয়সের একটা ছেলে তার মা বাবার সঙ্গে একটা কুঁড়ে ঘরে তার দিন কাটাত। বর্ষা কালে তার ঘরে জল চুকে যেত।ঘরে তার আলো পাখা কিছুই ছিল না।তাকে সন্ধ্যা বেলায় মোমবাতির আলোয় লেখাপড়া করতে হত।

এত কষ্ট, এত দুঃখ থাকতেও তার জীবনের গাড়ী থামেনি কিন্তু। সে অন্ধকারের পথ দিয়ে আলোর দিকে এগিয়ে গেছে।

একদিন তার বাবা মারা গেলেন। মা চোখে দেখতে পেতেন না। সংসারের চাপ তার নরম কাঁধে এসে পড়ল আচম্কা। হঠাৎই একদিন রাজা নামক একটি ব্যক্তির সঙ্গে ভোলার আলাপ হল।লোকটি খুব ভালো ছিল। ভোলার কস্টের জীবন কাহিনী শুনে তাঁর মনও কেঁদে উঠল। রাজা ভোলাকে জিজ্ঞেস করল- "তুমি কি আমার সঙ্গে কাজ করবে?"

ভোলা তো একথা শুনে অবাক। বন্ধ- আমি তো লেখা পড়া বেশী করিনি। আমি কি কাজটা করতে পারব 🗦 "

"এই কাজের জন্য বেশী লেখাপড়ার দরকার নেই। কোলকাতায়ে একটা দোকানে কাজ।তুমি
কোলকাতায়ে থেকে পড়াশোনাটাও তো পাশপাশি চালিয়ে যেতে পারো- বল্ল রাজা ।
ভোলা এখন কাজও করে, পড়াশোনাও করে। প্রথম মাইনে পেয়ে সে তার অন্ধ মাকে নিয়ে যায় চোখের
ডাজারের কাছে। ভোলার মা এখন আগের থেকে অনেক ভালো আছেন। ভোলারও খুশীর সীমা নেই।
ভোলা এখন চায় মা-বাবা হারা বাচ্চাদের জন্য কিছু করতে। ভোলা তার এই স্বপ্ন পূরণ করতে পারে
সেটা নাহয় পরের গঙ্গেই বলব।

নাম- চন্দন দাস বয়স-১৯ ভোকেসনাল্ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার

## Sampa Ghosh

Age: 13 India

I am 13 years old. I have Cerebral Palsy. I use an alphabet board to communicate. I love working on the computer and use two switches to operate the computer. I wrote this story on the computer without any help. I took two days to complete the story. Each day I was given 45 minutes. I could have written more and better if I had more time.

# A Day During The Pujas (189 words)

I enjoyed myself a lot during my Puja holidays. I went home in the morning of 'Ashtami'. That day my mother came forcefully, going against the wish of my father. First we rode an auto to the bus stop. From there we took a bus straight to Karunamayee. From there we took an auto to get down at Island no.8. We crossed the road to the other side and entered a small alley. From there we started walking.

My mother said, "You come with her. I am going before you. I will have to cook at home." saying this mother walked away fast. We walked down slowly. She went and set the rice to cook .When she was free she came to change my clothes. After this I had water and a biscuit. Mother made me wear a 'nupur' around my feet. After that cooking was complete- rice, dal, bitter gourd and a curry. I had my food first. Father fed me. Then we told mother, "You please have your food."

She said, "I will have my food after serving father." After that mother lay down and we chatted.

### পূজোর ছুটির একটা দিন

পূজাের ছুটি খুব খুব ভালাে লেগেছে। আমি অস্টোমির দিন সকাল বেলা বাড়ী গেলাম। সে দিন মা জাের করে এসেছে, বাবা আনতে চাইছিলেন না। প্রথমে আমরা অটাে করে বাস স্টপেজে গেলাম, ওখান থেকে বাসে করে একদম করুণাময়ীগিয়ে নামলাম, ওখান থেকে অটাে করে গিয়ে আট নম্বর আইলাান্ডে নামলাম, তারপর ওপারে পার হয়ে একটা ছােট্রাে গোলি আছে, ওখান থেকে হাঁটা শুরু হল। মা বল্ল তুমি ওকে নিয়ে এসাে আমি আগে চলে যাই- বাড়ী গিয়ে রান্না করতে হবে বলে মা জােরে হেঁটে চলে গেল। আমরা আন্তে আন্তে হেঁটে গেলাম। মাা গিয়ে ভাত বসিয়ে দিলেন। মার হাত খালি হলে আমার জামা কাপড় ছাড়িয়ে দিলেন।তারপর একটা বিষ্কুট, একটু জল খেলাম, তারপর মা আমার পায়ের পূপ্র পড়িয়ে দিলেন। তারপর রান্না হয়ে গেল,ডাল, ভাত,উচ্ছে ভাজাা, আলু পটলের তরকারি। প্রথমে আমি খেলাম, আমাকে বাবা খাইয়ে দিলেন। আমরা বল্লাম মাকে- তুমি খেয়ে নাও না, মা বল্ল বাবাকে খেতে দিয়ে আমি খাব, তারপর শুয়ে পড়ল, তারপর অনেক গল্প করলাম।

নাম- শম্ পা ঘোষ বয়স- ১৩ বছর ক্লাস- ৫

# Shradha Khator Age 30 India

I am thirty years old. I have Cerebral Palsy (Spastic Quadraplegia). I am a member of Ankur, an advocacy group and attend the Adult Day Services at IICP. I teach AAC on courses for doctors, caregivers, B.Ed. students. I use an alphabet board for creative writing and communication. I also have access to a computer and prefer working with it as I can write independently. At home my mother helps me by writing for me and at the Centre, my teachers do the same. This story was partly written at home. My mother and teachers helped me to search for new words in the dictionary and with sentence construction.

# The Echo of Life (Endings and Beginnings)

Lightening flashed in the sky. Winds were getting stronger. Madhavi was sitting near the window watching the sky, but she had a bigger storm in her heart. She was thinking that the storm outside would subside after sometime but would the storm in her heart ever stop? She felt that her life was empty—without colour, smell or taste. She felt frustrated. "What pen God had used to write the story of her life?"

Madhavi was spastic. She used wheelchair to move about. She could not speak and was totally dependent. She communicated with the help of Alphabet Board. School had helped her to study and get some computer training. Now she had a job and earned enough. Her eighty year old grandmother was her only living relative. Her parents had died in an accident when she was ten years old.

That morning Madhavi's helper, while combing her hair, noticed few grey hair and told her about it. Madhavi realized that grey hair was an alarm. She was aging. She is thirty three years old. What will happen to her? Who will look after her? Grandmother is so old. That day she could not eat her lunch and now she had a headache, too.

Due to the storm, Madhavi could not go to the park. She loved watching children playing and chatting in their colourful clothes. She would ask them

to come near her, but they would run away. She would ask her helper to distribute chocolates to the children. This would make her happy. But today she was very restless.

When her grandmother saw her sad face, she stroked her head and asked, "Why are you so sad today?" Hearing the words of sympathy Madhavi's eyes filled with tears.

Grandmother realized that Madhavi is very upset and suggested that she would take her to Guru Ma. She told Madhavi, I will take you to Guru Ma (a local preacher). You can tell her everything. She is very loving. Whosoever meets her, feels very peaceful. You, too will get peace.

Grandmother used to go to Guru Ma everyday. Next day, Madhavi accompanied her. Grandmother told Guru Ma that her grand-daughter is very disturbed and would like to talk to her privately. Guru Ma took her to her room. Madhavi talked to Guru Ma with the help of her Alphabet Board. Her eyes kept on brimming with tears as she opened her heart to her. She told Guru Ma—"Give me support, give me love, give me peace, Mother".

Guru Ma affectionately stroked her hair and said, "Do not despair, my child. Come after five days. I will give you whatever you want."

During the five days, Madhavi was restless and excited. "What can Guru Ma do for me?" She asked Grandmother a number of times, "What is she planning to do?" But Grandmother had no answer.

At last the day arrived. Madhavi and grandmother went to Guru Ma. She took her to a slum. There they went to a house. Guru Ma called out for someone. A little girl of five came out of the hut. She picked her up and put her in Madhavi's lap. "Here is your support. She will give you love and peace, too. You will get six times more love than what you give to her. She is an orphan. She, too, needs support and love."

Madhavi clutched the child do her breast. Tears were rolling down her eyes. Guru Ma was saying, "Life is an echo. What you want, you have to give first." It was a new beginning for Madhavi.

Written by Shradha Khator Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy, Kolkata, India

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Written by Shradha Khator Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy, Kolkata,, India)

## **Saikat Mitra**

Age: 15 India

**I am** 15 years old. I have Cerebral Palsy (Spastic Athetoid). I use an alphabet board and can verbalise in 2-3 word phrases to communicate. I love socializing, watching sports, chatting with my friends, and travelling.

# The Woodcutter and the Ghost (229 words)

In a village lived a poor woodcutter. He with his wife and son and daughter somehow managed to spend the days. Often he used to think about how he would be able to keep his wife, son and daughter happy. He often stayed very sad regarding this. He used to spend his days like this.

One day the woodcutter went into the forest to cut wood. The moment he hit his axe against a tree a light emerged out of it. The woodcutter got very scared. He was just about to run away with his axe when a ghost came out from that light and stood in front of the woodcutter. The ghost told the woodcutter, "Do not be scared. I will not harm you. On the contrary you please do not harm us. The tree which you are felling is our home. Please do not snatch away our shelter from us. In exchange of that I am giving you a golden plate. You will get anything you want from this plate." Saying this, the ghost vanished. Very pleased, the woodcutter took the plate home and explained every happening to everyone. The woodcutter asked for gold from the plate. He got the gold. Selling that gold the woodcutter gradually became a very rich man. He could make his wife, son and daughter happy. The woodcutter had no more sorrows.

#### কাঠুরিয়া ও ভূতের গল্প

এক গ্রামে এক দরিদ্র কাঠুরিয়া ছিল। স্ত্রী, পুত্র, কন্যা নিয়ে কোনো রকমে তাঁর দিন কাটত। প্রায় সে একা একা ভাবত কিভাবে সে স্ত্রী,পুত্র, কন্যাকে সুখে রাখবে।এই নিয়ে তার খুব মন খারাপ।এমনি ভাবেই তাঁর দিন কেটে যাচ্ছে। একদিন সকালে সে বনে কাঠ কাটতে গেছে। সে কুডুল দিয়ে যেই না একটা গাছে কোপ মেরেছে ওমনি সেই গাছের থেকে একটি আলোর রশ্মি বেরিয়ে এল। কাঠুরিয়া তো খুব ভয় পেয়ে গেল। সে ভয় পেয়ে কুডুল নিয়ে পালাতে যাবেআর তখনি একটি ভূত ও আলো থেকে বেরিয়ে এসে কাঠুরিয়ার সামনে দাঁড়াল। কাঠুরিয়াকে ভূতটা বল্ল দাঁতুমি ভয় পেয়ো না। আমি তোমার কোনো ক্ষতি করবো না। বরঞ্চ তুমি আমাদের কোনো ক্ষতি করবো না। বরঞ্চ তুমি আমাদের কোনো ক্ষতি করো না।তুমি যে গাছটা কাটছো সেই গাছে আমাদের বাসা।দয়া করে তুমি আমাদের নিরাশ্রয় করো না।তার বদলে তোমাকে আমি একটা সোনার থালা দিচ্ছি। এই থালার কাছ থেকে তুমি যা চাইবে তাই পাবে। বলে ভূতটা অদৃশ্য হয়ে গেল। কাঠুরিয়া মহানন্দে সেই থালাটা বাড়ী নিয়ে গিয়েসবাইকে সব ঘটনা খুলে বল্ল। সেই থালা থেকে কাঠুরিয়া মোহর চাইল,মোহর পেল। সেই মোহর বিক্রী করে কাঠুরিয়া দিনে দিনে অনেক বড় লোক হয়ে গেল। স্ত্রী, পুত্র ও কন্যাকে সুখী করতে পারল। কাঠুরিয়ার আর কোনো দুঃখ রইল না।

নাম- সৈকত মিত্র বয়স-১৫ ক্লাস-৮ Sayari Sarkar Age 14 India

I am 14 years old. I have Cerebral Palsy (Spastic Athetoid) and hearing impairment. I use an alphabet board and gestures to communicate. Since I have hearing difficulties, I require verbal assistance too!

# My Best Friend (90 words)

My name is Sayari. In my house there are my parents and my younger sister. I talk to them with the help of my communication board and play with my sister. I come to school everyday in my school bus. I have many friends at my school. I use my communication board to talk to them. Earlier no one would understand what I was trying to say. Now with the help of my communication board I can explain everything to everyone. That is why communication board is my best friend.

### আমার প্রিয় বন্ধু

আমার নাম শায়েরী। বাড়ীতে আমার বাবা, মা আর বোন আছে। আমি কমিউনিকেসন বোর্ড এর সাহায্যে ওদের সঙ্গে কথা বলি, বোনের সঙ্গে খেলা করি।আমি স্কুল বাসে করে রোজ স্কুলে আসি।স্কুলে আমার অনেক বন্ধু আছে। ওদের সঙ্গে আমি কমিউনিকেসন বোর্ড দিয়ে কথা বলি। আগে আমার কথা কেউ বুঝতে পারত না। এখন কমিউনিকেসন বোর্ড দিয়ে আমার সব কথা আমি সবাইকে বোঝাতে পারি। সেই জন্য কমিউনিকেসন বোর্ড আমার প্রিয় বন্ধু।

নাম- শায়েরী সরকার বয়স- ১৪ বছর ক্লাস- ৬

# Subhojit Sen

Age: 18

India

I am an eighteen year old boy with CP (Spastic Athetoid). I love sports, especially cricket. I try to communicate with others, verbally but use my communication board if they do not understand me. I like working on projects related to AAC, and using the computer with my special access switches. In order to write this story, I used my alphabet board to express myself and my teachers and my mother helped to write it.

## **The Priest and his Three Tigers (423 words)**

In a dense forest, in a small hut there used to live a priest. He had three pet tigers. The names of the three tigers were Shiva, Jana and Hema. They listened to whatever the priest said. The three tigers were very dear to the priest. One day the priest had gone into the woods to gather fruits, on the other side Shiva, Jana and Hema were playing at the courtyard of the hut. At that moment a hunter named Jaga captured Shiva and Hema in his nets. Jana escaped and ran to its master to give him the news. The priest hurried back home with Jana. Uttering some magic words he tore Shiva and Hema's net. Jaga, the hunter, seeing the priest's powers got scared and ran away.

Again a few days later the priest went into the woods to gather fruits. Shiva, Jana and Hema started playing at the courtyard of the hut. That day King Shyamchandra of Dubarajpur took his 'Sipahi' and 'Mantri' for hunting in that forest. Seeing the tigers at play the King could not control his greed. He captured all the three tigers and took them to his palace. The priest came back and saw that his dear, beloved Shiva, Jana and Hema were not there. He started looking for them around the forest but found them nowhere. Then the priest through meditation came to know that the three tigers were in the palace at Dubaraipur. Immediately the priest started on his way to Dubarajpur carrying some food with himself. When he reached the palace he saw a huge gate and many guards in front of it. The priest said some magic words to tie up the guards tightly with a rope. He then straight entered the palace. He started looking for Shiva, Jana and Hema around the huge palace. After a long search he found the three tigers tied up in a chain and left helplessly on the terrace of the palace. The tigers felt very happy on seeing the priest. The priest used his magical words to free them from the chain and started on their way back home. Suddenly King Shyamchandra came and stood in the way of the priest. The king took out his sword to cut off the priest's head when the priest's rope tied the king up tightly. The priest returned to his hut with his beloved Shiva, Jana and Hema. After this, whenever the priest went to the woods to gather fruits he took Shiva, Jana and Hema with him.

#### ঋষিমষাই ও তিনটি বাঘের কাহিনী

এক গড়ীর বনে ছোট্টো কুটিরে এক ঋষিমশাইবাস করতেন। তাঁর পোষা তিনটি বাঘ ছিল। বাঘ তিনটির নাম ছিল শিবা, জনা ও হেমা।ঋষিমশাই যা বলতেন তারা তাই শুনতো। বাঘ তিনটি ঋষির খুব প্রিয় ছিল। একদিন ঋষিমশাই ফল আনতে জঙ্গলের ভিতরে গেছেন, এদিকে শিবা, জনা ও হেমা কুটীর প্রাঙ্গণে খেলা করছিল। সেই সময়ে জগা নামে এক শিকারী এসে শিবা ও হেমাকে জালে আটকে ফেল্ল। জনা সেই সুযোগে তার মনিবের কাছে খবর দিতে গেল ৷ঋষিমশাই জনাকে সঙ্গে নিয়ে তাড়াতাড়ি কুটীরে ফিরে এলেন।তিনি মন্ত্র বলে শিবা ও হেমার জাল কেটে দিলেন। শিকারী জগা ঋষির ক্ষমতা দেখে ভয়ে পালিয়ে গেল। কিছুদিন পরে ঋষিমশাই আবার জঙ্গলে ফল আনতে গেলেন। হেমা, শিবা ও জনা কৃটীর প্রাঙ্গণে খেলা করতে লাগল। সেদিন দুবরাজপুরের রাজা শ্যামচন্দ্র তাঁর সিপাই ও মন্ত্রীকে নিয়ে শিকার করতে সেই বনে এলেন। বাঘগুলিকে কুটীর প্রাঙ্গণে খেলা করতে দেখে রাজা শ্যামচন্দ্রের খুব লোভ হল। তিনি তখন তিনটি বাঘকেই বন্দি করে রাজপ্রাসাদে নিয়ে আসলেন। ঋষিমশাই কূটীরে ফিরে এসে দেখলেন তাঁর প্রিয় আদরের শিবা, জনা ও হেমা নেই। তখন তিনি তন্ন তন্ন করে জঙ্গলের চারিদিকে খুঁজতে লাগলেন, কিন্তু কোথাও তাদের সন্ধান পেলেন না। ঋষিমশাই তখন ধ্যান করে জানতে পারলেনদুবরাজপুরের রাজপ্রাসাদে বাঘ তিনটি রয়েছে। ঋষিমশাই তখনি সঙ্গে কিছু খাবার নিয়ে দুবরাজপুরের উদ্দেশ্যে রওনা হলেন। রাজপ্রাসাদের সামনে এসে দেখলেন বিশাল ফটকের সামনে অসংখ্য সৈন্য পাহাড়া দিচ্ছে। ঋষিমশাই মন্ত্র বলে দড়ি দিয়ে সব সৈন্যদের আন্টে পৃষ্ঠে বেঁধে ফেল্লেন। তারপর তিনি সোজা রাজপ্রাসাদে প্রবেশ করলেন। বিশাল রাজপ্রাসাদের চারিদিকে তিনি শিবা,হেমা ও জনাকে খুঁজতে লাগলেন। অনেক খোঁজাখুঁজি করার পর রাজপ্রাসাদের ছাদে বাঘ তিনটিকে দেখতে পেলেন শিকল দিয়ে বাঁধা অসহায় পড়ে রয়েছে।ঋষিমশাইকে দেখে বাঘ তিনটির খব আনন্দ হল। ঋষিমশাই মন্ত্র বলে তাদেরকে শিকল মুক্ত করে নিজের কৃটীরে ফিরিয়ে নিয়ে চল্লেন।এমন সময় ঋষির পথ আটকে দাঁড়ালেন রাজা শ্যামচন্দ্র। রাজা শ্যামচন্দ্র তরবারি দিয়ে ঋষির মন্তক কাটতে যাবেন, তক্ষুণি ঋষির দড়ি আষ্টে পৃষ্ঠে রাজাকে বেঁধে ফেল্ল। ঋষিমশাই তাঁর আদরের শিবা, জনা ও হেমাকে নিয়ে কৃটীরে ফিরে আসলেন। এরপর থেকে ঋষিমশাই জঙ্গলে ফল আনতে গেলেই শিবা, জনা ও হেমাকে সঙ্গে নিয়ে যেতেন।

> নাম- শুভজিৎ সেন বয়স-১৮ ক্লাস- ১০

# Danny Millar Age 7 Ireland

#### Vandal Attack!!

One sunny Sunday afternoon I decided to walk to the city to meet Whitebelt Danny. Whitebelt Danny is my friend and he comes from Massachusetts. Danny now lives in Ireland and his house is on the same street as mine. He is called Whitebelt because he is good at Karate. He was going to sing in the AAC Song Contest. The AAC Song Contest was on Sunday, which is St. Patrick's Day. My name is Keffery Zexity. I'm nineteen years old. I have short, purple, green and white spiked hair. I use an MT4 to help me to talk to my friends and family but I don't use my MT4 when I pray to God because I can do that in my head. I understand everyone, but talk with my MT4.

I was dead late to meet Danny because I got up late because I was knackered as I played Yu Gi Oh all night. I had to drive my Four by Four Monster truck because the song contest was across town. As I passed the park I saw something rare.

In the phone box, I saw two fellas called Jack Plack and New Haircut Fenny. Fenny was bustin the phone box to rob all the coins and dollars. Jack Plack was cutting the wire to break the phone. Fenny looked up and saw me looking over at them as they wrecked the phone box. I shook my fist at him and shouted "STOP", what the hell is going on?"

"You stupid teenager, you are unable to sing and talk" Fenny yelled at me.

He called me stupid but I knew that they were the stupid ones. They were stupid because they were wrecking the phone box. Someone might use the phone box to call their friends when they lose their phone or if they had an accident.

Jack Plack did not know that I can talk with my MT4. I wrote that Fenny and Plack were breaking a phone box and Fenny called me stupid. I called the Phone Breaking Buster Guards on my mobile. I put my mobile on my MT4 and I touched the message window as I wanted my MT4 to speak.

It said "I am Keffery Zexity. I am in St. Xeaton's Park. Fenny and Plack are breaking a phone box and Fenny called me stupid."

The chief told me to wait for him in the Park. After a couple of minutes the Chief Guard leaped out from behind a bush. "You are under arrest!" roared Chief Wiggum. The two vandals were arrested.

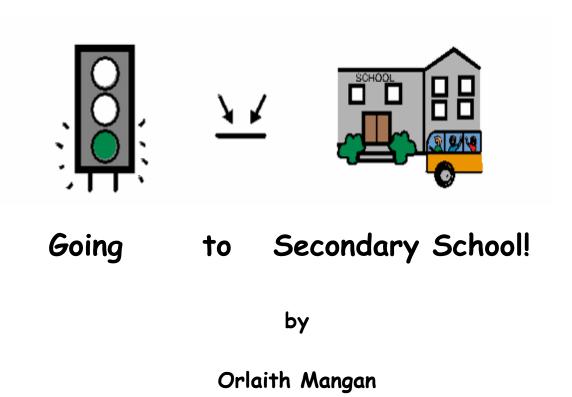
After that I went to see Whitebelt Danny in the AAC Song Contest. Danny won the contest. His song was called "I wrote a story as I waited for my family".

By qc as Danny Millar. Aged 7



Orlaith Mangan Age 12 Ireland

I am a single switch user. I wrote my story using a keyboard on my Dynavox. The Dynabeam puts the words from the Dynavox onto the CoWriter programme on the computer. My resource teacher helped me to structure the story and to fill in the top part of this form. All of the ideas and words in my story are mine. I put a lot of work into my story, I write about twenty words an hour.



My name is Orlaith, I am thirteen years old. I live in Killarney, County Kerry, Ireland. I live with my Mam and Dad and my two brothers, Ruairi and Cathal. I like to swing in my own special swing. I like the trampoline the best. I go to Girl Guides every Friday. My favourite thing is reading, I read at home and at school.

I am in sixth class in Saint Oliver's National School. My teacher is Mister Lynch, he is lovely. I have a resource teacher, her name is Miss Chute she is lovely too. The principal of the school is Mister D'Arcy, I love him because he chats to me. Elizabeth works with me, she helps me with my Dynavox and with lots of things at school.



I am going to secondary school next September. I am excited about it. I have a Dynavox. I talk with my Dynavox. I write with my Dynavox and do my homework on it. I use it for telling people all about me and my family. I like to use my Dynavox to chat. My favourite thing is chatting to people. I talk to Mam and Dad about school. I tell my news to my teacher and Elizabeth most days. I read books on line and I need my Dynavox for that. It is fun to tell jokes from the jokes page! The most important thing I use my Dynavox for is for telling people when I need something. When I go to secondary school people will not know about a Dynavox, I will have to show them how I work it. This will be hard in the beginning but it will get easier after the people there learn about it too.

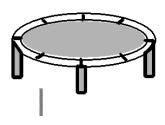


I hope to go to the Killarney Community College to make friends and learn new things. I want to do Geography and Art. I would like to do reading there also. I will have a new uniform too. I am really excited!

## **Key Words**



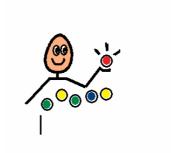
**Swing** 



**Trampoline** 



**Girl Guides** 



Favourite



Reading



Teacher





Dynavox



Chat



Computer



Joke



# Secondary School / Killarney Community College.



Geography



Art



**Excited** 

## Italy Valeria Gervasini

## "LA VOCE DELLO SGUARDO"

Valeria nacque in una grande città italiana. I suoi genitori l'avevano desiderata e l'accolsero con tutto l'amore di cui erano capaci.

L'orgoglio venne quando Valeria fece intuire, attraverso lo sguardo, che sarebbe diventata forte ed avrebbe conquistato il suo spazio vitale.

La sua vita prese il corso di un **torrente** in continua ricerca. Cercò con gli occhi le persone, poi i giochi, poi piccole parole e poi le lettere, con le quali cominciò a presentarsi non solo ai suoi genitori, ma anche ad insegnanti e compagni. Con le conquiste cominciarono anche dubbi. Scoprì che proprio le persone "più specializzate", erano quelle che frenavano le sue sicurezze. Alcune, con modestia,



accettarono di avvicinarsi al suo modo di comunicare, altre la avversarono, ma nonostante ciò, caparbiamente andò avanti.

Valeria divenne piccolo **lago di montagna**. Quando alle scuole medie, cominciò a voler raccontare, attraverso una lavagnetta trasparente, chi era come persona, cominciò a farsi apprezzare non solo per le nozioni che apprendeva, ma per il pensiero personale che cominciava a formarsi.

Divenne **palude** quando, durante il periodo delle scuole superiori, alcuni docenti cercarono di relegarla nella sua condizione di dipendenza: non credevano assolutamente a ciò che lei scriveva.

Un'assistente che valorizzò Valeria, docenti che presero a cuore la sua persona, un'insegnante di ginnastica, che le fece conoscere alcune compagne di altre classi,



Le sorgenti contribuirono inoltre alle conquiste sociali di Valeria.

All'università Valeria conobbe un grande docente, che comunicava con un comunicatore vocale. Questo incontro le ridiede vitalità. Il professore si affezionò a Valeria e l'aiutò a preparare due esami: con lui Valeria si rese conto che c'erano persone che, attraverso la la caa, erano arrivati a conquistarsi un proprio ruolo nella vita.

Riconquistata un po' di fiducia, Valeria con la sua lavagnetta divenne **fiume**. Superò gli esami, si innamorò di un compagno d'università e, per qualche tempo, si sostennero vicendevolmente.

Poi, in un momento di stanca, lasciò l'università. Le compagne, che l'avevano fino ad allora



sostenuta, si erano costruite una vita distanti da lei. Il fiume perse la sua "grandezza".



Valeria si rese conto che era in pericolo. Cosa poteva fare per rimanere persona?

Entrò a far parte di un centro diurno. Le proposero la pittura quasi come alternativa alla comunicazione e lei ci provò. Dal fiume uscì un braccio secondario che si incamminò parallelo al ramo principale che si definisce nei suoi margini: Valeria vuole raccontarsi, partecipare alla vita e ricorda che, ha scritto articoli, con l'aiuto della mamma, su una rivista scientifica e su dei giornali femminili.

Finalmente, si rende conto di cosa può fare per mantenersi "viva": non credere a tutte quelle persone che vogliono farle credere che essere adulta vuole dire "accontentarsi",

vuole mantenere vivi i desideri, non vuole

invecchiare prima del tempo.

Scriverà la sua storia: ha tanto materiale a disposizione. Deve solo trovare uno strumento che le consenta di lavorare in autonomia, perchè il dubbio è sempre presente.

I rami del suo fiume sono arrivati al mare.





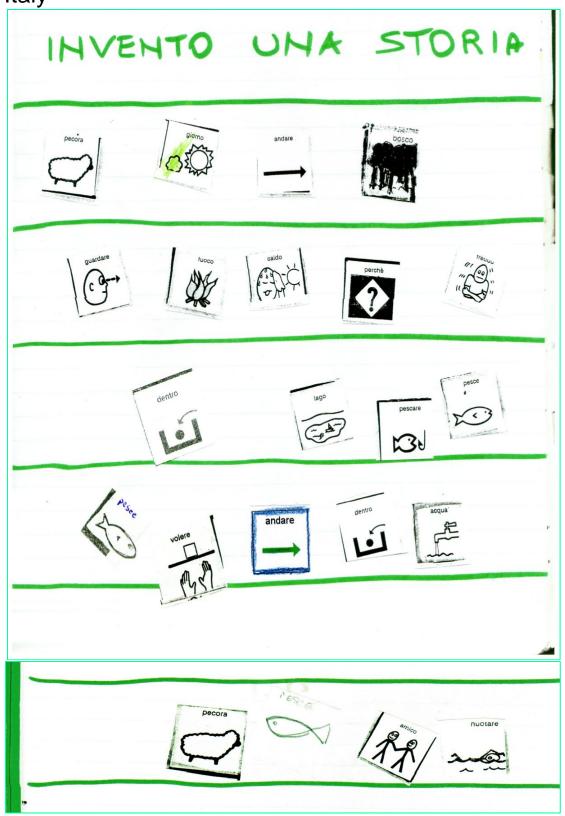


# Silvia Poem Italy

## A TE



Turrini Martina, Age 14 Italy









È SERA . STO ANDANDO A LETTO.









LA GIORNATA È STATA MOLTO LUNGA , A MOMENTI ANCHE NOIOSA .











A PROPOSITO, MI CHIAMO SASKO . SONO UN RAGAZZO DI 16 ANNI .











ABITO A BOLZANO CON LA MIA FAMIGLIA .











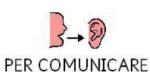
VADO IN GIRO IN CARROZZELLA PER ESSERE IL PIÙ VELOCE DI TUTTI.



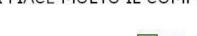








MI PIACE MOLTO IL COMPUTER





UTILIZZO I SIMBOLI PITTOGRAFICI .

















POI PIANO PIANO, SI AVVICINA











CON UN SALTINO ARRIVA SUL MIO LETTO .





CONTINUA AD AVVICINARSI.







SPERO CHE NON ARRIVI UNO SPASMO









PER NON SPAVENTARLO, MA LUI SEMBRA SAPERLO













COME SE MI CONOSCESSE DA SEMPRE, COME SE SAPESSE TUTTO DI ME,



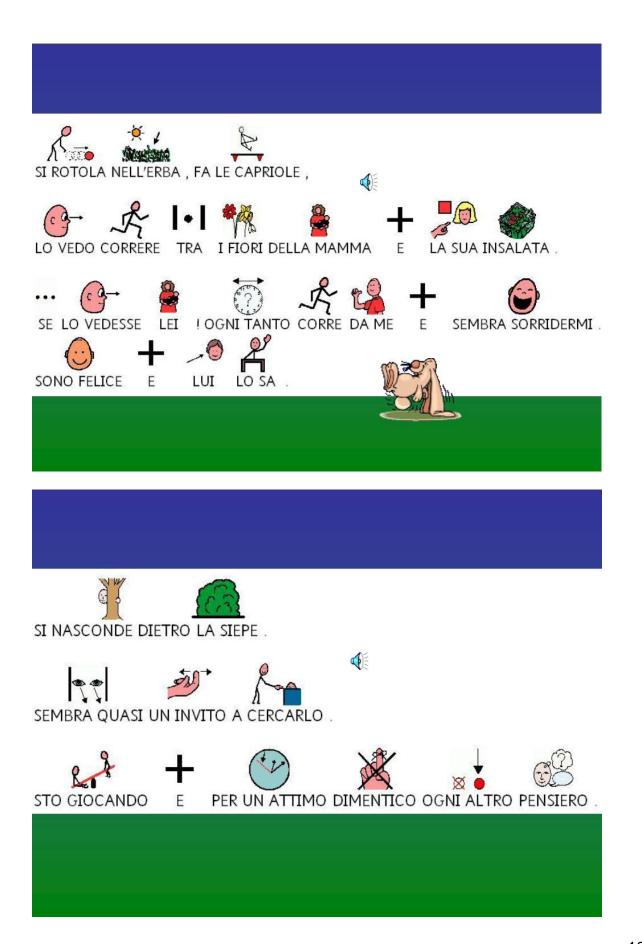




NON HO BISOGNO DI SPIEGARGLI NIENTE .







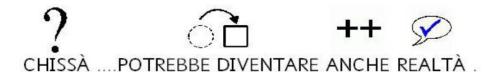




MA IL MIO CONIGLIETTO DOV'È?













# Dan Ngcobo Age 24 South Africa



My name is Dan Ngcobo and this photo of me and my niece was taken at my home in KwaNgcolosi where I live with my parents and my brother and his family. In South Africa, actually in the whole world, they are many people who don't understand about disability and it up to us as people living with disability to come out and use our voices. To say "Hey, we are here and we have something to offer to the world." We can use our voices to make sure that people living with disability get the same respect, love and humanity as everyone else.

## FRIENDS by Dan Ngcobo

One sunny morning John was just sitting outside then his friend Mike came to visit him. "Hey John! How's it?" John just looked at him and nodded his head. "Bro don't tell me you've just got up?" John replied "Okay, Mike I have just got up. Now let me just sit. Actually, you know what? Come lets go and sit next to the road." Off they went. Mike had something to sit on and John was in his motorized wheelchair. "So tell me my friend, how you're really doing?" Mike asked. John just took a breath and said, "I'm alive so that means I'm fine." The two boys laughed. "Oh man! John! Look at that!" John turned his head and

looked. Mike smiled and while he was going up to this good looking girl, he said to John, "Watch and learn my boy."

When he came back he had a big grin on his face. "Man, Oh man! Am I good or what?" John looked at him and asked, "What is her name?" "Umm wait let me check my phone." "She gave you her phone number?" "Oh! John, what are you asking? What is my name? Oh it is Sindi. Actually, let me call her." When John looked at Mike the big grin was gone. "What's wrong?" John asked. Mike looked at John with a disappointed face. "Well it says the number you have dialed ..." John just looked at him and just burst out laughing, "anyway she wasn't that hot." "Oh please Mike! She was hot." Mike looked at John and asked, "Did you want to speak to her?" John just looked down and said, "No man." "Tell me John, What is the hardest for you about your disability?" "Well yes, I can't walk and I can't use my hands very well but man to talk like this. It's really hard."

John grinned, "You know to get a phone call and hear someone asking if you are drunk." "What?" Asked Mike with a perplexed expression on his face. "Yarh! If someone calls a wrong number and it comes to me, Yarh I get told that I'm drunk." "You get told.... you are drunk?. Wow! I don't know how I would handle that." "Believe me, you do learn. I mean I remember trying to call my grandma, I dialed a wrong number and a lady picked up. When she heard the way I'm speaking, she just laughed and told me that I was drunk." "Did you tell her that you are disabled?" "Yarh! I did" "And?" "And she said disabled, and laughed." "Wow I actually can't believe that. How did you feel?" "Man I felt the tears coming down." "Well now you've got this ABC." John laughed and said, "It not ABC, its AAC."

"Does it help you?" "Yarh, I mean look at how I can stand in front of people and tell them about disability. Imagine if I did that without my laptop?" Mike smiled and said, "Yarh I can just imagine, everyone will be like. Well I was with him up to the first line, after that I got lost." The two guys laughed.

## The Ngubane Family by Dan Ngcobo

They were a family of four, Mr. and Mrs. Ngubane and their two children, Paul and Sammy. Paul is six years old and his sister is twenty and in grade ten. One evening while they were watching T.V. Paul asked his father when he was going to start going to school. His father laughed and shouted, "Wait, wait! Turn down the T.V! No, no turn it off! My son is talking." He continued "Now Paul you were saying?"

Paul, thinking that his father was so happy to hear that question, asked again, "When am I starting school?" The parents looked at each other and just burst out laughing. His father told Paul to ask again and when he did, they laughed even more but Sammy didn't laugh. Mrs. Ngubane told Sammy to take her brother to his room. When Sammy picked up her young brother Paul asked, "Sammy do you think dad and mom will take me to school tomorrow?" Sammy looked at him with a long, sad face. "I don't know Paul, I don't know."

Next morning off she went to school. At school that day they had a motivational speaker. He spoke about disability and he talked about AAC. When he finished speaking, Sammy went to him, "Hi, I'm Sammy." I have a six year old brother and he is also disabled. He can't walk and he speaks like you do but I don't think he realises how he sounds". Sipho, the motivational speaker said "Well at six years, I also thought that I spoke like everyone else. So, I think just give him time." "Okay, but my parents don't believe he can go to school". Sipho replied "Have you asked them about school for Paul? Maybe you must ask first to see what they will say."

When she got home Sammy screamed, "Mom! Dad!" "What!" they both shouted back. "Don't tell us that you're getting married now, we had enough jokes last night from your brother for this week." Sammy said "Please listen, today I met a disabled guy who came to give a presentation." "Hang on, hang on didn't you say he was disabled?" "Yes mom, I did." Mr. and Mrs. Ngubani just burst out laughing, "A disabled

person giving a presentation? Please!" "Mom, dad, I'm not making this up and he speaks like Paul." Sammy's dad looked at her. "So your school got someone that can't speak clearly to come to speak to you?" "Yes dad only he didn't use his voice. He had a laptop and the laptop spoke for him." Incredulously Sammy's dad asked "So you are telling us that you saw a talking laptop?" "Yes I did and I got the guy's number." "Well, call him and ask him to visit."

Two days later Sipho came to visit. He showed them the laptop and they were very impressed. Sipho told them that the most important thing they could do for their son was to take him to school. He also told them about Interface and that they would help Paul to communicate using AAC. So they did just as Sipho had said and fifteen years later Paul is doing what Sipho did, teaching people about AAC.

#### Darren van Zyl and Kivashin Pillay South Africa

## Best Friends by Darren van Zyl and Kivashin Pillay

We are best friends. Our names are Darren and Kivi. We are both in the teen group at Whizz Kidz in Pinetown and we spend most of our day at school together. We like different things.

Darren: "I love rugby and I support the Sharks Rugby team".

Kivi: "I love stroking my cat while I watch T.V."

Darren: "My favourite (activity) at school is cooking and baking. I use the electric mixer."

Kivi: "My favourite is computer".

We also both like gardening, helping at Tuckshop and playing soccer with Tsepho at breaktime.

Darren:"I also like to help the little children at Whizz Kidz".

Kivi: "I like to help with the laminating, the computer and the printer."

Darren: "At school the best is music and dancing."

Kivi: "For me, musical chairs is the best fun".

Darren: We both like watching a movie and I like to go to parties.

"On weekends I like to watch rugby on T.V., have braais (barbeque's) with my family and sometimes we go to the beach or a restaurant."

Kivi: On the weekend I play with my cat and help my dad in the workshop, taking things apart and fixing them. I also go horse-riding with my dad and my sister, Tanishka.

We are good friends. Here is our photo. Darren is talking on his Vantage and I am typing on the computer.



### France Mgenge Age 19 South Africa

I'm France, and I live with my parents. I have cerebral palsy. I wrote this story in Word with my headpointer and a laptop. I use the Grid software prgram on my computer to talk to strangers and to do speeches.

#### The Evil Man

Mr. Baker and his family were sitting eating breakfast, "Please pass me salt" said Kelvin. Mr. and Mrs. Baker had 3 children. It wasn't a big family. While they were eating, Kelvin's brother Duncan asked their mother if they could take a ride with their bikes down the road. His mother said "no", so they all kept on asking until his mother said "OK, you can go, but just be careful of the cars". They all were very excited because they did not quite know the place. This place was new for them because they just moved into the new area and house. It was time for their parents to go to work. The three brothers all quickly went and brushed their teeth. When they finished brushing their teeth, they ran and took their bikes and started their little journey. For them it was difficult because they did not know anybody, so the aim was to meet new friends. As they were going Kelvin said "Guys look over there, can you see that house?" They all said "yes". "Let us go there" he said. So they went.

It was quite far. There was no house next to it. This house was surrounded with leaves and big trees. You could see that no one was living there because the condition of the house looked very bad. The house looked like it was going to break down any minutes. When they got there Duncan said to Kelvin "Don't even think about knocking that door because nobody is in. "I can see that you stupid, you don't have to tell me". "But you know what lets go and knock" said Kelvin. They knocked. The door just slid open. "I'm scared" said Mike. "Please can the two of you shut up for once" said Kelvin. Inside it was dark, and you couldn't see anything. They asked Kelvin if they were going to go inside. He answered "Yes". "Hello," Kelvin shouted. No one answered. They went in slowly. As they went in the door closed. They quickly went and tried to get out. Now it was completely dark. They all screamed. Suddenly a voice said SHHHHHHH". Everybody was quite. Suddenly this big white round ball was bouncing. When the ball was bouncing it shined brighter. So this ball made light. Inside the house it was full of rats and spiders. The house was so dirty you couldn't breathe properly. As they looked to the left they saw this man. The man was necked. "Hi Guys what can I do for you" said the man. They answered "we were just passing by and" and what, come into my house without asking" shouted the man. "I told you Kelvin" said Duncan. "I don't like people making noise in my house that is why I don't let anyone cone into my house" said the man. Duncan asked "why are you necked?" The man said "because I'm the EVIL MAN". As soon as he said his name, the whole room just turned different color and there was a strong hot wind. Kelvin shouted to the evil man "How are we going to get out of here?" They knew that they were in trouble. The three brothers made a plan. They just tried to break open the door. Eventually it creaked open. They ran outside and never looked back. And they never rode their bikes down that road again.

# Hamilton Seolwane Hamilton Makes Friends South Africa

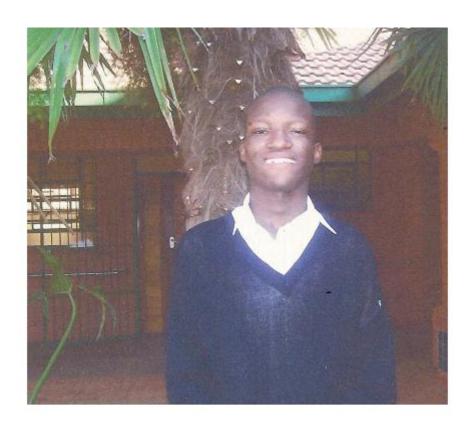


Hamilton





Author: Hamilton Seolwane



Му



is Hamilton.

I am 15 years old.

I go to Sunrise



I want to





a



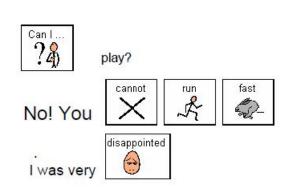


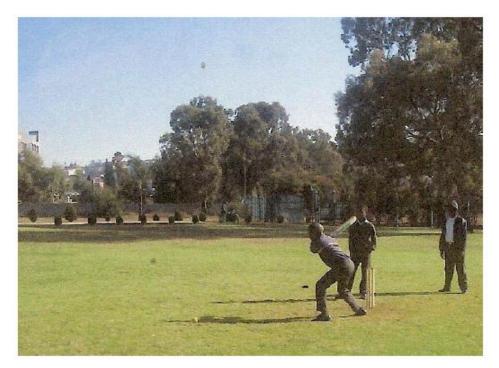
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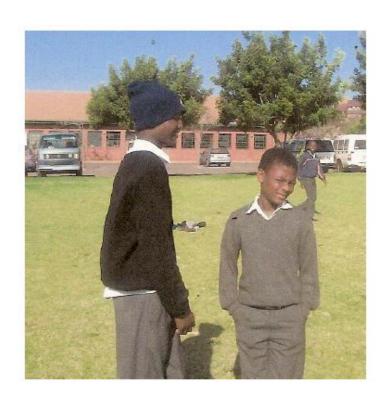




On Wednesday, the



were playing cricket.





play?

No! You







l am very





Му





us about talents.



are all

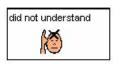




must not discriminate!



Thabiso



the









me to







Now



are



## Lebogang Sehako Age 29 South Africa

I'm Lebogang. I have Cerebral Palsy and live in Kuruman, South Africa. I am Deputy Chairman of a disabled people's organisation. I wrote this story in Word with my laptop. I use the Grid software program on my computer to talk to strangers and to do speeches.

#### **COMMUNICATION DEVICE**

What is life without you?
Oh technology I love you very much
Because you have made me progress
Cos I am disabled guy
And I cant do anything for myself
That is why I thank you communication device

I am struggling to make my voice heard
I cant speak properly that is why I use you.
Oh technology, what is life without you!
I extrominate\*. I write with my communication device, without it I make no friends No one helps me like you do.

Lebogang Sehako

\*synonym for extrapolate

#### Martin Pistorius South Africa

#### **Tshepo and Sam**

By Martin Pistorius

Tshepo lived with his mom, dad, sister Lindwe and his granny in the city. A few years ago Tshepo and his family were driving back from visiting aunty Gloria when they had an accident. Tshepo's brain got hurt in the accident. He spent months in the hospital getting better. He now uses a wheelchair to move around and talks by pointing at pictures in a communication book.

Every morning Tshepo's mom took Lindwe to school and every morning Tshepo wished that he could also go to school. One day Tshepo's dad brought a brown box home. Tshepo wondered what it was. His dad opened the box and took out a machine with lots of pictures on it. "This is a talking machine", he said. A talking machine? thought a very puzzled Tshepo. "Let me show you". Tshepo watched as his dad pressed on the pictures and then the machine spoke the message. Cool! Thought Tshepo. "You will soon be going to school Tshepo and you will need a talking machine".

Tshepo went to school everyday. He loved it, but none of the children wanted to play with him. This made Tshepo feel very lonely and sad.

One day Tshepo's teacher Miss Cassey said: "class I have a surprise, tomorrow we will be going to the zoo". Everyone was very excited!

The next day everyone got into a big bus and went to the zoo. They saw the elephants, the giraffes, the lions and even a snake. Suddenly somebody screamed: "Run! everybody run, Sam the gorilla has escaped!"

Everybody was so scared and ran away and forgot Tshepo. "Where is Tshepo?" "He is still inside the zoo Miss Cassey" said Paul. "Oh no!"

Sam looked up and saw Tshepo. Sam started walking towards Tshepo. Tshepo didn't know what to do. He pressed hello and his talking machine said "Hello there". Sam stopped and looked at this strange boy in a chair with shiny wheels.

Sam crept closer and sniffed Tshepo. Tshepo pressed some more pictures and his talking machine said: "my name is Tshepo, how are you today?" Sam got a fright and jumped backwards.

Tshepo pressed some more pictures and his talking machine said, "don't be scared,

it's just my talking machine". Sam came carefully closer and sniffed the small boy and his talking machine. Sam looked closely at Tshepo's talking machine. Tshepo said: "look if I press this, it says Hello". Now you try. Sam looked at this strange talking machine and then at Tshepo and again at the talking machine. Sam then pressed hello and the talking machine again said: "hello".

Tshepo then showed Sam all the things his talking machine could say. The two of them sat there for an hour. The next thing Tshepo heard a helicopter and a lady screamed: "Oh no! He is eating him!" and she fainted.

A police man shouted: "Don't worry son, we will save you". Behind him stood a big crowd of people, even the television news was there. Tshepo saw all the police men with their guns, he started waving. The police said: "get ready to shoot". Just then Miss Cassey yelled: "no wait he is okay, look!"

She then walked slowly towards Tshepo and Sam. Everybody held their breath! "Hello Miss Cassey, this is Sam he is my friend" said Tshepo with a big smile. "Sam said he was just very lonely in his cage, he is very sorry for scaring everyone".

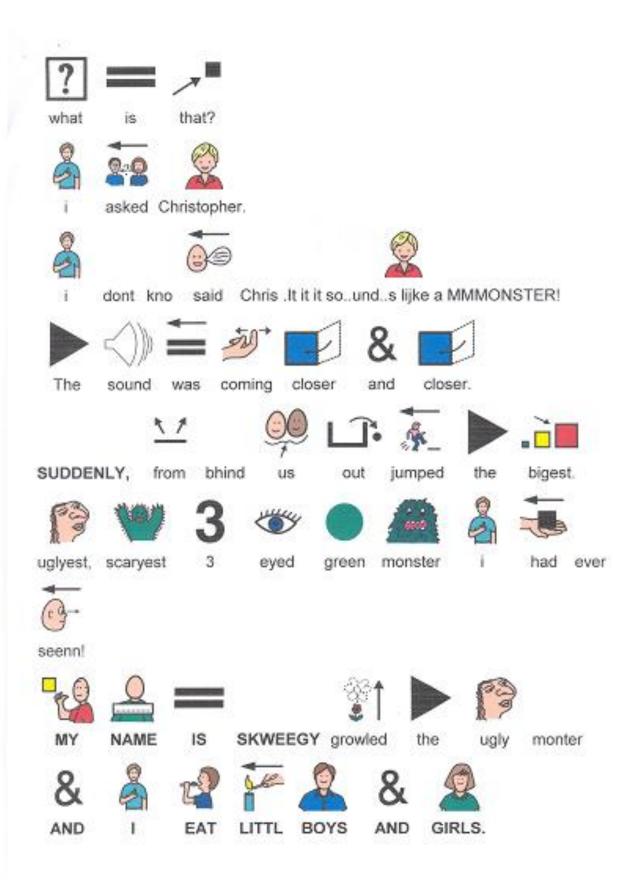
"How do you know that?" asked Miss Cassey. "He told me" said Tshepo. "Don't be silly Tshepo, everyone knows gorilla's can't talk". Come on let's go before you get hurt" said Miss Cassey. "No wait I will show you, we talk by using my talking machine" said Tshepo. Sure enough, Sam really did know how to talk. As the three of them talked the crowd slowly and quietly gathered around them. Whispers of "wow", "awesome", "cool" and "amazing", were heard as everybody watched and listened.

That night Tshepo and Sam were on the television news and the next day everybody at school wanted to talk to Tshepo. Tshepo and Sam the gorilla became instant celebrities. Tshepo didn't care too much about that, he was just happy that now he had friends and people to talk and play with and he visits Sam every Saturday.

By Martin Pistorius – www.mart.co.za

# Matthew Jonck Age 8 The Monster Named Skweegy









SKWEEGY!!!!

we screamed !!!



### PLEES DONT EAT US!!!!!!





goodmorning Matthew



says mum,













Nw who is skweegy that i heard yu calling?













Phew!

had a very bad dream mum abot the





uglyst monster.



silly

me!!!!!

### Melissa Gevers South Africa

#### **Stupid**

#### in 26 letters

#### When I can't communicate, I feel .....

Asinine

Brainless

Clumsy

Dumb

**Empty** 

Frustrated

Guilty

Half-witted

Irritated

Just like an idiot

Klueless

a Loser

Mad

a Nothing

O' so stupid

Pathetic

Queer

Really stupid

Stupid

Terrible

Uneducated

Very stupid

Weird

eXcluded

Yucky

a Zombie

by

#### **Melissa Gevers**

# MEDICAL BLUNDER OF NOTE - A TRUE STORY by Paul Burdett South Africa

My name is Paul Burdett. I have my own small business selling plastic-ware and live in Pinetown, near Durban on the east coast of South Africa. Addington Hospital is a large, general, public hospital that overlooks the warm Indian Ocean in Durban. I am an outpatient of Addington and go there whenever I need medical attention.

Soon after my twentieth birthday, long before I got my Pathfinder, I went to Addington to see the doctor. He prescribed some medication but when I went to collect it there was a long queue so my mom suggested I go for a ride on my motorised scooter along the beachfront while she waited in line at the pharmacy. I was riding along, enjoying the hot sun and watching the surfers when all of a sudden a lady jumped out at me and grabbed my scooter. The next moment there were three doctors around me. They thought I was having a seizure and while I was trying to tell them I am cerebral palsied they rushed me into Casualty at Addington and injected me with Valium. As I was still fighting, trying to tell them I had C.P. they gave me another injection of Valium! Hours later when my mother eventually found me I was "lights out." I woke up – two days later!

#### South Africa

### The Strange Kangaroo

# by Sam Byrne with help from his classmates & Jackie

My story is about me, Sam. If you like holidays then you will like reading about mine. Holidays are such fun. Here is what happened to me during my December holidays.

My home is in South Africa so going to Australia was a big adventure and very far away. It took a long and boring time to get there. All I wanted to do when I got to Australia was to rest for a while in the garden. The house we were staying in was great as the sea came right past the bottom of the garden. I really liked having the sea at the end of the garden.

I woke up very excited one day as we were going to the zoo and I would see my first kangaroo. I ate my breakfast fast. I wanted everyone else in the house to get dressed and be ready to go much faster than they did. We had just arrived at the zoo when the bright sunny day changed and it started pouring with rain. The rain came down hard and we got very wet. The water was rushing past my wheelchair wheels like a river. When the rain slowed down we put on funny white raincoats. I thought we looked like aliens.

Now comes the strange part. I heard a kangaroo talk to me. There were two kangaroos on either side of me. I noticed that one of the kangaroos was trying to push the switch of my AlphaTalker. The kangaroo had put its front legs on my lap-tray and was looking at my AlphaTalker. "Hey, what is that funny looking box you are using?" I looked at my mom. Could she hear the kangaroo talking?

The kangaroo looked up at me. "So, are you going to tell me what it is?" I pretended not to notice. I could not move away as I was not in my motorised wheelchair. The kangaroo spoke again. "Ok. I get it. You can't

use your mouth to talk so you use this machine." "Now, can you tell me whether a lion would eat a kangaroo? I heard your mom say you were from South Africa. I want to visit there but not if your lions will eat me. "

I did not know what to tell it. Would our lions eat a kangaroo? Maybe if the kangaroo ran really fast the lion would not catch it. Just then my mom moved me away from the kangaroo. I wanted to tell it to be careful if it visited us. I decided to send an email to my friend Caitlyn in South Africa and ask her about it. The next morning I read her answer.

#### Dear Sam

First of all I don't think you should tell anyone else about the kangaroo talking to you. I am sure you understand this.

I think that our big fierce lions would eat a kangaroo.

All our friends in class say hurry back.

See you soon.

Caitlyn

It was almost time for my holiday in Australia to end. Bye Australia. I hope that the kangaroos do not decide to visit my country. I would not like to hear the news that a lion ate a friendly kangaroo.

### Sindy Rebola Age 35 South Africa

My name is Sindy Rebelo.

I live in Port Edward. With my mother. It is quite lonely here and i would like other disabled people to visit me,

I enjoy painting. Especially in water colour and i also

Enjoy fabric painting. I painted this myself although the design was not my own.

I watch dvd's that my brother's friend copies for me. I love the seaside. We can see dolphins and whales in the sea from the beach.



Zach Joubert Age 37 South Africa

I'm suffering from Frederick's Ataxia, I've started using AAC systems in 1994. I'm currently using a PF1 by PRC. My story says it all.

#### Adventure on Oppikoppi.

My name is Zach Joubert. I'm the person that has been supposedly forgotten during a Rock & Roll music festival, namely Oppikoppi, in a bar. It was held in the bushveld near Northam, in the Northern Province of South Africa in August 2005 over the long weekend.

I have Friedrich's ataxia, which causes difficulty in using my muscles throughout my body. My voice and balance is strongly affected by it, but it has not deterred me from living my life to its utmost.

I'd had my birthday on the 31 July. About 2 weeks before I had my birthday, I'd send out during a pal's friendly get-together an invitation to the guests to come and celebrate my birthday at the forthcoming Oppikoppi music festival, that was being held the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> August. I had been there 3 times before. I had organized with 2 other friends for my stay and lift to the venue. The 1<sup>st</sup> of August my friends phoned me and told me that their car had broken down but they would get a lift with someone else. I just have to organize my own transport to and from the music venue. I had to contact them on arrival so that they would take me to their camping-spot. I'd managed to get transport from a taxi company by searching on the Internet. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, my friends and I met at another place and planned the Oppikoppi outing.

The 5th of August finally arrived. I drove around like a formula 1 racing driver on my electric wheelchair to get my things finished for the planned long-weekend. At about 17h40 another buddy arrived at my place to help me pack my things and to drop me off at the taxi's meeting place. My gear consisted of a tent, clothes put in a nylon back, manual wheelchair and food in a cool bag. I arrived there at 18h20 and climbed aboard with 7 strangers in a combi (van) with a trailer. Everything was loaded onto the trailer. At about 18h30 we were on our way to Oppikoppi.

During the trip I tried to get to know my fellow passengers. It was almost impossible because I have left my Pathfinder at home for security reasons. I had taken along a qwerty alphabet board, a cell phone and a notebook with a pen to try and communicate. To make things worse, I was dead tired, had no light as darkness descended on us and the road surface was terrible. Eventually I learned

that the 2 passengers, the driver and co-driver were all engaged. There were 3 girls from overseas in front of me and beside me there were a guy with his girlfriend from Cape Town.

After a bumpy ride of about 2 and a half hours, we arrived at our venue, The Oppikoppi music festival. At the entrance our festival and camping tickets were taken and each one of us were marked by clamping a black piece of cloth around one arm. Everywhere inside the camping site, there were thousands of people talking, braaiing (barbeque) and enjoying themselves. There were hundreds of fires flickering between the endless oases of thorn trees in the campsite of about 25 square kilometers. We decided to be dropped at the nearest empty camping spot to the entrance to the music sites. We've found it on the corner of Silang Malabe road and Oom Piet Duik road. As we were unloading our suitcases, my wheelchair and camping gear from the trailer, I asked someone to phone my friends and tell them where they should look for me to take me to their camping spot. The person tried to contact them via my cell phone, but only got that the number he dialed was busy and if he would leave a message. The person then eventually did leave a message and departed. The departure time and place, back to Pretoria, were given to each passenger by the lift organizers. The lift organizers together with the combi and its trailer disappeared into the night. The passengers then got to put up their tents, while I'd settled nearby in my wheelchair, waiting for my friends to come and pick me up. I tried to entertain myself by looking at the different tents and watching what the other campers were doing. I was eventually asked by inquiring campers if I'm helped? I tried answering their questions with my alphabet board and stored messages on my cell phone. Most of the campers thought I'm deaf and tried spelling what they wanted to know on my alphabet board. I'd put the following text message onto my cell phone: "I can hear you, just can't speak clearly." Another hour and a half passed with me waiting in vain for my friends to pick me up, so I tried phoning them again. I could only get their cell phones voicemails. For the next half hour I could only to get their voicemails. I had to eventually switch over to the sms function as my pre-paid airtime was exhausted.

After waiting for another half hour, I smsed a mutual friend, and explained the situation to him and asked him to try and contact them. A quarter of an hour later, I'd received the mutual friend's sms that he had also gotten only their voicemails. He told me to put up my tent on the spot and that he would try to made contact with them.

With the help of to 2 strangers, I began putting up my tent. Halfway through the process, we discovered that there were just 2 tent poles and not 3. It had been realized that 1 of the tent poles had gotten left behind at my home in Pretoria by me. Luckily we've managed to put the tent up despite the missing tent pole. I was then put inside the tent together with my belongings. The 2 strangers then disappeared in the dusty road on their way to the stages entrance. Disappointed, cold, tired and in despair I'd waited for any sign of my lost friends. At about 01h00. I had decided to try and sleep.

Every few minutes thereafter, I had been woken by the lights of a passing car or some campers with flashlights. At the 8 music stages, every speaker was put to its fullest to try and attract the biggest crowd. You could only imagine the ghoulish sounds evolving from the stages and rolling through the campsite. A deep sleep overcame me at about 03h30. At 05h45, I was awakened by the morning cold. After gathering my thoughts, trying to puzzle out the wellbeing of my friends that should have come to pick me up but didn't, I'd decided to go outside armed with my alphabet board, cell phone and pen & paper around the neck. Outside the day was breaking.

As 'lady luck' would have had it, I'd discovered that my tents outside was put wrongly with the outside entrance at my back with the insides entrance in front of me. When I'd eventually managed to crawl out, I received an even greater shock. My tent was standing halfway in the farm road. I couldn't believe my luck as during the short time, I hadn't been run over by the traffic.

2 nearby campers, realized my helplessness in shifting my tent on my own to a safer place, helped and offered to make place for it near theirs about 10 meters away. I'd accepted their offer and my tent was moved. I'd smsed my tents new position to my missing friends. The mutual friend also had received my tents new position. The mutual friend, whom had unsuccessfully tried to get hold of our missing friends, eventually got hold of the campsites security and told them of my dilemma. They had to come and hear if everything was okay with me. At 10h00 the campsites security come and asked me if I'm okay and offered me a lift to the medical tent. As I had a full bladder and the campsites toilets were impossible for me to use on my own, I'd accepted their offer. After making arrangements with nearby campers that I'm at the medical tent should someone come looking for me, I was put onto their bakkie and off we went.

Once dropped off by the medical tent, I'd hurried off to the nearest toilet. The medical tent was very busy. Most people had or a hangover, a thorn in the flesh or ailment problem. As can be expected was the medical personnel were afraid of the situation into which they found themselves while trying to communicate with me. After a while they started understanding my way of communication. Some of the festivals people came to take my personal info so that it could be broadcasted from the music stages that my friends should look for me at the medical tent. I'd waited patiently, helping the medical personnel where I can, till 13h45, but my missing friends did not show up.

I then decided to go and watch rugby with some of the medical personnel. If there is something I like, its rugby. The game was shown on a big screen at the beer tent next to the medical tent. South Africa was playing against New-Zeeland at Newlands in Cape Town and had won the game, 22 – 16. After the game, I'd started looking for my tent with belongings that I'd left that morning with some campers. At first I couldn't find my tent and belongings. After enquiring for it at a few campers and being pushed or pushing a wheelchair by myself on the uneven dirt roads for about 3 kilometres, I'd heard that someone had left a tent and backpack at the medical tent. It was my tent and backpack that were left by the

medical tent. On my way back to the medical tent, a young girl gave me a handful of coins because I must have looked like a beggar.

At the medical tent, an awful surprise awaited me. A newspaper reporter had heard about the dilemma. Reluctantly I'd agreed to an interview. The reporter had asked me only two questions namely what's the matter with me and where do I come from. I answered the questions by using my alpha board. The reporter then disappeared.

Tired, frustrated and disappointed at the outturn of events was what I'd felt. I'd asked for permission to sleep in the medical tent which I did get. Just like the night before I couldn't sleep immediately.

The Sunday morning, I'd stayed inside my sleeping bag till 07h30. At 08h45 I'd decided to phone an old friend of mine, George van Heerden. I'd got hold of him and explaining the situation to him. We then decided that it was best that he'd come from Centurion and take me back home to Pretoria. Centurion is just outside of Pretoria. About 14h00, he arrived together with a other friend, Quinton. Sadly I'd said goodbye to my new friends before taking the road back. We were driving in the wrong direction but eventually had gotten our direction sorted out and back to Pretoria we went. I'd arrived back home dirty and worrying about my missing friends.

That Monday morning, I'd almost had a heart attack. On every lamp pole in Lynnwood highway, a photo of me trying to communicate at Oppikoppi was portrayed with the following headline 'Person in wheelchair forgotten in bar'.

On the funny side now I could brag that I'd had been put on the 'Beeld' frontpage together with Riaan Oberholtzer (SARVU Rugbyboss) and Jake White (Rugby trainer).

My missing Oppikoppi friends had phoned me the 9<sup>th</sup> of August. They'd been experiencing sim card problems at the Oppikoppi music festival. I want to thank them for the expierences gained at Oppikoppi. You can't buy that expierence from anywhere else. I would love to go again. Oppikoppi is sure not meant for the faint hearted!

Oppikoppi aventurer Zach Joubert

### Spain

## Ramón Jesús Pérez Julián AGE: 44 Spain

Una experiencia con el Bliss, sistema de comunicación en mi vida.

Soy Ramón Jesús Pérez Julián, soy paralítico cerebral; sufrí asfixia cerebral al nacer; de ahí, mis neuronas que se encargan del habla y del movimiento están muy afectadas. Esto también me afecta en el habla: sólo emito sonidos, letras que mi familia y algunas personas entienden.

Mi vida escolar empezó en mi casa; aprendía lo que podía. No me resultó difícil, ya que mis padres eran profesores de Primaria y me animaba viendo cómo mis hermanos iban aprendiendo yendo al colegio.

En 1989 fui a un centro de discapacitados. Allí es donde conocí el sistema de comunicación Bliss. Tardé tres meses en manejarlo y después se abrió todo un mundo de posibilidades para mí.

Tampoco puedo mover las manos y tecleo con un puntero adaptador que llevo en la cabeza. Lo utilizo desde hace veinte años.

Aparte de esto, hacía otras actividades como pintar y tirar saquitos de arena a una alfombra que tenía dibujada en una diana.

Terminé mis estudios primarios y ya era mayor para empezar la Secundaria. En mi país, España, hay unas pruebas para entrar en la Universidad para mayores de 25 años.

Por aquel entonces existía el servicio militar: iban los chicos de 20 años. Los que no querían ir hacían labores diversas: una de ellas era acompañar a los alumnos discapacitados a la Universidad. Elegí la carrera de Derecho. Se daba la feliz circunstancia de que en mi ciudad, Castellón, hay transporte adaptado, con lo cual sólo tenía que estudiar, prestar atención en clase e integrarme con mis compañeros.

El Bliss fue fundamental para comunicarme con los demás. Hice buenos amigos; me comunicaba con ellos mediante el sistema alternativo. Me llevaban al bar; olvidaba que era discapacitado. Me iba solo al baño a lavarme la cara; otras veces se suspendía la clase y nos bajábamos a la cafetería. Entonces sacaba mi

Bliss y me ponía a hablar con ellos. Era muy divertido conversar de mil cosas y sentir que era uno más; yo no notaba que era discapacitado.

En clase, incluso me atrevía a intervenir cuando los profesores preguntaban algo; y alguno se acercaba a mi mesa a ver el Bliss y tenían la santa paciencia de entenderme.

Una noche quedé con un cuidador del Centro en el que estoy: me invitó a salir y fuimos a un pub. Era la primera vez que salía de "copas"; pusimos el tablero de símbolos sobre la mesa y empezamos a hablar. No pasó mucho tiempo cuando vino el dueño del local a preguntarnos si aquello era un juego. Me hizo mucha gracia.

Cuando terminé la carrera de abogado me dieron una beca: es como un trabajo. Me duró un año. He estado dos años buscando trabajo por Internet. Como no he encontrado nada, actualmente me dedico a la investigación jurídica por mi cuenta y tengo muchas expectativas.

# United Kingdom Alan Martin

#### **SECRETS** by Alan Martin

Joe lived in Liverpool. He went to a little school, with a big, untidy garden.

Joe was a happy, friendly boy. Joe was in a small class. Some of Joe's classmates used wheelchairs, and had no speech, like Joe.

Lots of people told Joe their secrets. Joe had a brilliant memory!!

One day, Joe was playing football in the school playground. He hit the ball very hard, with the wheel of his chair. The ball flew high into the sky.

When it came down, it landed on the head of the gardener.

He said "who kicked that?" Joe wheeled up to him. He signed "sorry!"

The gardener said "it's OK. I've got a tough head." Joe laughed.

"What football team do you support Joe?" said the gardener.

Joe pointed to his red T shirt. "So!!you're a RED are you?"

"Football's boring" the gardener said. Joe signed "thumbs down" to that idea.

"Can you keep a secret?" said Lotszy. (that was the gardener's name)

he looked mysterious. I've never told this to anyone. I'm safe telling you Joe. You can't tell people. Then Lotszy told Joe a really ENORMOUS!!secret. Joe went all hot and cold. He felt faint. It was a really HUGE secret.

Time passed, and Joe stayed at the same school, in the same class, with the same friends. Some evenings Joe went to a club. He made lots more friends there. His "club friends" wanted Joe to talk to them. They collected money. They bought a communication aid for Joe.

He liked his new voice. Joe and his speech therapist worked very hard to learn how to use it.

What do you think Joe said first? He said "YES" and "NO" because those are most important. "HELLO" and "GOODBYE." "EXCELLENT" and "RUBBISH." "LIVERPOOL" and "FOOTBALL." Then, he began putting words together. "I am a vegetarian." "I like chocolate milkshake."

The others in his class, (who could not speak) wanted to talk, like Joe.

Then, Joe remembered something. Now was the time to tell the gardener's story! Joe went to find Lotszy. He told the gardener about his friends.

Lotszy did not speak. He picked up a big spade. He went to find the teacher. They started digging. They shouted for HELP.

"Come and see what we've found." The gardener, and the teacher, were covered in mud. They opened a big, rusty old chest. It was full of treasure.

Joe's school got a big reward.

Joe said "buy communication aids for my friends, please!"

"What a great idea!" said everyone.

It cost lots of money to buy all the aids.

Joe got a reward too. With the reward money that was left, his school bought Joe a season ticket to Liverpool football matches. The gardener got an electric lawnmower. The school garden was never untidy again.

THE END.

Alexandra Upton, Krishna Magan, Ellis Jones and Callum Gooding United Kingdom





# The lost class



Ву

Alexandra Upton, Krishna Magan, Ellis Jones and Callum Gooding





# It's eleven o'clock on Thursday morning. Jane goes to meet the class.



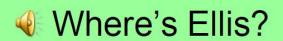




# Where are they?



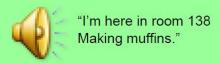






(Sound of electric mixer)







# Where's Elaine?



(Sound of ball bouncing)





"I'm here in the courtyard playing ball."



# Where's Callum?



(Sound of Callum playing music)







# Where's Caroline?



"I'm here in the parent room having a meeting."



(Sound of typing)



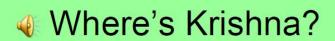


(Sound of blow dryer)











(Sound of lively dance music)



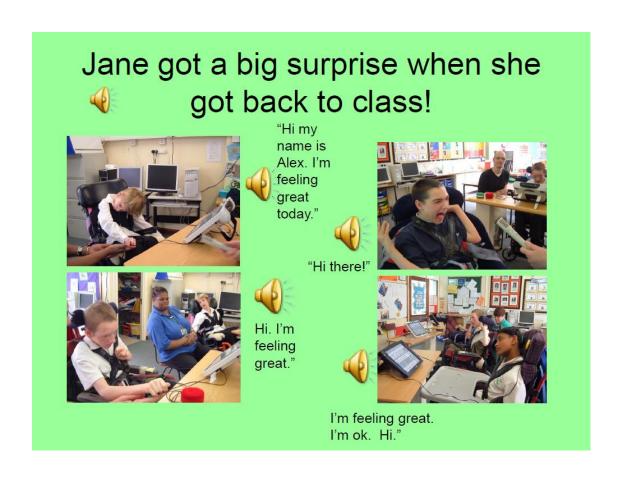
"I'm here in the hall. I've been dancing."



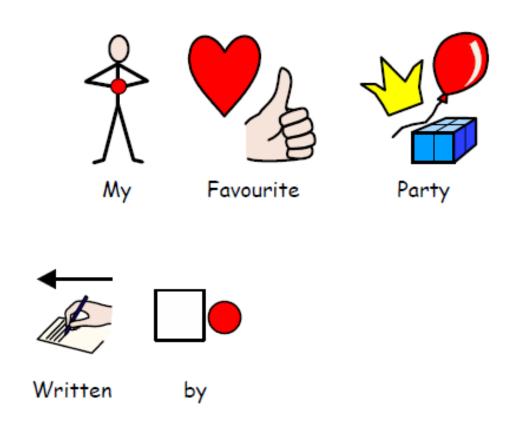
"Don't worry. The clock is wrong. The class will be here in five minutes."

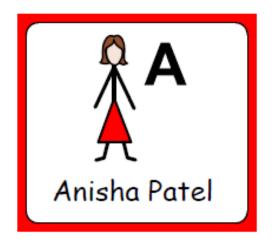


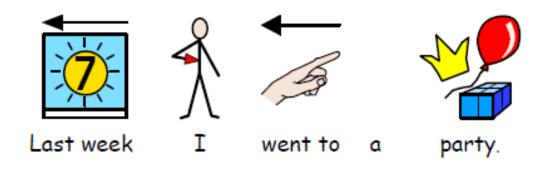


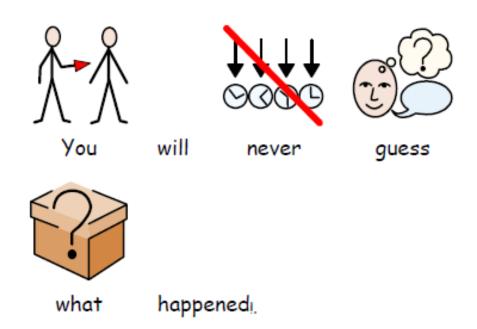


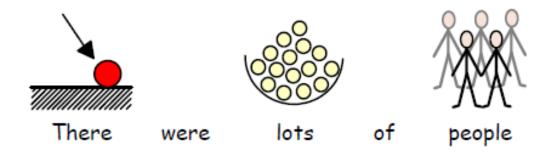
# Anisha Patel United Kingdom



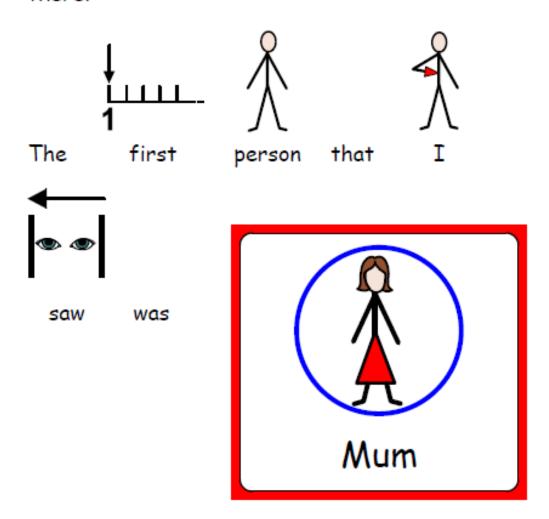


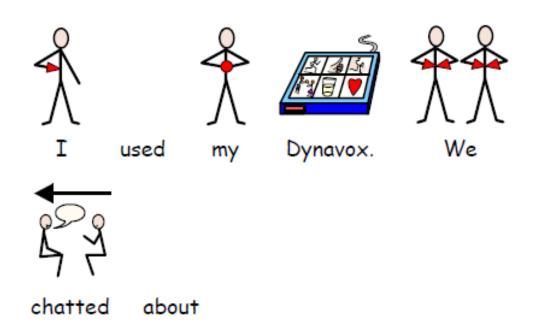




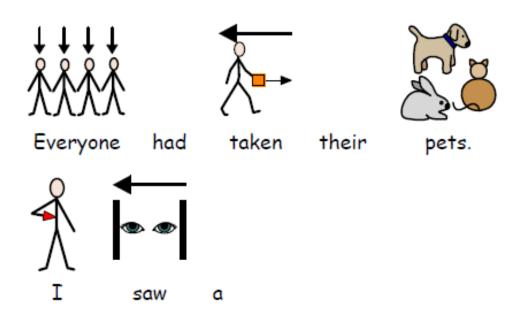


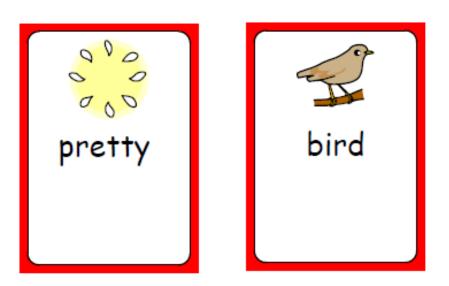
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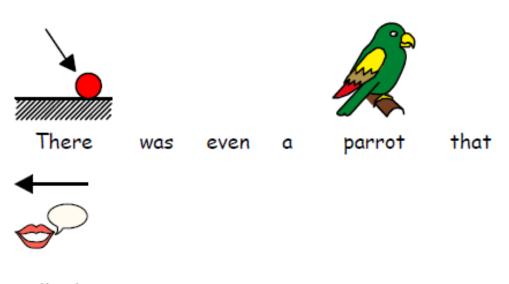




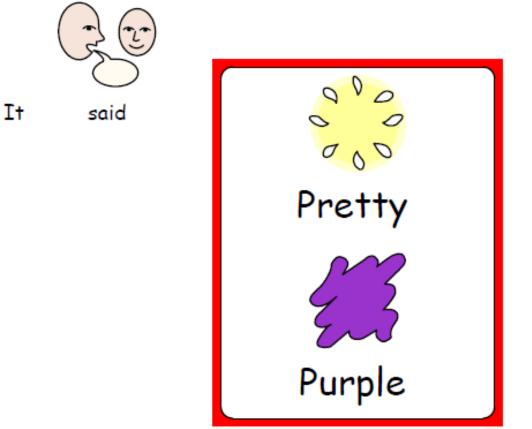


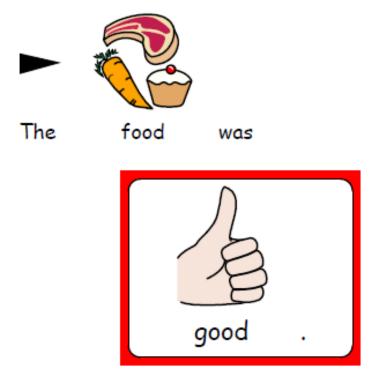


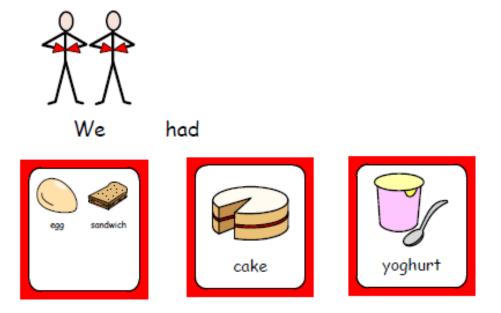


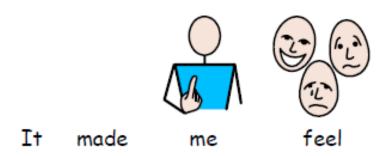


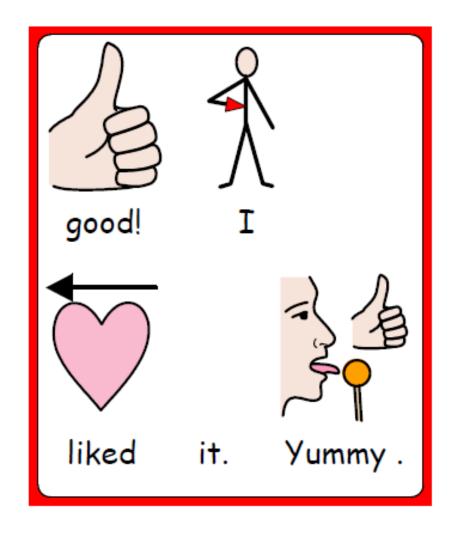
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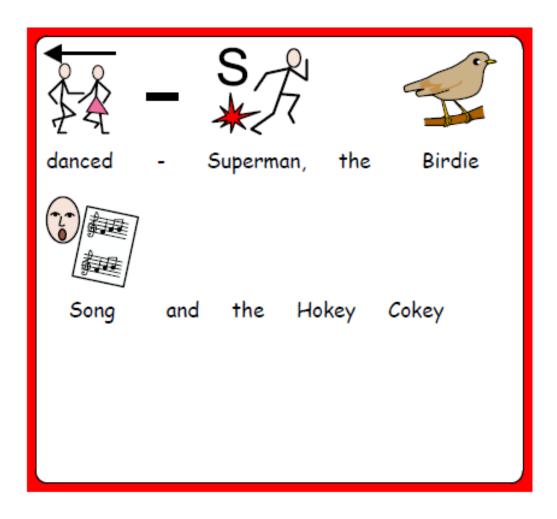










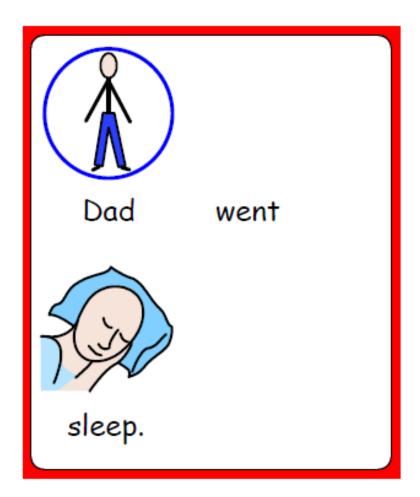


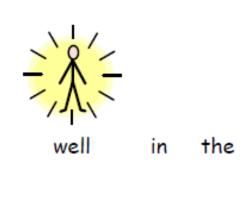


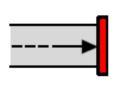
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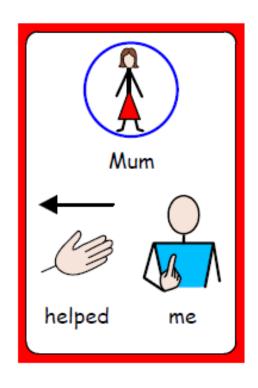


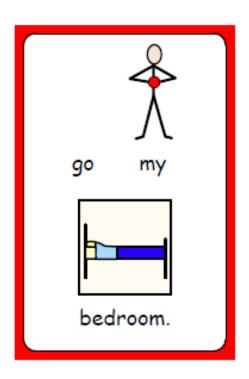




end because

But it turned out





## Ashley Baxter age 23 UK

My name is Ashleigh Baxter. I used my Tellus to write my story. Sarah and Katie from school helped me. I enjoyed writing my story.

The Big Fight by Ashleigh Baxter

My name is Ashleigh Baxter. I am twenty-three years old. I love the amazing singer Shayne Ward. He sings romantic songs and is gorgeous. I am a Manchester United Supporter. I use a Tellus, a communication book and my voice to talk to people. I live with my Mum and Dad in Eltham in London. My parents like to listen to me talk about Shayne Ward. I use my Shayne Ward page on my Tellus to talk about him a lot.



Me and my Tellus

Georgina is my best friend. I've known Georgina since I was eight years old. I met her on a farm. Georgina is beautiful, but very dangerous!



Me (left) and Georgina

Georgina and I are on our way to have dinner at an Indian restaurant. We are walking past a florist when we see Shayne Ward inside. We play his music on my Tellus and dance around. Shayne sees me and says: 'hello.'



Shayne Ward

'Hey, Sweetheart,' I reply, using my Tellus. 'How you doing?' 'I'm fine,' he replies.

Georgina turns to me. 'Go away!' she says. She wants Shayne Ward all to herself!

'No, you go away Georgina!' I reply, on my Tellus. I think Georgina is being boring.

I throw a bunch of red roses at Georgina. She gets hurt on her face and hands. Her heart is also hurt because she doesn't want me to steal Shayne Ward. She is really angry and shouts 'buzz off!' at me.



Shayne begins to sing *If That's OK With You.* It's my favourite song, but not Georgina's. Her favourite song is *Breathless*. Georgina and I both join in singing though. I use my Tellus to sing because I have all of Shayne Ward's songs on it.

I'm angry with Georgina and never speak to her again. I don't know why. Shayne tells me I've got gorgeous hair. My hair is blond and short.

'You have a nice smile,' I reply. 'I love you.'

Shayne and I decide to go to the Indian restaurant that Georgina and I were going to go to. Georgina is even angrier than she was before! She goes to the funfair to cheer herself up.

At the Indian restaurant I order food for Shayne and I using my Tellus. We both have curry. Afterwards we go home and watch *High School Musical*.

'I love you,' Shayne says.

'I love you too,' I tell Shayne.

Shayne gives me a big kiss. It makes me feel really happy.

# Barry Smith United Kingdom

#### We have a voice

#### Who I am

My name is Barry Smith and I am 29 years old, I have a Physical Disability called Ceribel Paulsy. People might wonder how I feel about C P, it is only a part of who I am. You may wonder why I think this way, many people are not happy in this world. In my opinion I need some support in my life, it gives people a Job and they get know me as a person. My lightwriter helps them understand what I am saying.

Some people walk past and pat and me on my head because, they see my Wheelchair first and the Communication Aide 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### In a meeting?

In the meeting I am the only person their using a Communication aide and it take time for me to program in what I want to say and people don't have time to hear you out. I do not think this is right. In my opinion everyone at the meeting should made aware someone is using a Speaking Aide it should be pointed out it may take a bit longer for me to say something. It takes time to program my ACC and voice my opinion.

#### What I would like to see?

In the UK, people are not aware about speaking aides. By getting more education like making a TV Program and having people who are disabled to high light both matters how they lived it would give people a better understand about Communication Aide and way they work. their are so many different types of Aide on the marker now, and they can be adapted to meet people needs.

#### Link Up

You can link you Communication aide up, get internet access, and have a voice hearing all over the World if you are online. My hand is not that bad thank the Lord. I have Keys over lay to stop me press the wrong Keys and a Joystillck Plus to use as a mouse to over come my physical disability in my hands.

#### Our voice

People can find a way around their computer by connecting a communication aide so they can get access to both if people can't use their hands because of their physical disability is so bad they can using your Communication aide for the computing, you could go onto the net to speak to differ people.

#### Hear us out

Over the year when I am speak to people by using my own voice sometime, I personal feel some people beaten they know what I am speaking about. You may asking yourself do I like us. No because I feel the personal do not want to know what I am saying to them.

# Beaumont Specialist FE College -- Oliver Refuerzo, David Sanderson, Matthew Chamberlain, Ben Hartley and Craig Smith, Ages 20 United Kingdom

This was a group entry, by students at Beaumont specialist FE college in Lancaster, UK. The authors worked together in a group to answer questions and offer suggestions, using various language packs on Vmax devices, about the characters, storyline, setting etc. These suggestions were made into sentences by a supporting member of staff.

#### The fire

Rick and Amy were best friends. They lived in a town called Barrow and went to school together. Rick was deaf so he couldn't hear people talking, or any noises at all, and neither of them could speak. Rick used symbols and photographs to talk to people and Amy had a computer with pictures on, so that when she pressed one of the pictures it said the word.

One day at school the fire bell started to ring. No one knew if it was a practice or a real fire, so they all started to go outside. Rick was in the toilet, and when he came out he found everyone was walking out of their class rooms towards the front door. He couldn't hear the bell so he didn't know what was happening and tried to walk past everybody back to his classroom.

Amy saw Rick walking the wrong way and grabbed him. She showed him a picture of a bonfire on her computer and a picture of the playground, and grabbed his arm to pull him the right way. Rick understood that he was supposed to go outside with everyone else, even though he couldn't hear the bell.



When they got outside they saw smoke coming from the library - all the books were on fire! Rick realised that Amy had saved him. He still had his symbols with him so he found the ones he wanted to say to Amy.





Friend

### **United Kingdom**

# Beth Moulam Just Talking

Jane sat watching the TV. Her favourite programme had just finished. She wondered what to do next. She looked around but no-one was there. She was alone.

So, Jane called "Sam". Her brother came running into the room. He said "Can I get you something?" Jane was laughing when she replied "No". Sam came over and gave her a hug. Then went back to his homework. Jane smiled and asked herself "who next?"



Jane went outside to find her father. The sun was shining and it made her warm and happy. By the garage she called "Dad?" Her father was bending over a bucket of water. He looked up and said "Yes Jane, what can I do?" But Jane just smiled and shook her head. Dad smiled back, then he came over and ruffled her hair. He went back to washing the car. Jane thought "and who now?"

Jane rushed to the kitchen door and shouted "Mum". Her Mum walked over to the door. Mum asked "Can I get you a drink or cookie?" Jane giggled and said "Yes". "Yes what?" replied Mum laughing. "Yes, please!" said Jane.

Mum brought Jane her snack. Then she bent and gave her a kiss. Jane drank the juice with a straw. She ate half the cookie getting crumbs everywhere. What a mess! Next she called "Spot". The dog came running from the garden. He was panting and wagging his tail. She gave him the rest of the cookie. He gobbled it up and licked her hand. He put his head on her knee.

Jane sat very still in her electric wheelchair. She stroked Spot's silky ears. She was having fun. Now she had her communication aid she could talk with her family.

Who should she go and speak to next? What should she ask?

#### Written by Beth Moulam

I am 14 and use the Lightwriter. I live in England

#### Illustrated by my friend Melinda (Mel) Smith

Mel lives in Australia and uses the Pathfinder and the Lightwriter

Brent Butson United Kingdom

My Life in a Wheelchair

By Brent Butson

I am Benjamin age 14 with long blonde hair and glasses. when I was 10 I was hit by a car when riding my bike on the side of the road. I woke up in the hospital to find that I now was paralysed from the waist down. I have to be in a wheelchair for the rest of my life.

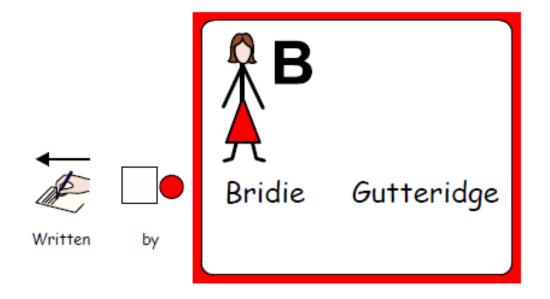
At first I was very upset because I like to be active. After the help of my physio therapists and my family I have learned to do many things to stay active. At home I have adapted my computer with many ACC programs including Kurzweil to help me with school and communication. I like to stay in touch with friends and family using facebook and MSN now adapted through the ACC programs.

One week night my sister Lillian asked me to come and watch her curl. She is in a tournament and her first game is against the London Spitfires vs. the Exeter Cannonballs.

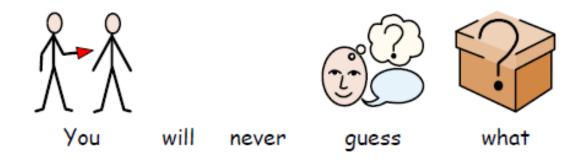
On Saturday morning we woke up at 7:00 a.m. to get ready to go to the Exeter curling club. Lillian's first game starts at 9:00 a.m. and we have to be there for 8:20 a.m. to meet up with the rest of her team. I load myself into the car at 8:00 a.m. We arrived at the club at 8:10 a.m. After getting out of the car we realized that this club was not wheelchair accessible. Lillian carried me up many stairs to the sitting room. After Lillian went to join her team I talked to the owners about making the club accessible. The owners said it would cost way too much and they would close it before they would make any changes. After the day of watching my sister curl I decided to write a letter to our MPP Carol Mitchell and tell her about my concerns.

# Bridie Gutteridge United Kingdom

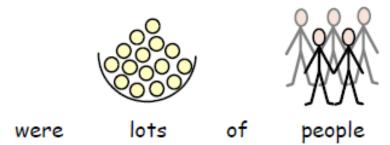






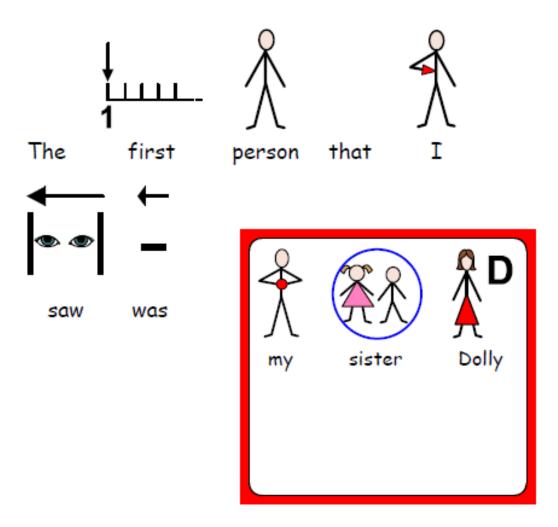


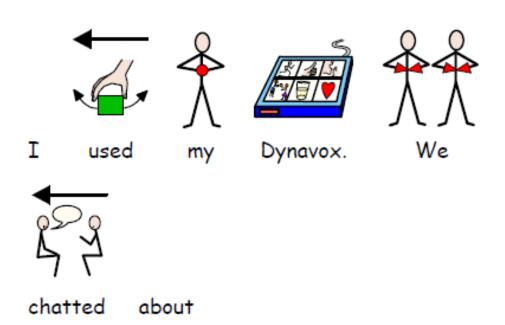
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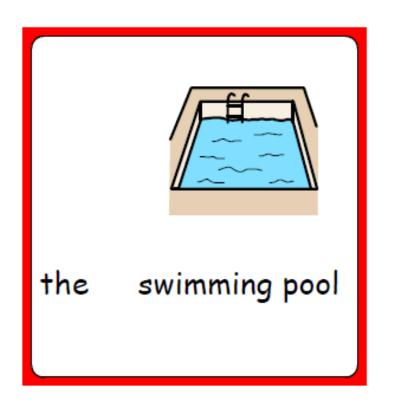


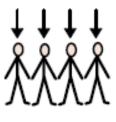
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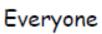
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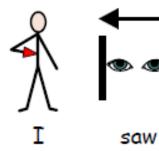


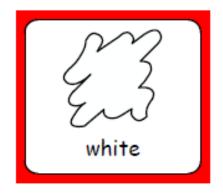
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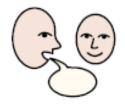




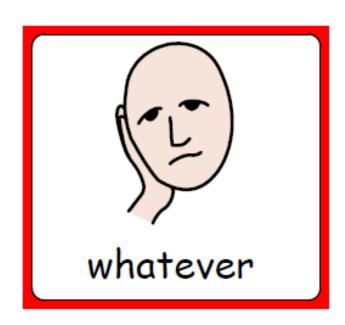
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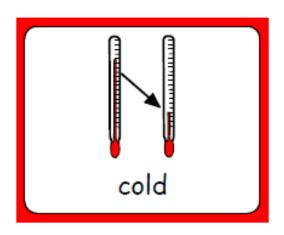
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It said







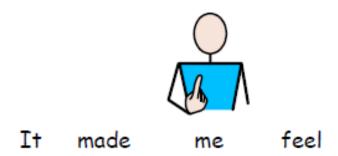


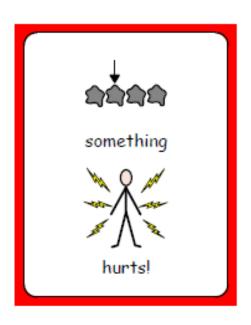




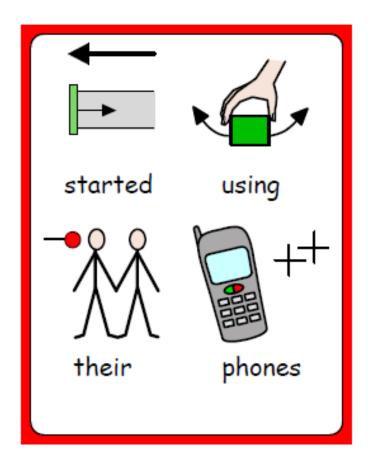
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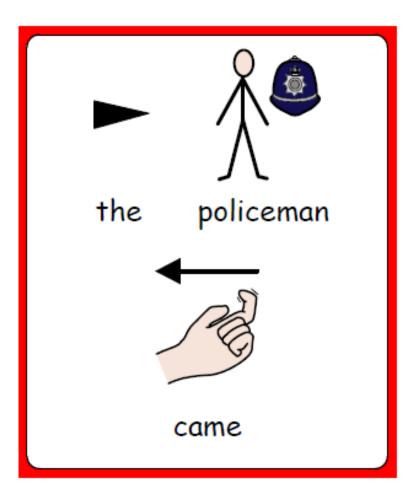




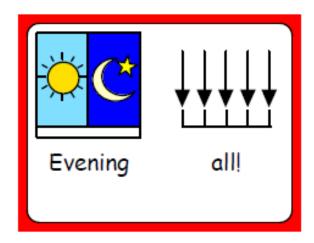


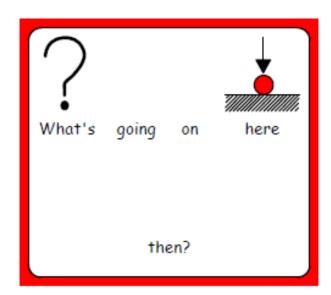
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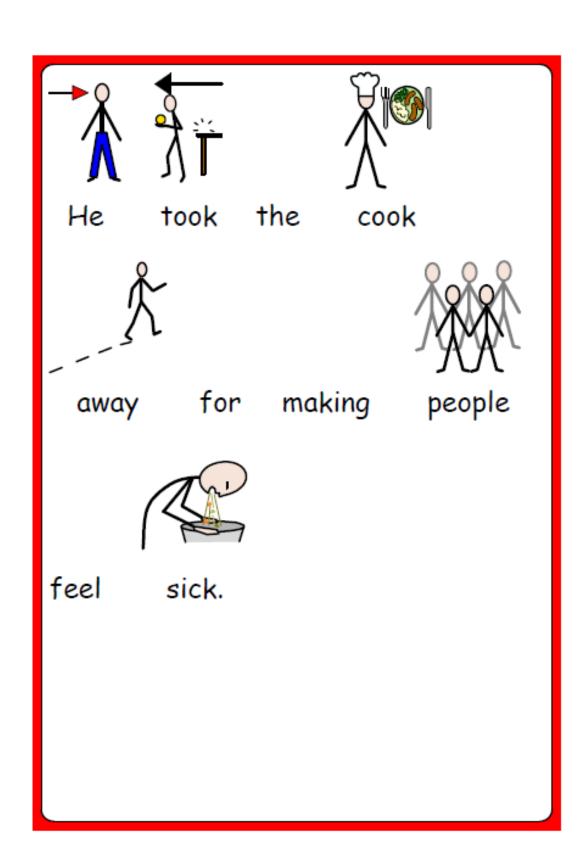




# And said







# Chris George Age 21 United Kingdom

#### COOL

"Cool" – said the guy who I don't even know at all but still. When I read Jess's message I kind of felt emotional and a bit more important than usual.

During my life helping other people has been very important for me. Unfortunately, I was born with no speech and only have control over my eyes. Despite this, I am still a chatterbox and the centre of attention all the time.

I happened to upload a few videos of me using my tobii to youtube, because I felt like had to show the world how great power I have in my eyes. I thought that people would be amazed but they weren't. I had no responses on my videos until a few days ago when Jess from the USA left me a message. I showed her the mytobiicommunity site where by then I became probably the most active member, helping everyone with their problems.

One morning Jess's message waited for me. She had visited her friend who is a tobii user just as I am. She reckons that "it was really inspirational for him to see someone older than him using the device, and also quite *cool*". If I only had a positive impact on Jess's friend for this one occasion, I say it was worth it already.

Every time I think of this, I feel well appreciated again and again. Indescribable feeling...



Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, **United Kingdom** 

We visited the Butterfly house. We saw lots of different coloured butterflies.

Some of us were brave and held snakes, lizards and millipedes. Some of us were scared.







We went outside and a turkey kept following us around.



We had a good time.

Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, United Kingdom

Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, United Kingdom

We had a coffee morning to raise money to go to Blackpool. We made cakes and pies to sell.



We had a raffle with lots of prizes, one was a giant Tigger.



We made over £300.

Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, **United Kingdom**  Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, United Kingdom

We planted some marigold seeds to sell. We put them on top of the wet compost and then covered them with a black bag to help

them grow.





When they started to grow we took them out of the bag, watered them and put them in the sun.

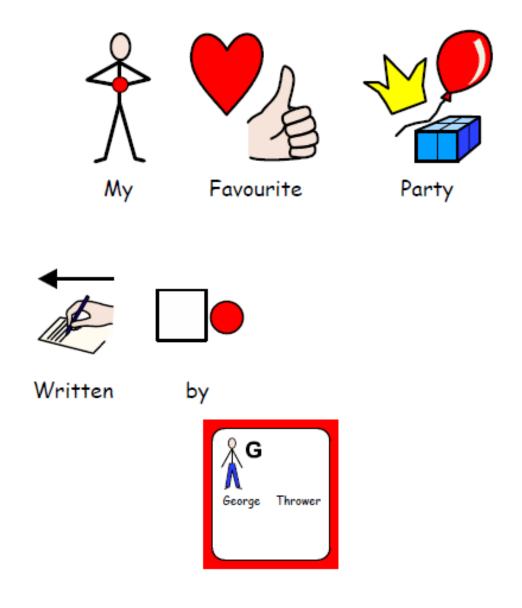


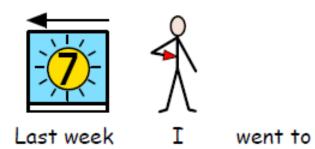


We have sold them all.

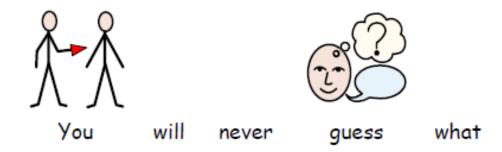
Declan Gould, Jake Ward, Daniel Hardman, Connor Whitehouse, Daniel Woodhead, Sarah Parker, Ages 10-14, **United Kingdom** 

# George Thrower United Kingdom

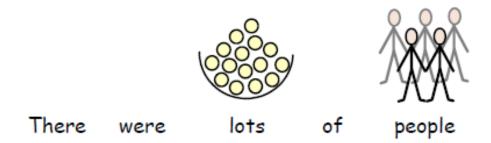




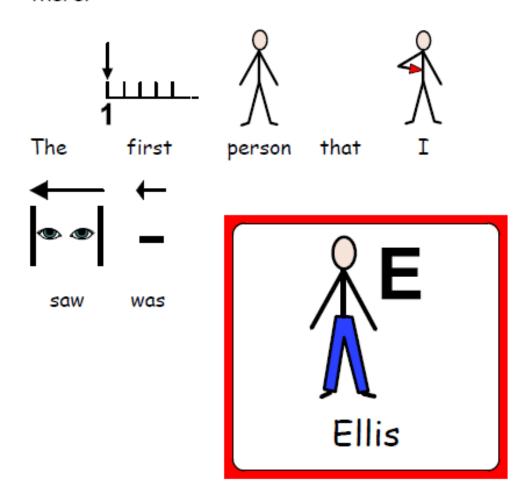


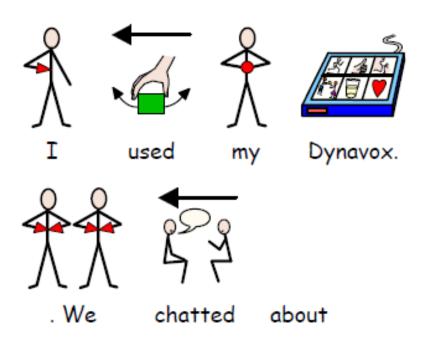


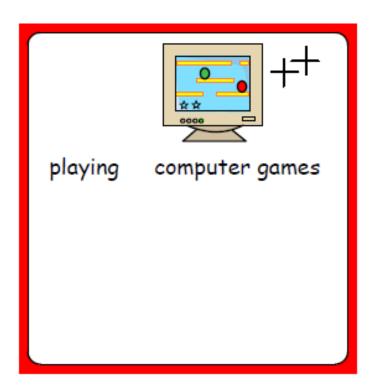
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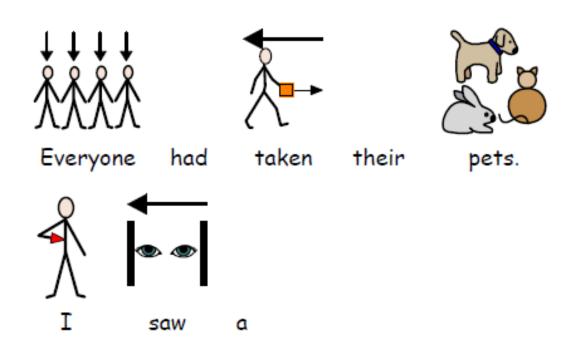


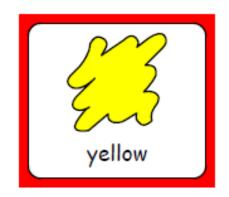
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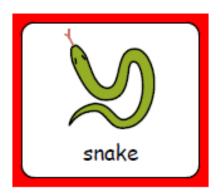










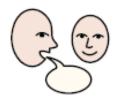




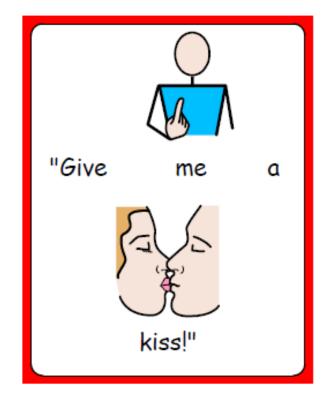
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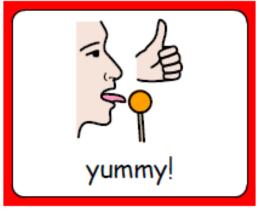
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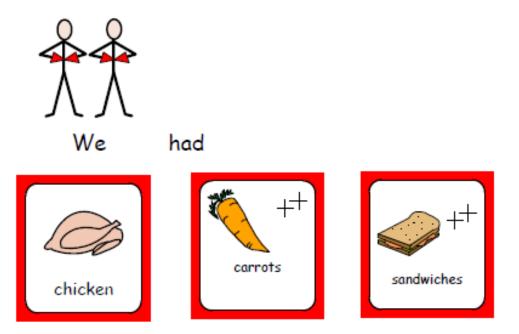


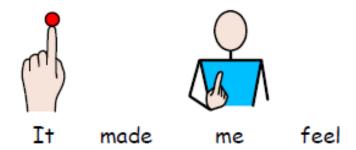
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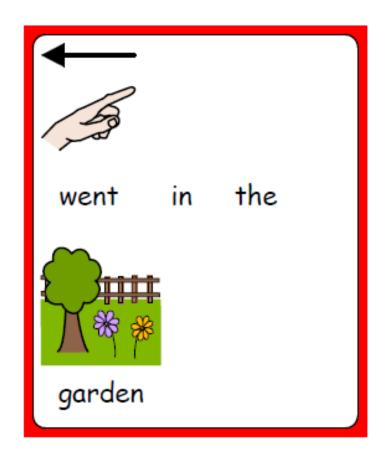










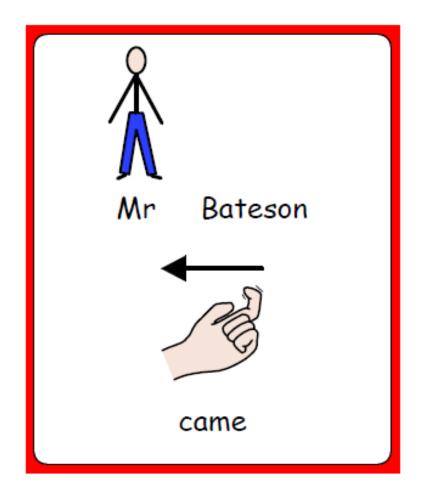




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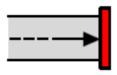


Oh no!

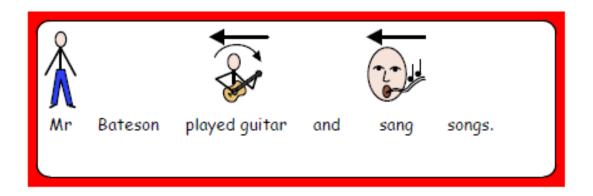




But it turned out well in the



end because



### Helen Machen and Maggie Newman-Rose United Kingdom

#### **AAC Awareness Story Competition**

Title	'TH	E MAGI	C SCHC	OOL [	DOOR'		
by <b>Helen</b>	Machen	and her	friend	and	teacher	Maggie	Newman-
Rose							

"Im happy in my house" said Daisy, she was sitting nicely in the lounge with her friends. It was a special evening because her favorite soap was on the t.v. She smiled at the three people who shared her house, it was such a nice house, with happy sounds and warm furniture.

Tea time came around and Daisy left the lounge to go to the kitchen.... but, something very very strange happend on the way.....

Daisy pushed the door open to make tea but she found her self at school...... school, where she went many many years ago! The chairs were tiny, the tables were round and lots of smiling faces greeted her. There was Amanda and Diane the two twins...... this is strange thought Daisy...... i must be dreaming.

Daisy was now tiny, her satchel was in her hand and the teacher was waving and saying "sit down Daisy we are just about to start handwriting."... Daisy scratched her head... this cant be happening, Im making tea for my friends not sitting at a desk with the twins 35 years ago.

Daisy was asked to write a poem......still quite dazed, she agreed and opened her desk to find all of her old books and pens

from years and years ago.... "oh well" said Diasy, "if this is a dream i might as well get on with it"!!

Daisy wrote her poem.......

We sang and danced when i was young magic stories and dreams were ours days of laughter and giggles holidays and fun a magic door to yesterday

Daisy looked up when the teacher asked her to ring the bell for the end of lesson. The bell was just outside the door and as she walked towards it she remembered she wanted to ask the twins how they were... but suddenly, and just as quickly as before, she found herself through the door into her lounge. "Where have you been? shouted one of her house mates "we are waiting for our tea!!

Daisy scratched her head and sat down.... what on earth is going on she thought... I do wish i had asked the twins when i had the chance....... twins, writing, school, I must have been dreaming. There is no magic door in the kitchen... oh well, whats on the t.v tonight guys?

Do you have a magic memory door in your house?

Helen Machen and Maggie Newman-Rose

399 words

## Jake Edward Storm Lee United Kingdom



### Puzzles, Puzzles

Puzzles, puzzles all around

Some on the shelves the rest on the ground

You open the box and what's inside?

A world full of magic and full of surprise

Piece by piece they fit together

Jungles and toys and birds of a feather

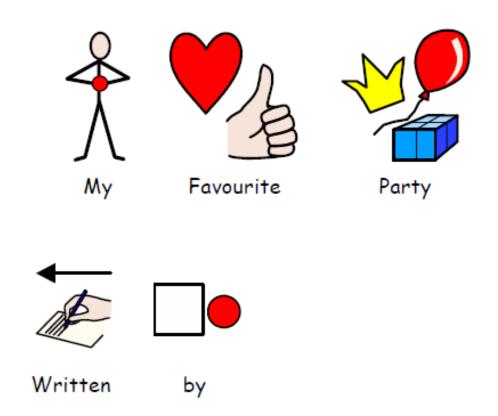
As if by magic they fold away

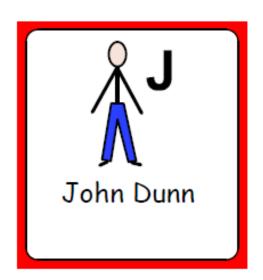
Back in the box for another day

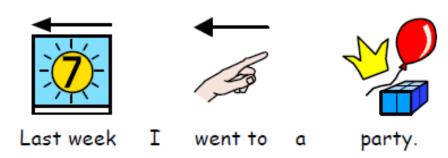


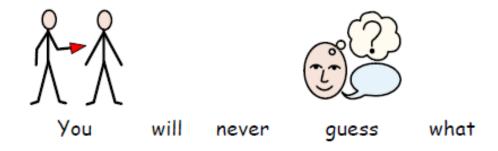


### John Dunn United Kingdom

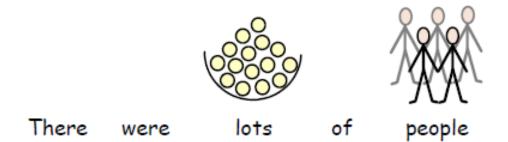




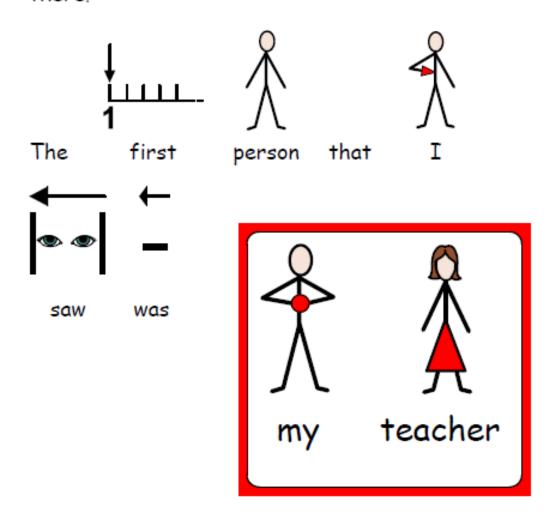


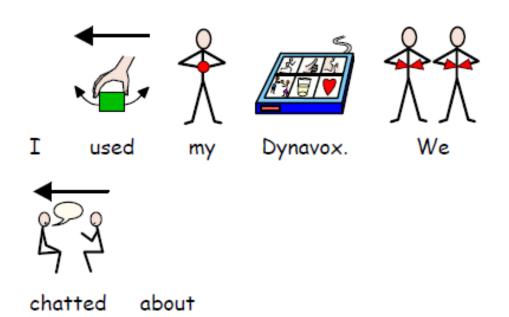


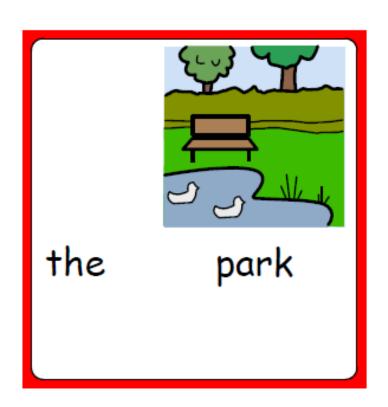
happened!

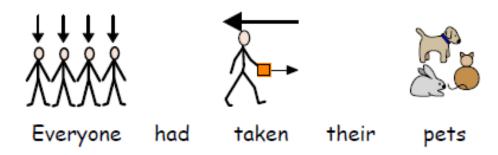


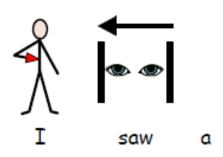
there.

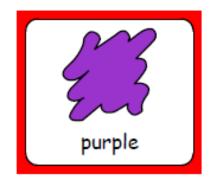
















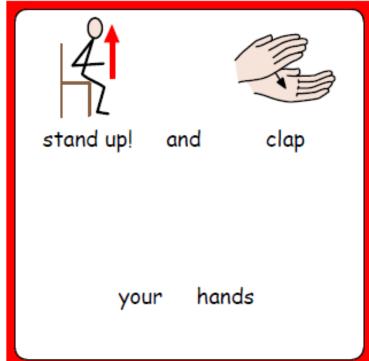
There was even a parrot that

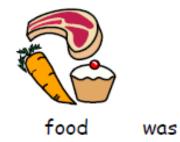


talked.

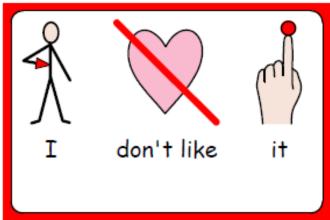


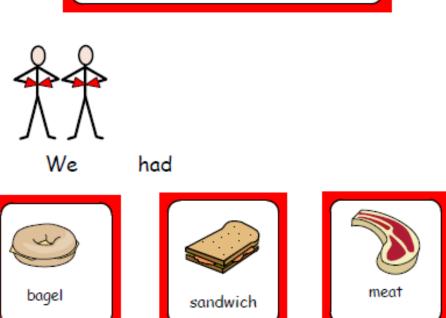
It said





The



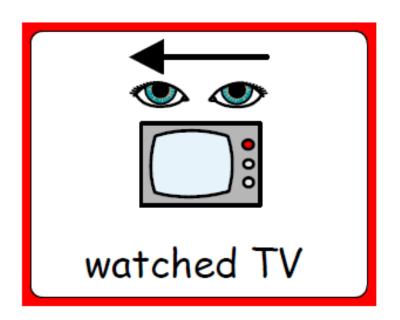




It made me feel





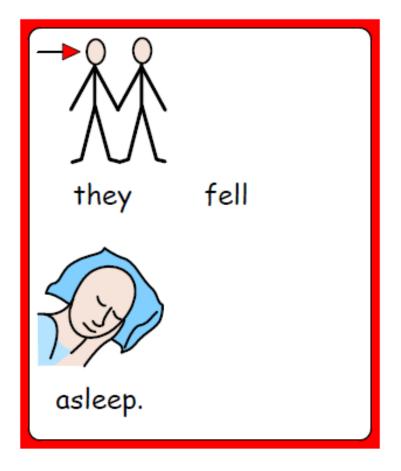




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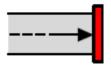


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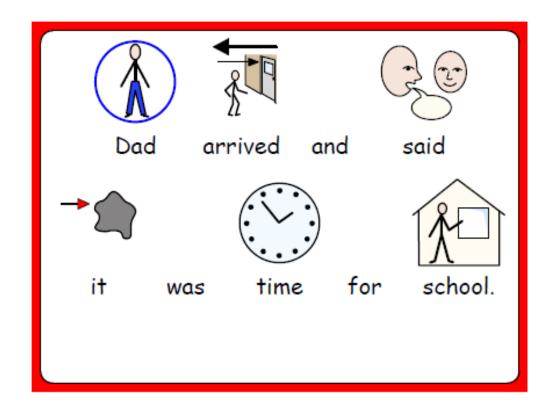


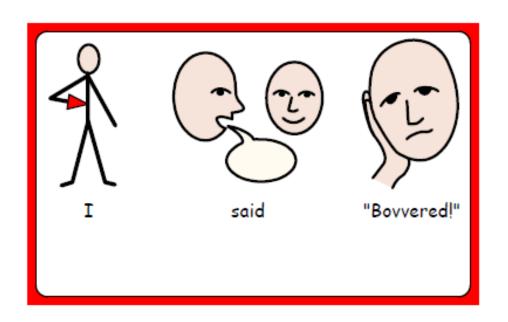


But it turned out well in the



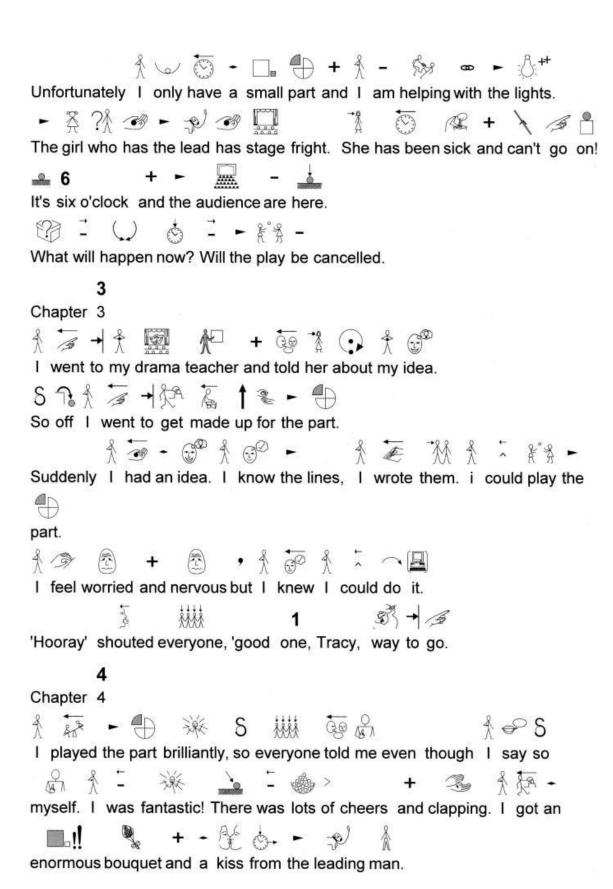
end because

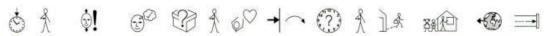




#### Lisa-Marie Eastwood United Kingdom

一美茶 The Play 0 by Lisa-Marie Eastwood Chapter 1 My name is Tracy. I am 14 years old. My favourite activity is Drama and I have written a play for my class. I have a physical disability. This means I need to use a speech output @ & P & - A! S & R & > \ > machine for talking. Using a Dynavox is hard work. So I need lots of time to compose my messages. It's worth waiting for as I have many interesting things to tell you. I love to chat and gossip with my family and friends. 2 Chapter 2 ★ → № ★ → № ★ ★ № + · As I said before I have written a play for my class and it's going to be ₩ \* - ●! ※ + - (統) performed for the whole school and the parents. + - - -Thebchildren have had auditions and all the parts have been allocated. Everyone wanted to be in the play as it is a funny story about a holiday to Spain that goes wrong. In a funny way of course





Now I definitely know what I want to do when I leave school. West End



here I come!

X GP

Any guesses?

\$ 1 - ~ □ = 6° 10 - 4! □ = - ? 1 ♥!

Now i am lying in bed thinking what a great day it was. How I would love

→ - □ ► □ □ □ □

to be on the stage acting.

Well, as the saying goes - the rest is history!



### Matthew Poulton United Kingdom

Matthew Poulton age 15 UK My name is Matthew. I used my Tellus to write this story. I also worked really hard at school to write this story. The school staff helped me a lot. I really enjoyed doing it.

#### Matthew Wants a Wedding by Matthew Poulton

My name is Matthew and I am forty-five years old. I look happy because I am getting married. I am going to make a video of the wedding on my Tellus. I want to get married to Katie. She is twenty-one. I like her yellow hair.



Me and my Tellus

I live in the countryside in England with my Dad. We have a big house in a small village. We work with computers. I met Katie at Charlton School. Katie is a bus driver. I asked Katie out on a date to a restaurant for lunch. We had spaghetti, raspberry yoghurt and beer. I drank too much and got drunk. Afterwards I took Katie to see *Oliver* at the theatre.

At our wedding, my brother Ralph is going to be my best man. My sister Cath is going to be Katie's bridesmaid. She is very good and helps me out all the time. My friend Alex who was in my class at school is going to be a pageboy.



Me (left) and my page boy

Ralph wakes me up at six in the morning on my wedding day to get ready. Ralph makes me cereal and orange juice for breakfast. I wear a red shirt with a brown jacket and trousers and a tie. Ralph wears the same.



Me and Cath

I travel to the church with Ralph and John in a big, posh red car. Katie goes to the church with Cath in a big, posh blue car. I get to the church first and wait at the door in my standing frame for the wedding to start. I meet all the guests and tell them that I am scared about getting married.

'I thought I was going to live by myself until I met Katie,' I tell them.



Me and Katie

Katie arrives at the church. She is wearing a cream and red dress. The wedding starts and I turn on my Tellus. Cath had helped me put my wedding vows on my Tellus

to read out in the church. I'm not happy when I can't find them on my Tellus. I'm going to have to make them up!

'Katie,' I start, giving her a very nice ring. 'I love you more than chocolate. You make me so happy I want us to be married for one thousand years.'

After the wedding we go to a party. There are lots of balloons. People are wearing party hats. We had a disco and everyone was dancing.



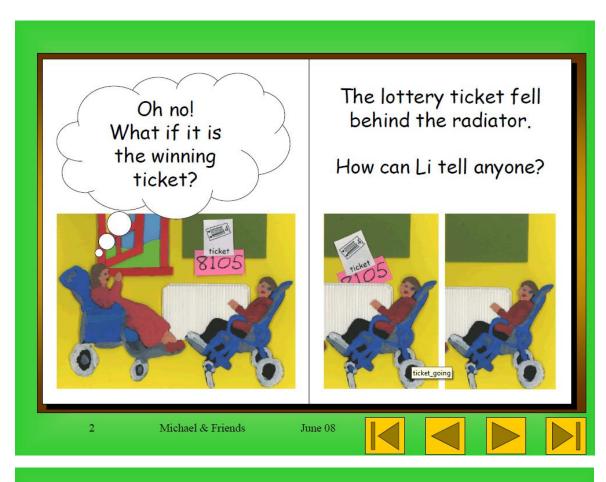
Me

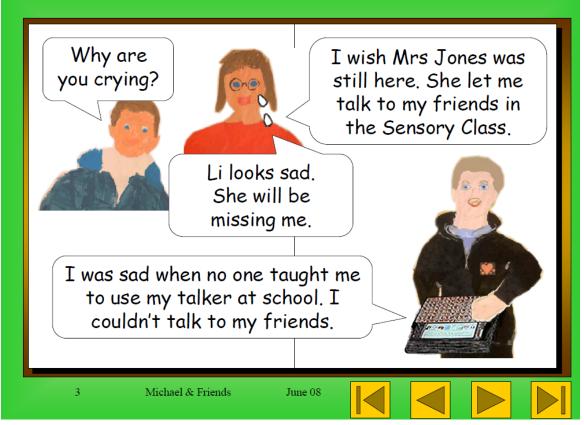
We go to Spain on our honeymoon for two weeks. We stay in a hotel and go to the beach every day. When we are back from our honeymoon we move into a house next door to my Dad.

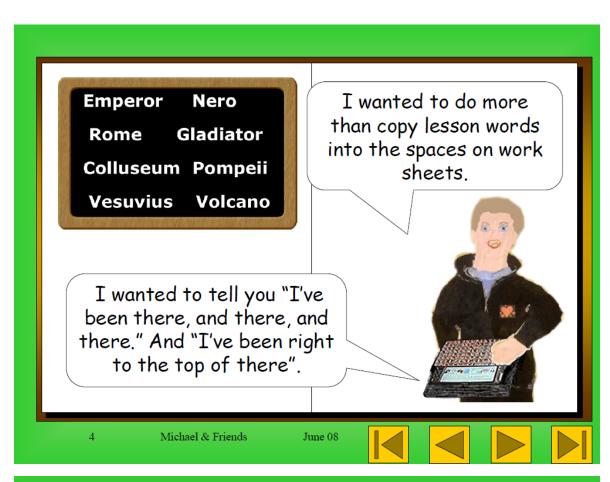
We live happily ever after.

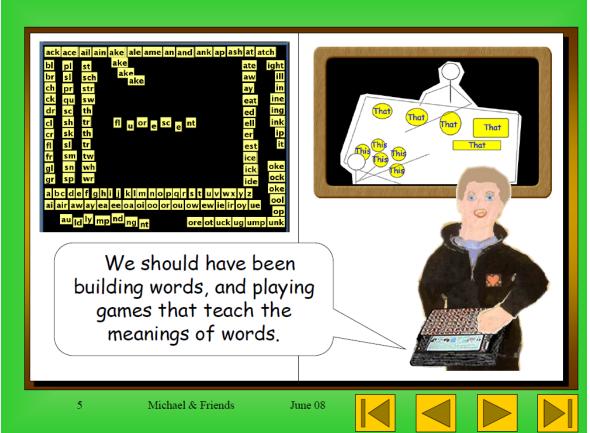
## Michael, Andrew, Gemma, Jake, Robert and Sam United Kingdom

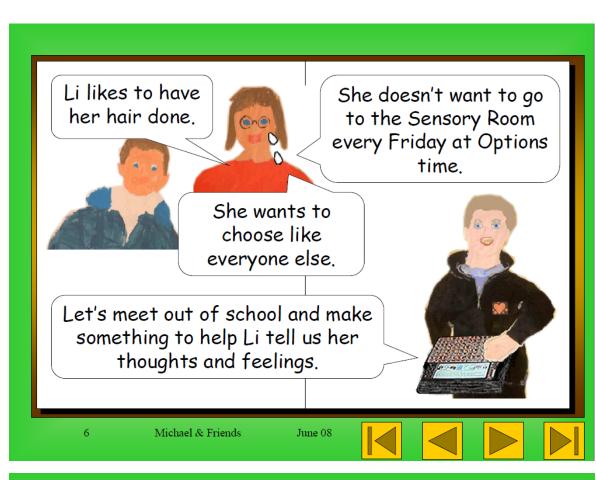


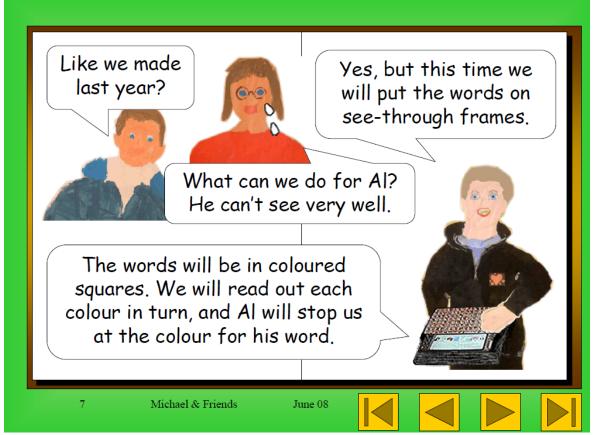














We put the top core words on the frames.

again are bad big come don't down drink find eat feel get good happy he let little look make now other put read she should take tell there these they thing this those to try turn up we will where who why

See what you say with just these few words.

8

Michael & Friends

June 08

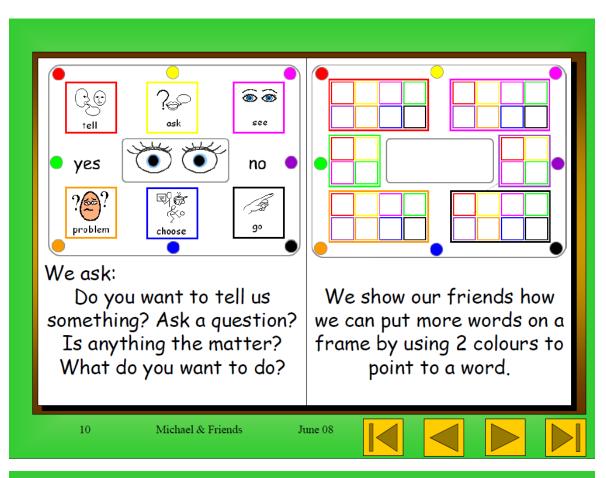


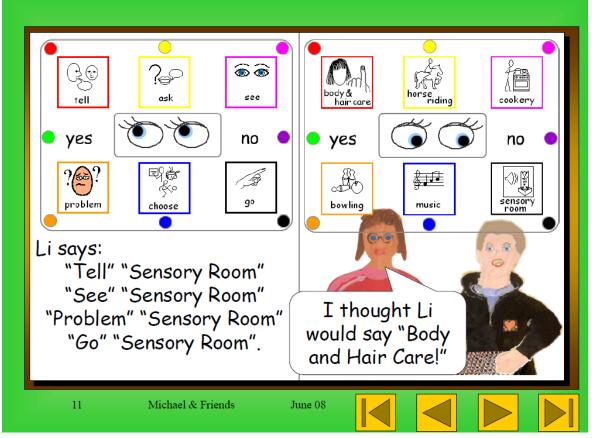


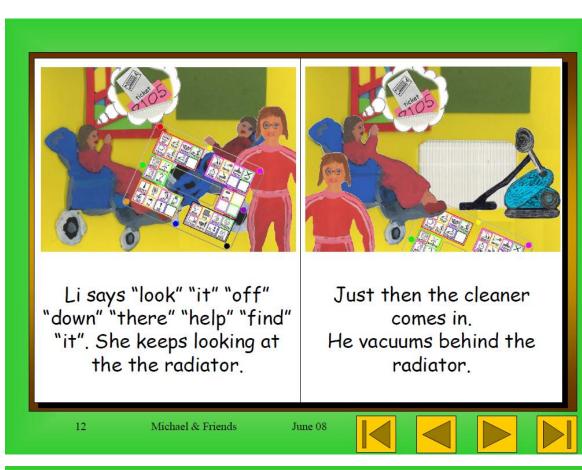


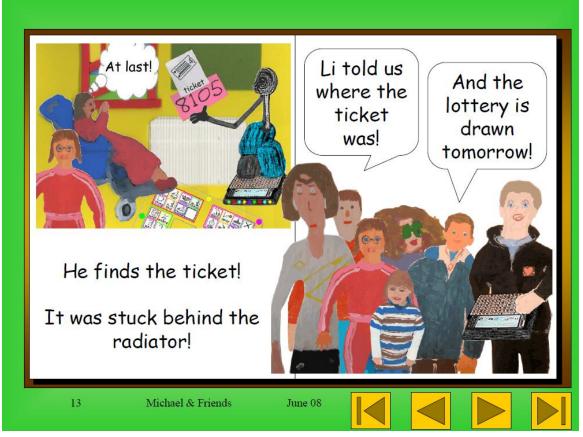


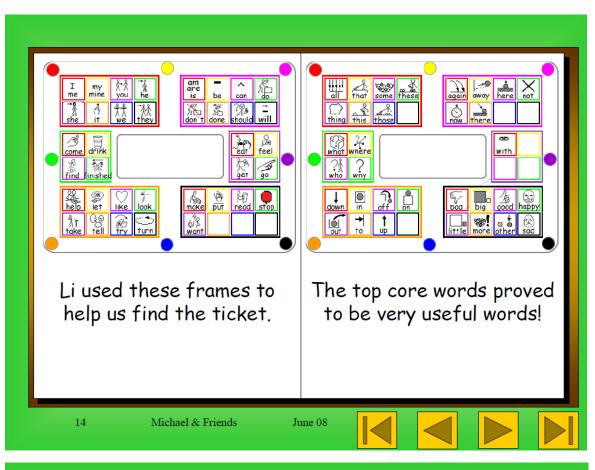


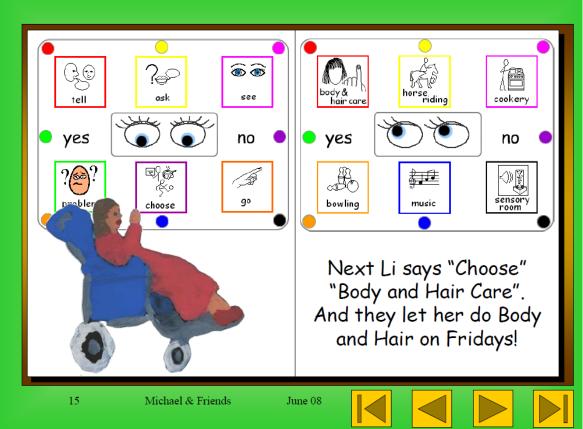


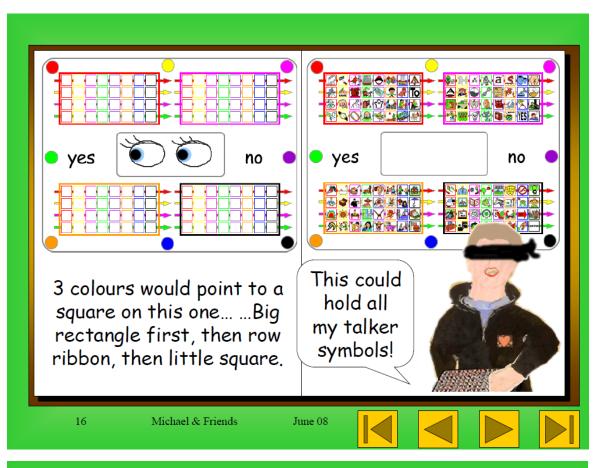


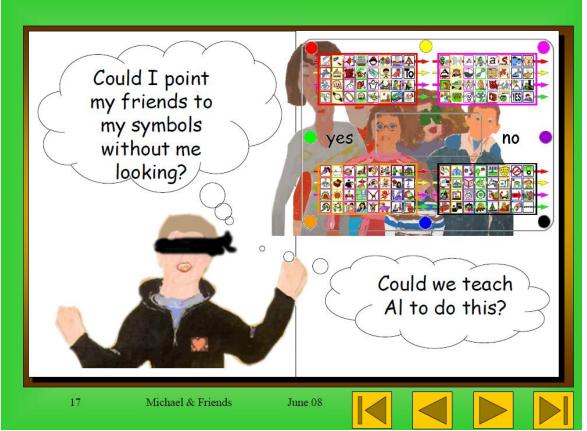














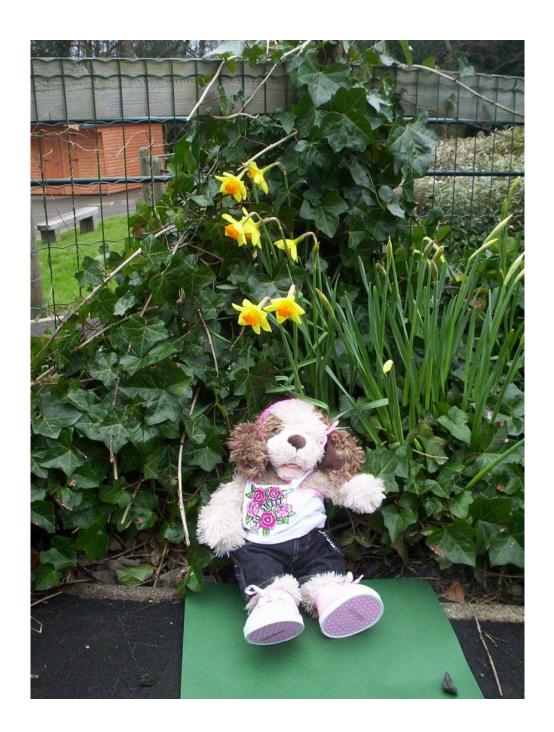


Nicholas Dallinson, Caitlyn Bagshaw, Ryan Kelly, Louisa Staniforth United Kingdom

# Sally and Ben Play hide and seek



It is a windy spring day. Sally is waiting for Ben to play. Sally is a dog. She is brown and white. Sally is sitting on a green blanket. She is looking at the yellow flowers.



It is Ben bear. He is fishing with Louisa his friend. Louisa is a little green frog. They are fishing in the stream.



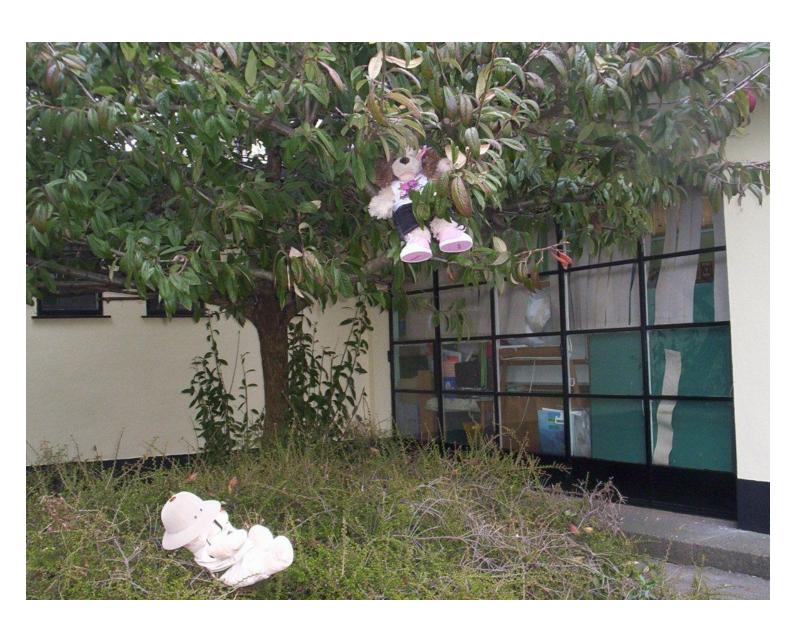
"Will you play with me?" said Sally.
"Yes, Can we play hide and seek?" said Ben.



## Sally is hiding up the tree. She is hiding in the green leaves. She is waiting for Ben.



Ben is looking for Sally. He looks up into the tree. He sees Sally in the green leaves. "I found you" said Ben.



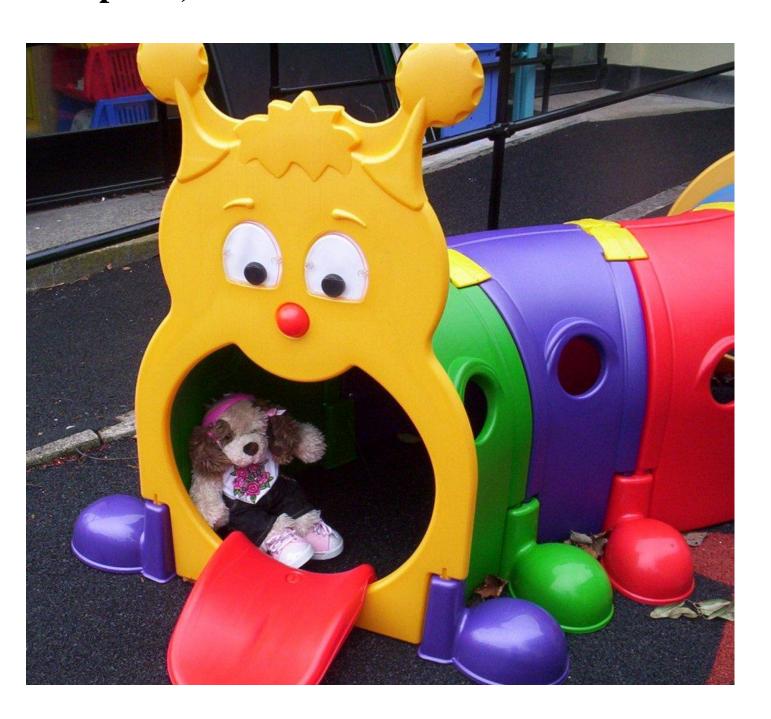
# Sally goes to the playhouse to hide. She sits down on the yellow bench.



Ben looks for Sally. He goes to the playhouse. Ben looks into the window. He can see Sally sitting on the bench. "I found you" said Ben.



Sally is hiding in the blue and yellow and green and red caterpillar. She is sitting at the front of the caterpillar, in its mouth.



Here is Ben. He is looking for Sally. He is up on the caterpillars head. He can see Sally in the caterpillar's mouth. Ben is happy he has found Sally.



## Sally is in the garden shed. She is sitting on the wood floor at the door.



Ben looks and looks for Sally. He opens the door to the shed. Sally is sat on the floor. "I found you" he said.



# Sally is hiding behind the wood posts. She is waiting for Ben.



# Ben has found Sally. He is tired and falls asleep. It has been a long day.





Written by Nicholas Dallinson aged 8
Caitlyn Bagshaw aged 7
Ryan Kelly aged 10
Louisa Staniforth aged 8

#### A JOURNEY CALLED CONFIDENCE

First of all let me tell you all that this is a true story.

Once there was a boy named Jim who was 15 and could only walk short distances and could not talk. He used a wheelchair and a talking device called the Dynavox. He was very conscious of his talking device as he felt that many people had seen wheelchairs but stared at him when the words came out of the machine instead of his mouth.

He felt like he was being caged into a room with eyes glaring at him anytime he went out in public. His favourite haunt was an Indian restaurant called 'Haveli' where he often went for Sunday buffet lunches.

This is what happened on one occasion about 6 months ago. His whole family were seated at the restaurant. His favourite food was spring rolls and Jim could sometimes eat as many as 20 spring rolls!! Jim's mum asked him to go and get what he felt like from the buffet.

He said ok but as he got closer and closer to the food table he felt like everybody was staring at him like he was some animal in a show window at a zoo. He came whizzing back to the table where his family were eating and mum saw that there was nothing on his plate.

When they got home Jim explained everything to his mum who was convinced that he had to do something about it. Every day Jim and his family made sure they had some time to sit down and build up his confidence. His sister and friends promised to help as well.

Every time he was invited to his friend's house for a party or dinner Jim and his mum wrote little speeches and saved them in his machine. He then made these little planned speeches amongst the guests at his friends' house saying

### "Thank you for inviting me, the food was really yummy" and so on.

On one occasion he even said some after dinner jokes!!

He did all this in front of a group of friends and slowly got used to speaking with his communication aid amongst a lot of people. They went through this process for many months and also practised speaking to strangers such as at the hospital reception desk.

All of Jim's family were so pleased with his progress that they had to go back to his favourite restaurant 'Haveli' to celebrate!

Just when his sister and Jim went up for spring rolls, they found that the buffet container was empty. With no prompting at all, Jim went straight to the waiter and said

#### "Please could we have some more spring rolls?"

His sister started clapping in joy and all his family were so pleased with him that he came back with a big smile from ear to ear.

Of course, with about 10 spring rolls on his plate too!!!!

By Pranav Iyer

#### 999 Story

One day I was in north Wales, because I am an anorak (LOL). I love trains and I love Wales. This story is about the Ffestining cob, the cob is a one mile long track and next to the track is a really bumpy path. But at the end of the path I could not get down to the end so my dad didn't know but I went down anyway. I was thinking what a fantastic day, many people were passing me, the sun was out, it was a fantastic day, great scenery around. I could see some more people in the distance and my wheelchair wheel got stuck in the gravel, the people were getting nearer and nearer. I was having a go at getting it out but I couldn't. The people were there, somebody asked somebody else what to do, he said I don't know. I could see somebody calling but I didn't know who but a few minutes later I could see some blue shadows on the cob wall. The man leaned over the cob wall shouting he is here!!!! I was thinking what's going on, I was thinking I knew somebody had called

999. My dad was sitting at the Ffestiniog Railway harbour station and my dad could hear a police car, so the police car stopped in the middle of the road (LOL) to ask him what was going on. He explained so the police car went up to the Ffestiniog Railway station, the man at this point figured out how to turn my chair off. He was pushing me back up the cob, my dad was thinking what's going on, the police were getting nearer and nearer. I was laughing I was having the time of my life (LOL). The man was pushing me up the Ffestiniog Railway cob the police were there, and my dad was also walking up the cob. In the end the man ran off so my dad had to explain to the police, they said not to worry it always happens.

That is the end. By Rob Brown.

I wrote this myself using my vantage, if I'd had my vantage then, then the police wouldn't have been called and I wouldn't have had a story to tell (LOL)





This is the unedited version of Robert's story so you can see how little assistance he was given.

#### 999 Story

1 day I was in north Wales because I am an anorak (LOL) I love trains and I love Wales this story is about the festining cob the cob is a 1 mile long track and next to the track is a really bumpy path but at the end of the path I cannot get down to the end so I my dad don't know but I am I am going down anyway I am thinking what a fantastic day many people was passing me the sun was out it was a fantastic day grat senery around I can see some more people in the distance and my wheelchair wheel got stuck in the graver the people getting nearer and nearer I am having a go at getting it out but I cannot the people are here somebody ask somebody else what to do he said I don't know I can see somebody calling but I don't know who but a few minutes late later I can see some blue shadows on the cob wall and the man leaned over the cob wall shouting he is here!!!! I am thinking whats going on I think I know somebody call 999 my dad was sitting at the FR harbour steon and my dad can hear a police car so the police car stopped in the middle in road (LOL) to ask him whats going on so he explained so the police car go up to the FR station the man at this point figured out how to turn me off he was pushing me back up the cob my dad was thinking whats going on the police was getting nearer and nearer I was laughing I am having the time of my life (LOL) so he was pushing me up the FR cob the police was here and my dad was walking up the

cob in the end the man ran off so my dad have to explain the police said not to worry it always happens that the end By rob brown.

I wrote this myself using my vantage if I would have had my vantage then the police wouldn't have been called and I wouldn't have had a story to tell (LOL)

#### Sean Lucas United Kingdom

#### MI6 Rescue

One day two brothers called Sean and Alex were travelling on an aeroplane. They were on a mission for MI6 to rescue some people from a boat called The Pinch, which had sunk under the sea. One of these people was Sean's friend, Amber. MI6 had given them an old map.

Sean was twenty-one years old and he was clever, handsome and neat. He had gold coloured hair, blue eyes and freckles on his face. He used an electric wheelchair because he had no legs and had broken his elbow. He was very quick. He also used a communication device to speak.

His younger brother Alex was only twelve years old but he was taller than Sean. He had blonde hair and blue eyes. He was slower than Sean but very strong and brave.

The boys were the only passengers so it was very quiet. In the hold were one hundred RNV robot soldiers, sent by MI6 to keep Sean and Alex safe on their mission. There was also Alex's motorbike, a lorry, an ambulance and a fire engine to help rescue the people trapped under the sea.

All of a sudden bad robot soldiers in a helicopter, sent by the big, mysterious baddy called Grant, started shooting at the aeroplane. A tank on the ground was shooting upwards too. They made a big hole in the aeroplane. The good robot soldiers fell out of the hold and in to the river. They got very wet.

An MI6 lorry was driving round the mountain. The people inside were shooting up at the helicopter. Sean and Alex's friend, Bob, was in a car and he was shooting at the tank.

Sean and Alex both got hurt in their tummies. They were taken by the bad robots and put in a prison. They felt dizzy and terrified. In the prison they found Amber. Grant had put her there too.

Sean used his communication device to email his friend Bob. The computer traced them and found out where they were. Alex had his own soldiers. Bob told the soldiers where to find them. They came in a jet and climbed down a rope to get

Sean, Alex and Amber out of the prison. Bob was very good at making machines. He built a boat and came to rescue his friends. Sean, Alex and Amber got on the boat. Grant saw them escaping. He got in a submarine and chased them. He sank under the water, but MI6 had told the police. They found him under the water and arrested him. They took him to prison. MI6 saved the people trapped under the sea.

Sean and Alex went to the hospital in an ambulance. Alex needed an electric wheelchair too. Their Mum was waiting for them at the hospital with all their family and friends. They were all very worried but very proud of the boys.

Sean and Alex just felt bored. They wanted their next mission from MI6!

By Sean Lucas

5<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Word count 495

## Shuaib Mahrnood United Kingdom

#### Communication Aid Poem

There once was this boy
He had a communication aid
But he liked playing with his toy
He never really used his communication aid
But when he did use it, it really paid off
The boy is a baby
He's first word was maybe
He always has fights with his sisters and brothers
And he cares about his father and mother
His sisters tell him off
But he's quite tough
He's got a great sense of humour
People think he's got a brain tumour
His mum shouts at him
Because he nicks biscuits from the biscuit tin

#### Shuaib Mahmood, Age 14, United Kingdom

## Story about Sophie United Kingdom

Daniels mum brought his baby sister Sophie to school.



She was asleep. Sophie was little and happy and good. She had blue trousers, white t-shirt and socks and a pink bib on. Daniel's mum let us hold Sophie.



She is coming to see us again when she is bigger.

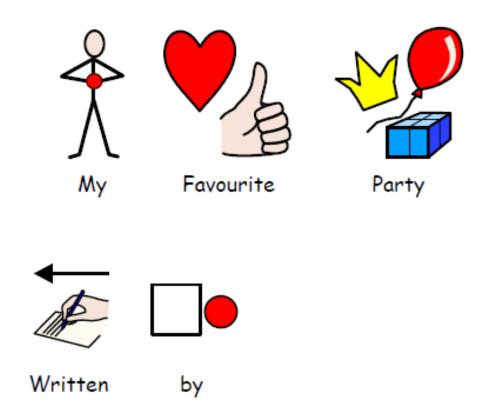
## The AAC Club Party United Kingdom

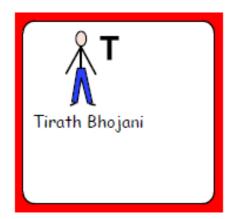
We had a party for the A.A.C club. We all went to the cookery room. Mrs Rose, Jackie and Mrs Turtle got the food. We had pizza, crisps, some cakes, jelly, little sausages, jam sandwiches and ice-cream. Lysa put some music on and we had a dance. It was good.

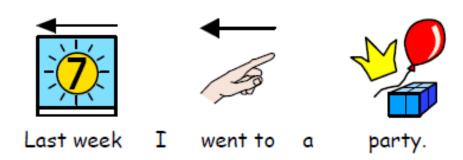




# Tirath Bhojani United Kingdom

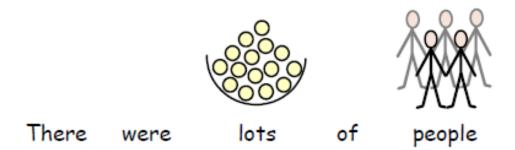




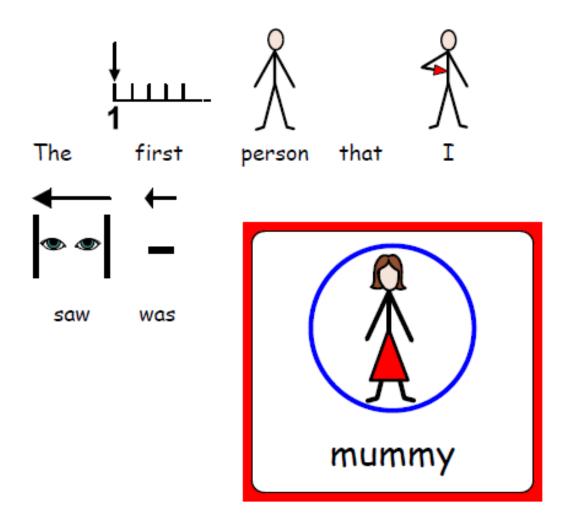


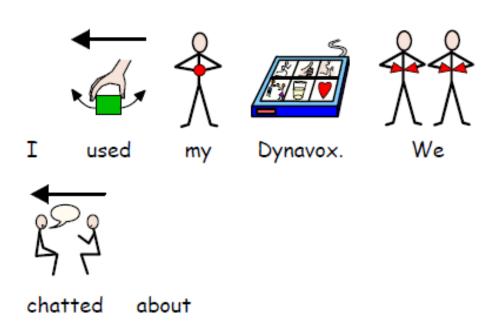


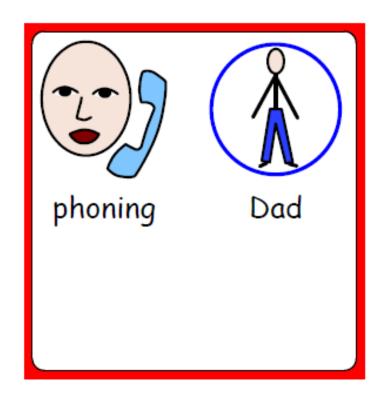
happened!

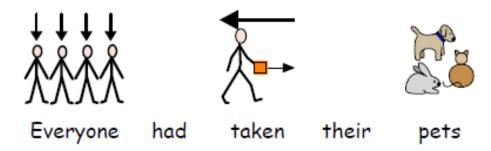


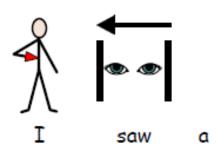
# there.

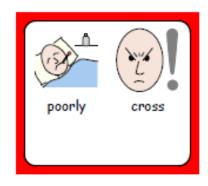


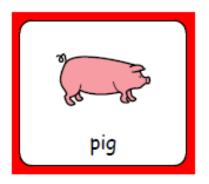










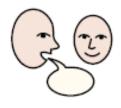




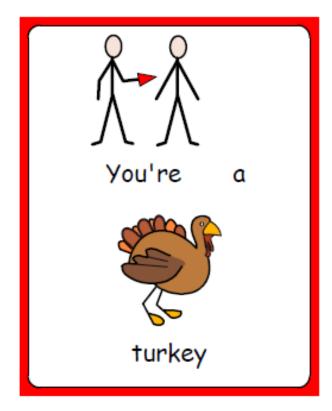
There was even a parrot that



talked.

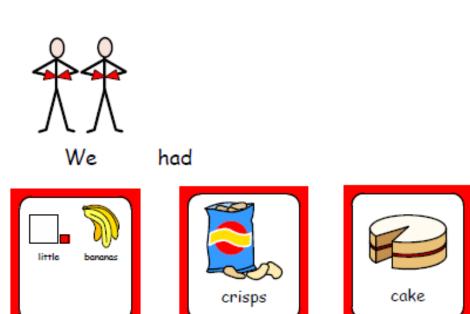


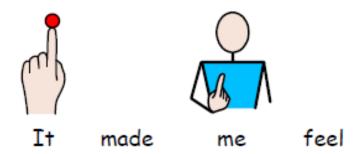
It said





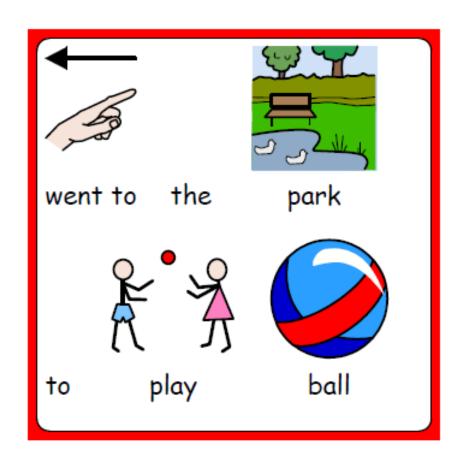








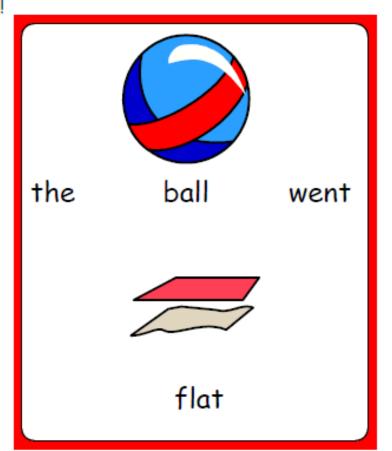


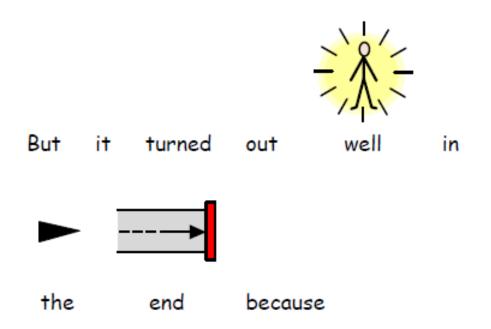


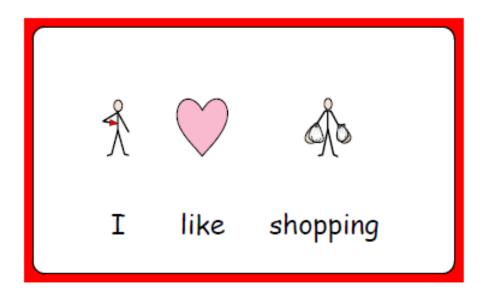
# Then.

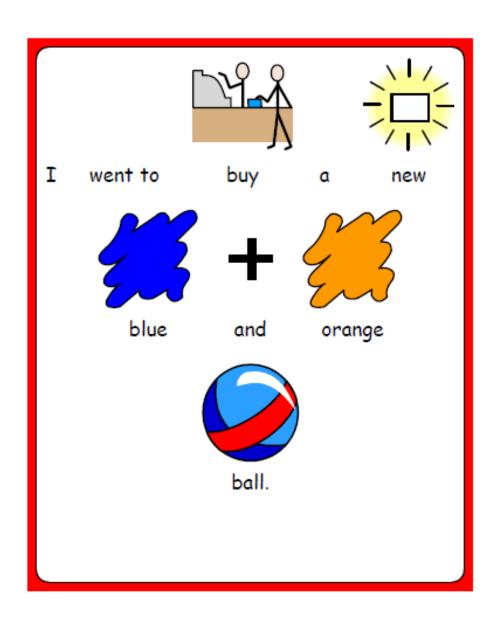


Oh no!



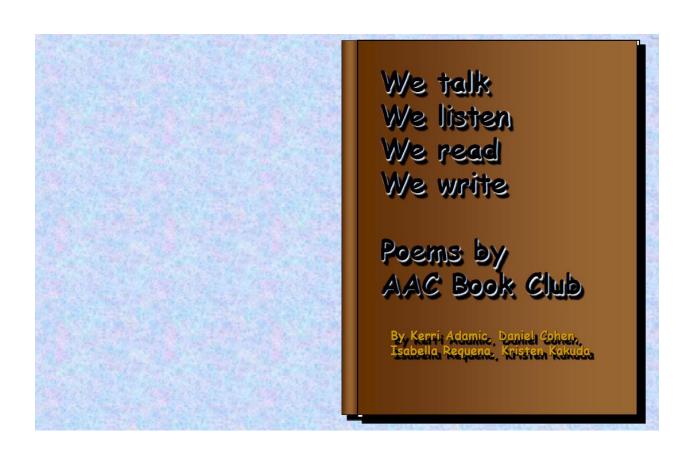






#### **United States**

AAC Book Club -- Kerri Adamic, Daniel Cohen, Isabella Requena, Kristen Kakuda -- We Talk We Listen We Read We Write: Poems by the AAC Book Club USA





To the Speech and Language Center of Buena Park, CA We would like to say thank you WE LIKE TO TALK
WE USE COMMUNICATION
DEVICES

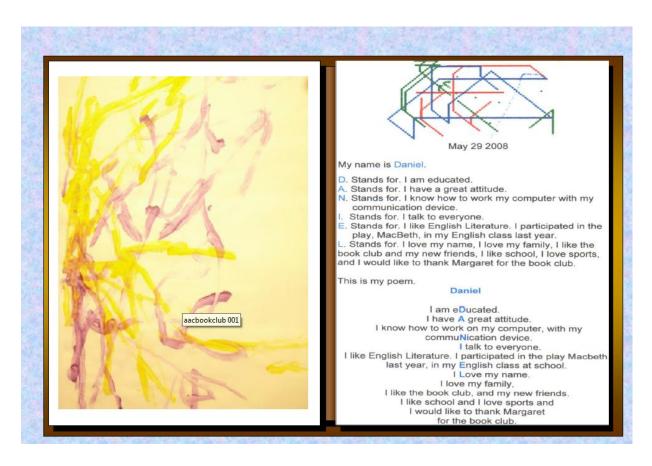
WE SIT IN CIRCLE
WE EAT COOKIES
WE MEET
WE LIKE MAMA AND PAPA TO LISTEN
WE ARE FUNNY
WE MAKE FRIENDS
WE HAVE PIZZA AND DRINK JUICE
WE CREATE MESSAGES
WE SHARE FAVORITE BOOKS
WE TALK
WE READ

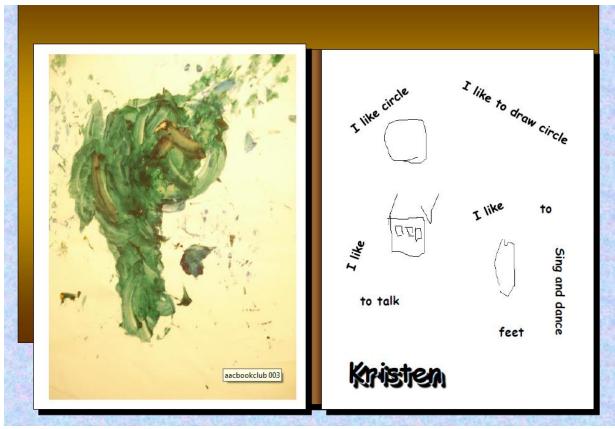
Written by: Kerri Adamic, Daniel Cohen, Jason Cohen, Isabella Requena and Kristen Kakuda

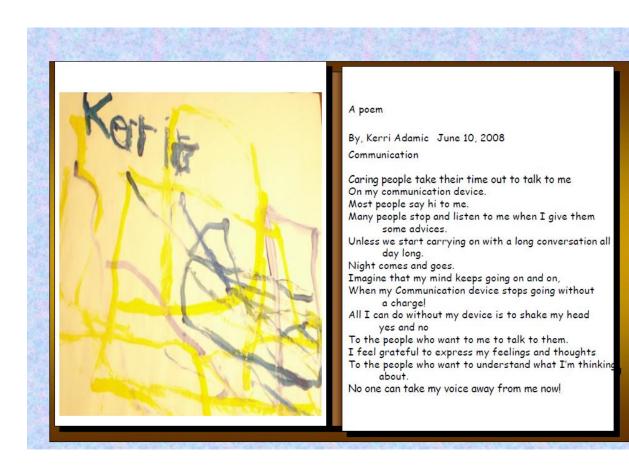


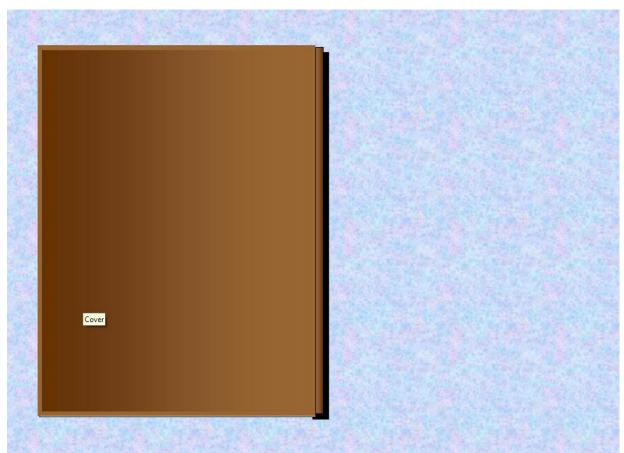
#### I LIKE BY ISABELLA

I LOVE MOM
I LIKE TO SAY WETTER
I LIKE TO SAY GOOD MORNING
I LIKE TO SAY GOOD MORNING
TO THE BUS DRIVER
I FEEL HAPPY
I LIKE EATING
I LIKE TO SAY HI
AND GOODBYE









# Alex Layton Age 17 USA

Alex is a high school Sophmore in Seaford, Delaware. He currently uses his DynaVox Series 4 to communicate. The limerick poem was initally spoken by Alex using his DynaVox, transcribed by Mrs. Wagner, and then typed into a Microsoft Word document. This Limerick was created at school. This is Alex's first Limerick poem.

#### The 1949 Jeep

By: Alex Layton

The 1949 Jeep is fun.
My talker is how I get 'er done.
Ask Pop-pop what is next?
Left the river and flexed.
Only take the Jeep out in the sun.

## Allison Ventura Age 5 USA

Allison is in the kindergarten in an AAC class in Maryland. The class contains 6 students who all use high end communication devices. She uses a DynaMyte 3100 to communicate and access the currciulum. The assignement for this writing activity was to create a story about someone that wanted to go somewhere or get something but no one could understand what they were saying so they had to use they communication device to be understood. Mrs. Donohue is the teacher of the class, she did not edit the stories that the students wrote since she wanted them to be in the students own words and wrting styles.

#### Using a Talker

There was a boy Tito. He mad because people no understand what saying. He use talker. He want go to zoo to see elephant. Tito use talker with mommy go zoo. Tito happy see elephant.

Allison

# FINALIST YOUTH SUBMISSION

Ben Hayes Age 8 USA

Ben uses a Vantage speech-generating device with full Unity for communication. He accesses his system using two-switch step scanning with switches located on each side of his head. Ben generated ideas for his story on his Vantage and sent them to IntelliTalk III software on a computer using a cable. He brainstormed all of the ideas for the story, and his speech therapist helped him put the ideas into sentence form.

Ben reports that he was very 'excited' to write this story!

# Moon Talkers by Ben Hayes

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Alex. She had two animal friends, a cockatoo named Gabby and a chicken named Isaiah T. They all came from the moon to live in Texas. Alex is ten years old and she

rides in a wheelchair. All three friends have talkers. Alex uses a Vanguard. Gabby has a Deltatalker, and Isaiah T has a Sidekick. One day Alex, Gabby, and Isaiah T. were all in the library meeting their friend Adam, who uses a Pathfinder for talking. They were all searching for Arthur books to read when Adam said, "I'm really hungry." The friends left the library to get something to eat.

Alex, Gabby, Isaiah T. and Adam decided to go to Colonial Cafe for lunch. They all used their talkers to order food. While they were waiting for lunch, a waiter carrying a tray walked by their table. She tripped and the tray went flying up in the air. The friends looked worried, but Alex saved the day. She used her superpowers to stop the tray and make it land safely on the table. That is how Adam

found out his three friends were from the moon!

Alex, Gabby, and Isaiah T. told Adam the whole story of how they came from the moon and asked Adam if he would go back to the moon with them. He said "yes." Their spaceship was scheduled to come in to Washington D.C. in one week. They all got on an airplane to Washington D.C.

The spaceship landed in the parking lot of Ben and

Jerry's ice cream shop in Washington D.C. Alex, Gabby, Isaiah T., and Adam played backgammon in the restaurant before boarding the ship.

Adam took one last look out the spaceship window. Suddenly he spotted a girl from his second grade class named Diamond standing in the Ben and Jerry's parking lot. Adam was so excited to see her that he ran out of the spaceship to give her a

big kiss! At that moment, he realized he needed to stay on earth because he was in love with Diamond.

Adam said goodbye to Alex, Gabby, and Isaiah T. He and Diamond ran off to get married and lived happily ever after!

The end.

# Bob Segalman, Ph.D. Age 65 USA

I have led a full life, earned a Ph.D, worked for the government for 30 years, and started our national telephone assistance service for people with speech disabilities (see www.speechtospeech.org). I did this even though I was born with cerebral palsy, a condition which now causes me to use a motorized wheelchair and use AAC. As an AAC User, I want other users to have the opportunity to use AAC on the telephone. By describing how I do that here, I can get the information out to others. I am particularly anxious for AAC sales people to know about Speech-to-Speech and AAC so that they can provide the information to customers. Telephone use is vital to the independence of AAC users. With this technology training must also come social skills for telephone interaction. People who have never used the telephone before will need to undergo a social development process before the telephone becomes a useful tool to them. This is particularly true for AAC users who have been dependent on other people to make their telephone calls for them.

Bringing Telephone Access to AAC Users

Bob Segalman, Ph.D.

My abilities led me to develop a telephone assistance service which enables AAC users and other people with speech disabilities to access the telephone effectively. This paper will deal exclusively with use of the telephone by AAC users.

Speech to Speech (STS) started as my idea around 1990 and grew out of my attempts to be understood by telephone, despite my cerebral palsied speech. At ISAAC '94, I learned that Swedes with speech disabilities benefit from a similar service which developed independently of my efforts.

PSD's (People with Speech Disabilities) who speak use STS differently from AAC Users. I moved from speaking over STS to using STS with AAC, as my vocal chord support muscles deteriorated from aging with cerebral palsy (and it became very difficult to hear my whispered speech).

#### WHAT IS SPEECH TO SPEECH?

STS is a telephone access service for PSD's and is free to its users. STS allows many PSD's to use the telephone independently. The FCC requires that STS be provided nationwide. STS is also available in Sweden, Australia and New Zealand. I helped design Australia's service.

WHO USES STS?

Most STS users have developmental disabilities. Individuals can be understood by STS CAs (Communication Assistants). These patient listeners with acute hearing have had experience listening to PSDs. Users also access STS with an artificial larynx.

#### HOW DOES STS WORK FOR AAC USERS?

AAC users have positive experience calling strangers using an AAC device when using STS. The AAC user dials 711 and asks for Speech-to-Speech with a device. A Communication Assistant (CA) answers, and the user has their device say "Speech-to-Speech" about four times. (Four times can be necessary as 711 operators receive mostly non-STS calls and it may take a few seconds for them to realize that they are receiving an STS call.)

The AAC user is then connected to a different CA, trained to help AAC users and other people with speech disabilities make successful telephone calls. The AAC user asks the CA (using preprogrammed messages) to set up the call and negotiate any menus, introduce the call explaining AAC and then fade into the background. After that, the AAC user tells the CA to only speak to: 1) stop the other caller from interrupting, 2) restate something said with the device that was not understood, or 3) cue the listener that it may take a while for the caller to type a response. This enables AAC users to communicate independently once the other party is on the line and knows the protocol.

#### POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED SALES OF AAC DEVICES

The ability to communicate by telephone increases the usefulness of an AAC device. Salespeople need to know this when describing the potential of AAC to customers. As a customer, I would be more likely to buy a device if I knew that it could be used over the telephone.

## Bryan Holm Age 16 USA

I had a good time doing this. I use Classroom Suite to do all of my writing because I can't see the computer screen and Classroom Suite will speak what I write. My Vanguard plugs right into my computer.

My name is Bryan. Before I got my own AAC device it was hard for me to talk. People have a very hard time understanding me. I have CP.

Nikki and Lorna are my speech therapists, they both worked very hard to get my device. I borrowed a few before they sent my device. This is my own device. I never have to send it back.

Now it is better!

At break time I like to go and use my device to tell jokes. Jokes Are fun.

Why don't sharks eat clowns?

Because they taste funny.

Do you want to hear another one?

Why are fish afraid of computers?

They are afraid of being caught in the internet.

Why can't you tell a joke to the ice?

Because it will crack up.

I also like to play tic tac toe, write email,

I do math, sometimes on weekends I get to take it home.

It sure has been fun! See you later.

# Carrie Kilbourne USA



AAC is my voice It goes everywhere I go Other people take their voices It's just that theirs don't show

People are curious this is common
I see them take a peek
But an animals curiosity
Is truly something unique!

Carrie & Stacia Kilbourne Age 31 USA

Hi, my name is Carrie. I was in an auto accident in 1996. I have a TBI and am now quadiplegic and non-verbal. I use a Dyna-vox DV4 communication device. I use a switch to operate it in the scanning mode. I have two miniature horses that I show from my wheelchair. I have won many ribbons and trophies. The photo is of me and my horse, Belle. It was taken in my barn. I don't use any additional software with my AAC device. My DV4 works as a keyboard so that I can type directly into MS Word. My mother used Adobe Photoshop Elements to do the edging on my photo.

Carl Fjetland Age 46 USA

Story: Carl's story

By: Calr Fjetland

My Device helps me talk to others. My tengos fun, it helps me sound like Sponge Bob. It makes my peer laugh. I can tell people jokes. I can tell people how I feel. I am thankful for my tengo.

Thank You.

# Daniel Rogers USA



Friends





soft

soft







mad

good

happy







outside

play

play



eat





hi

how are you?







BY DANIEL ROGERS



okay



okay

# Dylan Wilson Age 8 USA

Dylan is in the 2nd grade in an AAC class in Maryland. The class contains 6 students who all use high end communication devices. He uses a DynaMyte 3100 to communicate and access the currciulum. The assignement for this writing activity was to create a story about someone that wanted to go somewhere or get something but no one could understand what they were saying so they had to use they communication device to be understood. Mrs. Donohue is the teacher of the class, she did not edit the stories that the students wrote since she wanted them to be in the students own words and wrting styles.

#### Using a Talker

There was a girl named Estella. People don't understand her. She gets mad. She wanted to go to Dave and Busters. She use talker. Chucky take her to Dave and Busters. She plays water games she won 1000 tokens. She is happy!

Dylan

# Edward Lambrecht Age 27 USA

#### Profile of a US. Marine

They come from big cities like New York and from country towns, like Deanville, Texas. They might be your neighbor or could be your friend in time of need. They are ordinary men and women that sacrifice everyday around the world for our freedom and liberties. They are the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

One such person is a good friend of mine, Jonathan Webber. When he was 17, his father had to give permission for him to join the Marines. GySgt. Webber made a career out of the military retiring after twenty years of service. It would take him to some of the recent conflicts in our world. He went to Panama as part of a stabilizing force, Operation Just Cause. He served in Somalia in a peacekeeping role and also served a tour of duty in Iraq.

Once he accidentally ran over a fellow Marines foot with a tank. GySgt. Webber was not afraid to speak his mind but then he would also give you the shirt off his back. I once asked him if he could do it all over again would he? His answer was, in a heartbeat.

## Erin Blasé Age 18 USA

I wrote about how getting a communication device changed my life. I am so happy that I can now talk so I can tell other people what I think, tell them what I want, tell them what to do, etc. This device has really changed my life – for the better. I am so thankful for this device!

This device has made it possible for me to learn how to read. I really enjoy reading and want to learn more and more. It is so much fun to be able to pick up a book and be able to read and not have to rely on others to read to me all the time.

I use a T-tam to write but we are having problems with it. It is getting older than my para-educator!

As a person with lots of disabilities, it is so great to be able to be independent in one area of my life by talking!



# How My Communication Device Changed My Life

Having been born with cerebral palsy, unable to talk and walk, care for myself and being confined to a wheelchair, it hasn't been an easy life for me. My communication as a very young child was blinking my eyes to say "yes" and shaking my head for "no".

But then my life changed at the age of seven when I got a Delta-Talker. I haven't stopped talking since that day! With the help of the para-educators at my school, I spent hours learning the language which was very hard. I would get mad, upset and even stubborn, but I kept working at it and am glad that I didn't give up. I could say exactly what I wanted to say, tell people that I wanted or needed, let them know that I really like M & M's and pop for a snack and just plain speak when I wanted. My eyes and head finally got a rest!

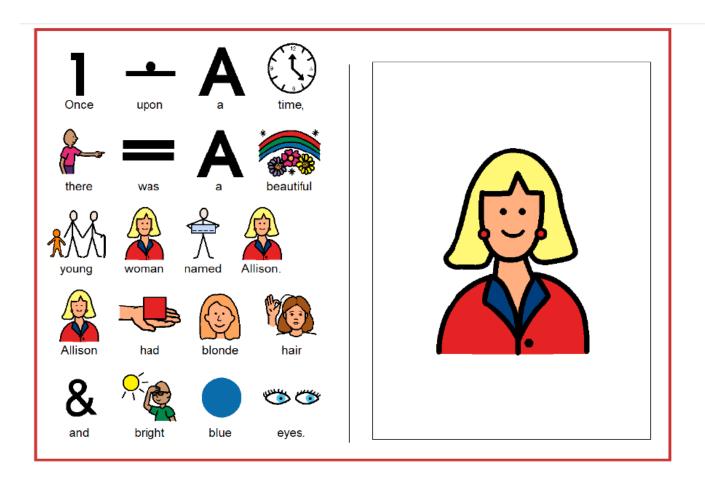
I used my Delta-Talker so much that I wore it out. To replace it, I got a Pathfinder which wasn't hard to learn to use. Now that I've had these devices for several years and learned how to use them, I am much happier and glad that I'm able to talk to everyone!

When I ask my para-educatior for help to say a word, I like to say it before she can look it up in the book, tell her she is old and slow and even try to fire her from her job which is a way I joke with her. Really, I couldn't get along without her! With my grandfather, I like to tell him that he is handsome and then ask for a dollar. It works every time!

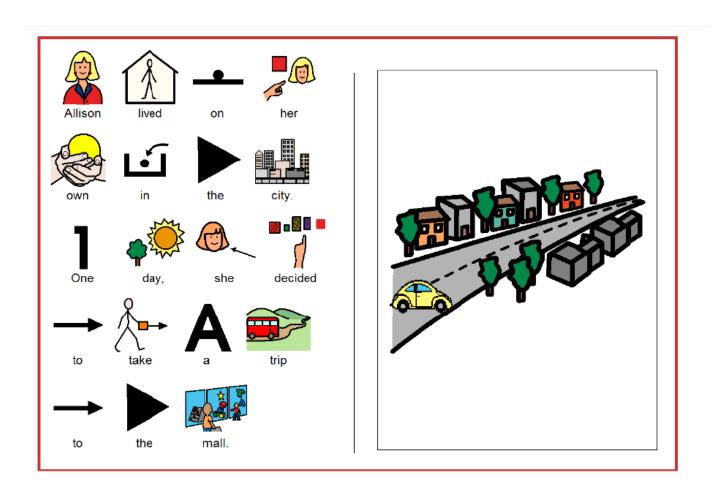
My communications devices have changed my life in so many ways, made me happy and given me a way to communicate the rest of my life. Gompers Habilitation Center Adult AAC Group Mattie Matlock, Danielle Cuzick, Virginia Perez, Becca Urban, Misty Fletcher, Chris Ransom, Kyle Bright, Mickey Gardner, Karen Lehmann, Buddy Eschenbacher, Victoria Sucato USA

My name is Kendra Brown and I am the Speech Language Pathologist at Gompers Habilitation Center. Victoria Sucato is my Speech Therapy Assistant and all the other names you see listed are adults enrolled in our DTA (Day Training for Adults) Program. Our Adult AAC Group is very diverse!!! We range in age from 20's to 40's, have a variety of skill levels and many different devices (Pathfinder, Dynavox V, Touch & Talk, Mercury, Vantage and progressive communicators). We wrote this story using all these different devices, as well as some low-tech options for one of our participants who is blind and has difficulty with her Touch and Talk. Although it is sometimes difficult to create activities for such a wide variety of people, we always have a great time!!! Our adults would be thrilled to see « Gompers Habilitation Center Adult AAC Group » up on your website! Thank you for your consideration!

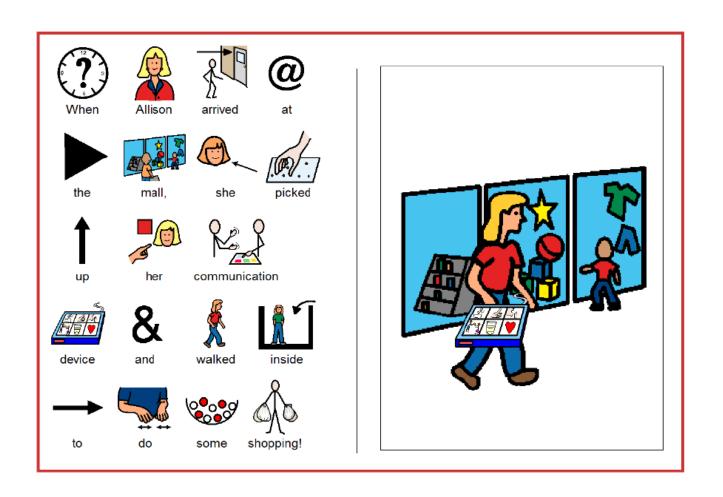




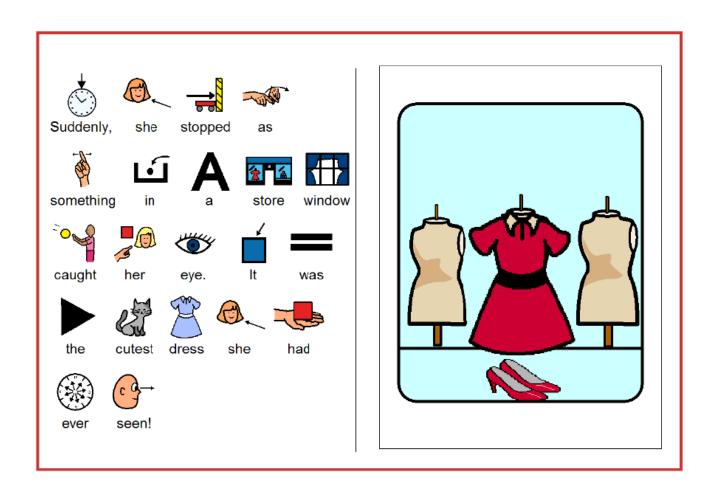
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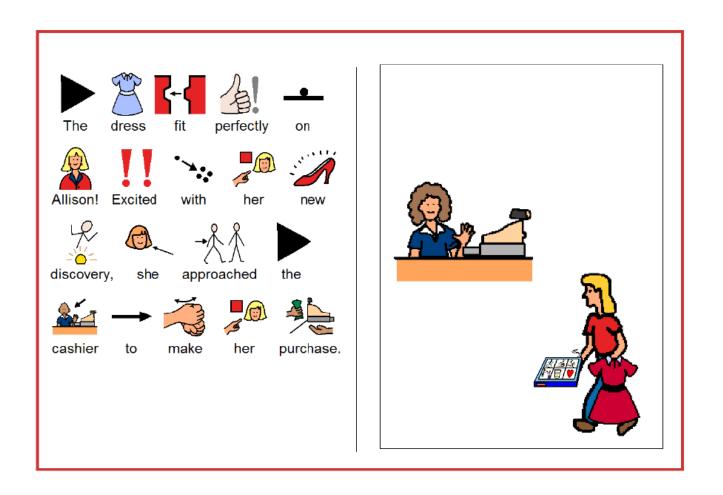
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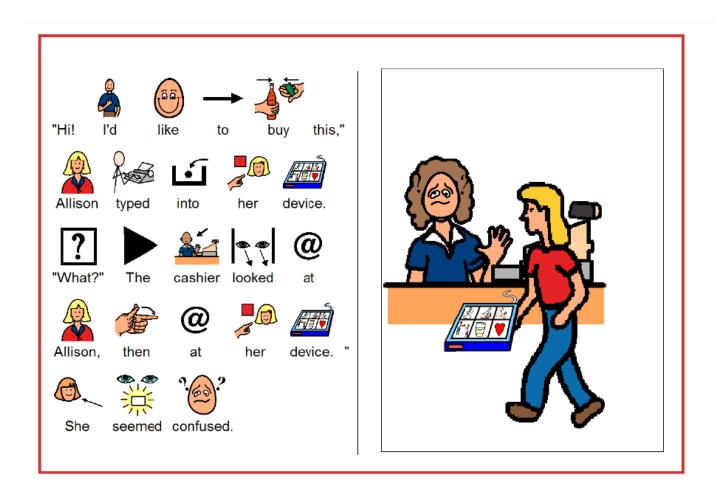
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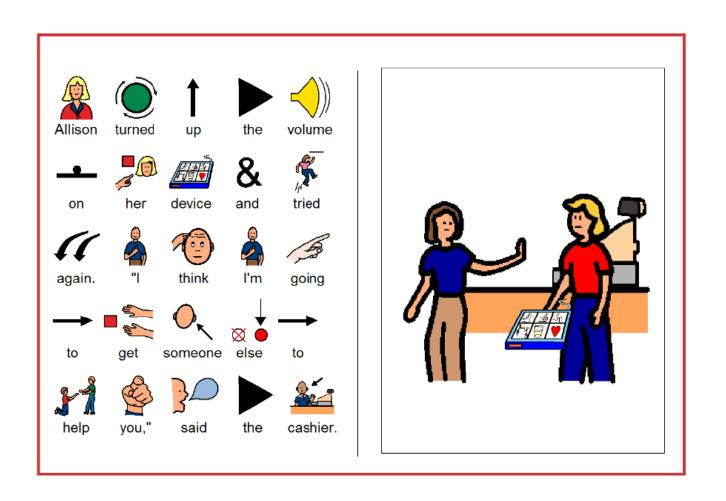


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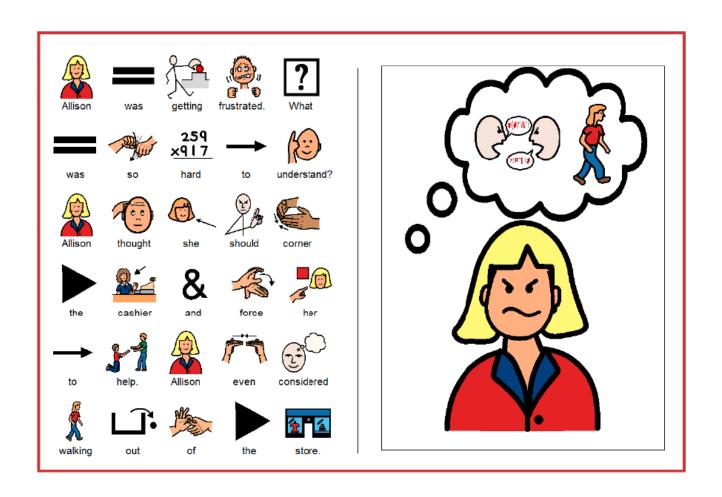


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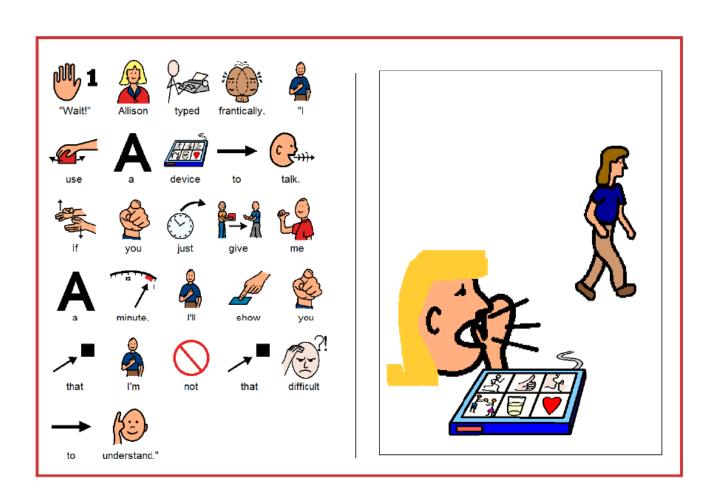
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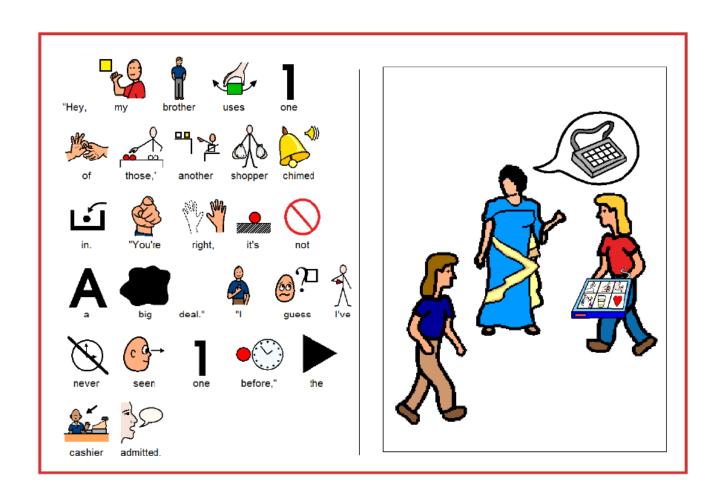


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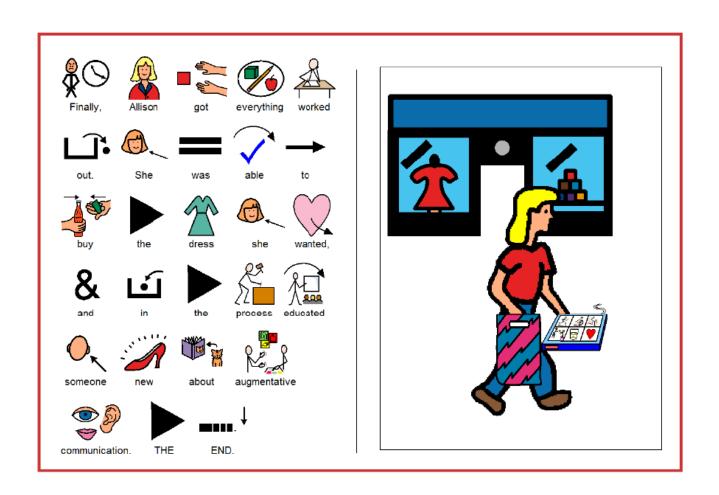


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[TITLE] Written by Gompers Adult AAC Group



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#### Ivan Alzate Age 6 USA

Ivan is in the 1st grade in an AAC class in Maryland. The class contains 6 students who all use high end communication devices. He uses a DynaVox 3100 to communicate and access the currciulum. The assignement for this writing activity was to create a story about someone that wanted to go somewhere or get something but no one could understand what they were saying so they had to use they communication device to be understood. Mrs. Donohue is the teacher of the class, she did not edit the stories that the students wrote since she wanted them to be in the students own words and wrting styles.

#### Using a Talker

There was a boy named Sunny. He had a talker to tell he want healies. He get mad at people because he can not talk good. He wanted to cry but he not cry he used his DynaVox to say he want new healies. He get healies and he is happy.

Ivan

## Jenell Gordon Age 42 USA



#### **Technology Gives Me A Voice**

By Jenell Gordon

This is a story of restoration and resurrection. During my graduate studies at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, I experienced recurrent tingling and numbness in my left arm and leg. Preliminary research indicated that the cause was probably neurological. After graduation, I accepted a clinical fellowship in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) in my home town of Norfolk, Virginia.

Concerned about the feelings in my extremities I consulted a neurologist and got an MRI. On May 6, 1993 my suspicions were confirmed – I had an arteriovenous malformation (AVM). At home, I searched through my textbooks determined to satisfy my curiosity – what is it? An AVM is a cluster of malformed veins and arteries. In my

case, the congenital AVM was on the pons, connected to the brainstem. Removal of the AVM was highly recommended and risky. There I was 27-years-old – poised and ready to embark on a successful career – facing brain surgery.

With faith, and my parents, I began searching for a neurosurgeon. The first doctor was associated with the University of Virginia Medical Center. He was world-renowned but seemed hesitant about doing the surgery due to its location. The second doctor, known as the *guru* of AVM, was associated with the Yale-New Haven Hospital in Connecticut. He offered a positive attitude, and a clear- cut plan to safely remove the AVM. On January 7, 1997, at the age of 31, I faced death and after a successful surgery – lived. My journey however, had just begun.

Recovery from this type of surgery requires extensive specialized rehabilitation. After only two weeks in rehab, my insurance company demanded I be transferred to a long-term care facility for the elderly. As a result of inappropriate care and neglect, I have suffered many post-operative deficits, including the inability to speak. I was devastated.

My SLP training and my experience as a long-term hospital patient has placed me in the challenging position of being mentally alert with no voice. Fifteen years after graduating, I was given an instrument with which to communicate – the Vanguard II by the Prentke Romich Company. This Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) device is my life-line to the world. It is a godsend! It has improved the quality of my life by enabling me to communicate my thoughts and feelings. It has given me independence and control. The AAC device connects to my PC and allows me to interact with the world through e-mail. As I type on the AAC device the words appear on the computer monitor like magic!

The high point of my journey was volunteering at Norfolk State University. I demonstrated the AAC device for SLP students, underlining the importance of using technology to improve people's lives. I still communicate with the students. The Vanguard II has restored my voice and resurrected my dream of making a difference in the lives of others. I am grateful to the Prentke Romich Company.

# FINALIST Joe Hemphill Age 64 USA

My name is Joe Hemphill. I am 64 years old and I was born with cerebral palsy. At first I composed my stories on an electric typewriter and then later on a computer. I studied writing at several local colleges. I am a member of the Board of Directors of United Cerebral Palsy of Central California. I can usually be found at a local coffee shop where at times someone reads my latest poetry or essays. I use a stick in my left hand to push in the keys on my computer keyboard through a plastic template with holes in it. I have very limited use of my hands and this way of typing allows me complete access to my computer. I use my speech device in a

similar manner, hitting one key/space at a time with my finger. The computer has opened up the world of books and newspapers to me. In addition to making the writing process much quicker and easier, it provides access for submitting letters and articles to newspapers and online newsletters and websites. My voice can be heard in many places now.



Jimmy and the Talking Machine

By

Joe Hemphill

Jimmy, who couldn't speak clearly or walk, was very sad because he didn't have anyway to play with the other kids in the neighborhood. Jimmy thought that it

would be fun to watch the other kids ride by on their bikes while he played gas station.

The other kids could stop for gas. But his mom and dad always said no. "They won't understand you." His parents were afraid the other kids would make fun of him.

Then, one day, Jimmy's mom and dad learned about a machine that could talk for him. It could have messages recorded into it by his parents. All he had to do was hit a button and it would repeat what they had said. They brought it home for Jimmy. His dad recorded "Hello, my name is Jimmy." Jimmy tried pushing the button. It repeated what his dad had sad. Jimmy was excited and wanted his dad to record more things.

Jimmy's dad recorded more messages such as, "Fill it up?" and "Cash or credit?"

Jimmy's mom said to add, "Drive safely."

At first, Jimmy could not remember which button was for what message. So his mom made a small picture for each button and highlighted some buttons with different colors. Jimmy studied the pictures and colors for a long time.

On Saturday, Jimmy's mom and dad took him and his machine out to the front yard. Jimmy really didn't know whether the idea was going to work. But he wanted to try it. He wanted so much to have some friends. His dad put the garden hose in Jimmy's right hand. His parents went back into the house. They knew they had done all they could. It was up to Jimmy now.

Jimmy waited for someone to ride by on his bike. Bobby rode by on his red bike.

Jimmy pushed a button that said, "Get your gas here." Bobby rode right past. Jimmy

thought it was a dumb idea after all. But in a few minute, Bobby came back.

"How much a gallon?"

Jimmy pushed the button with a green "3" on it, replying "three dollars."

Bobby said, "Make it two gallons. Hey, that sure is a nice talking machine."

"Thank you." Jimmy's talking machine said when he pushed the button with the smiley face on it. While Jimmy was filling up Bobby's tank, four more kids on bikes pulled up for gas. Jimmy pushed a button that had a hand on it, saying, "I will be right with you."

After that, each time around the block, one of the kids would stop to get gas. And Jimmy would fill their bike up. When the tank was full, Jimmy would push the button with a picture of a wheel on it. The talking machine would say, "You're ready to roll."

Jimmy spent most afternoons at his gas station. With help from his talking machine, he made many friends in the neighborhood.

Julie Wolf Age 43 USA

#### Story:

By Julie Wolf.

My Device helps me tell people whats bothering me. My device helps me tell someone a story. My device helps me communicate my wants and needs.

### Karastina Hafner Age 20 USA

« I like to write. I like to type. « Kara uses a DynaVox V to help her « talk ». She wrote the story during a speech session with me. Kara and I have worked together for three years. Kara was thinking about « her friends and her brother, Zack, at college ». Kara was thinking about « growing up. » The social story is to help her « feel happy » about her future.

-Kara Hafner & Amy Michalak, MA CCC-SLP

#### GRADUATION SOCIAL STORY

I will be 21 years old on December 10.

I am growing up.

I will live in a new house at 12 Jamir Drive in Fayetteville.

I will live with Liz, Lisa, and Jenny, my roommates.

I want Julie to live with me too.

Julie will stay in her family's house.

I will graduate from Liverpool High School.

I leave high school.

I am growing up. I will go to an adult program.

I want to work, sing, play games, do arts and crafts, and go shopping.

#### Larry Biondi USA

# Shut Up, Shot Down

by Larry Biondi

"Don't worry, sir. We've got it under control."

It would be easier to explain if I compared my lifelong predicament with being a foreigner who doesn't speak English. But for me and others with speech disabilities, it's much different. People don't just ignore us, they patronize us, think we're stupid, and maybe fear us too. We hear them. They don't hear us.

The police are no exception. My power wheelchair broke down one afternoon, out in the community. I flagged down the police for assistance. What I wanted was to call my support person to the rescue. Without taking the time to listen and understand, they rudely raffled through my work bag and belongings in search of my I.D.

Every time I told them what I really wanted, they answered, "Don't worry, sir. We've got it under control" — which they didn't. Lucky for me, my chair kicked in. I fled police protection and wheeled to another person for help.

On my way to a party, I knew I was headed in the right direction but couldn't remember the exact address. I asked a neighbor for directions, and she went into her house, I thought for a phone book or something. Then she returned to say, "Just hold on. I called the police for you."

Geez. I didn't know asking for directions was a crime. I took off down the street again, but the cops arrived, pursuing me as if I'd run a red light. At least I was the talk of the party. My hosts said I was their first guest to arrive with a police escort.

When we are young, speech therapists show people with speaking disabilities how to get peanut butter off the roofs of our mouths with our tongues, to control our breath when we speak, to talk slow-ly and e-nun-ci-ate. No one teaches us that the problem isn't in us but in the way society perceives us, and no one is teaching society how to listen to us.

People escape their own uneasiness, conveniently, by choosing to hush our voices, shuffling us to others as if to imply, "Well, I did my part, it's their problem now."

If they could hear our unspoken words! Larry Biondi is an independent living specialist at Progress Independent Living Center in Forest Park, IL

# Lateef McLeod USA

Best Friend By Lateef McLeod

Malik was the most popular guy in kindergarten. All his classmates liked him. The boys all were anxious to play with him and the girls wanted to chase him. Even all the teachers at Rightguard elementary thought the kid was one of the most adorable kids they ever met. His teacher Miss Rhineheart was so proud he was in her class and bragged about him to all her friends. Malik was good in sports and was the good star of his little league baseball and basketball team. Things were going good for the little dude.

One day a new kid arrived in Miss Rhineheart's classroom. When Malik walked in class this new kid was already in front of the class with Miss Rhineheart. However this kid wasn't like any kid Malik had seen before. The first thing was that this kid was in a wheelchair and Malik had never seen a kid in a wheelchair before. The other thing that was weird about this boy was he communicated in what Malik thought was a box. The talking box had a squeaky little boy's voice coming out of it and it told the class that the kid's name was Jamil, he was five, he favorite color was red, his favorite TV show was Sesame Street, and his favorite Sesame Street character was Snuffleufogus. At the end of his speech Jamil's talking box said that he wanted to become friends with everyone then Jamil gave a big smile.

However, when recess came no one played with Jamil. All the time Jamil's talking box kept saying, "Can anyone play with me?" This occurrence kept happening for the next couple school days with Jamil left totally alone. Miss Rhineheart even tried to persuade her to play with Jamil promising three stars to every student who played with him. That didn't work and it just made the kids tease him chanting "teacher's pet" at recess.

Then one day, Riley, the class bully, came up to Jamil and started to bother him. Jamil started to cry making most of the kids laughed. Malik, who was playing tetherball with his friend Frank, saw Riley bothering Jamil and quickly rushed over there. He pushed Riley aside and took Jamil to where he and Frank were. Riley started to charge over there then saw Miss Rhineheart glare at him and stopped dead in his tracks. He grumbled then went to see if he could bully someone else.

From that day Jamil and Malik hung out every day. They found out that they had a lot in common liked they both liked watching the Oakland Warriors and listening to Keak da Sneak. They soon went to play at each other's houses after school and went to the movies on the weekend. Soon they were best friends. They kept being best friends through high school and went to the same college. Even when Jamil got married Malik was his best man at his side as he was in kindergarten.

#### Leslie Zelaya Age 8 USA

Leslie is in the 2nd grade in an AAC class in Maryland. The class contains 6 students who all use high end communication devices. She uses a DynaVox 3100 with scanning to communicate and access the currciulum. She accesses her device with a buddy switch by her left knee. The assignement for this writing activity was to create a story about someone that wanted to go somewhere or get something but no one could understand what they were saying so they had to use they communication device to be understood. Mrs. Donohue is the teacher of the class, she did not edit the stories that the students wrote since she wanted them to be in the students own words and wrting styles.

#### Using a Talker

There was a girl names Marge. She don't talk. She get mad. She need DaynVox she want play with new doll. She use DynaVox to tell mama. She get new doll. She is happy.

Leslie

Lora White USA

#### Lora's story

My family helps me out by helping me do the things that I thought that I would never be able to do. My fammily take me to go out in the community. They also take me on outings, out to eat, and to the Doctors. They help me do the things that are fun to do like shopping, going to my firends house, reading storys to kids, cooking, being able to talk to my peers and family members. I love to do thing with my mom who is a big part of my life. She also helps me out with personal things going on in my life.

By: Lora White.

#### Luca AbiChedid Age 9 USA

I am 9 years old. I am in the Centerville school. Centerville is a school in Beverly

I use My Tobii to communicate and read.

I use viking to write. The My Tobii is at school all week. I worked in my house and at school.

I won the pie-eating contest by Luca AbiChedid

On Saturday from 4:30 to 7:30 my family and I went to the pie-eating at Centerville School. We sat between Amy and Mrs Gove. We listened to Mrs Noglar, who said. "Players will dig around and eat off the whip cream. You will not share the pie. The first person to be done when 20 seconds are up, gets the metal. On your mark, get set, go."

I ate and I ate. I dug around the apple. My brother Nichola was in the crowd. He yelled and yelled, "GO LUCA! Eat and eat and eat!" My brother uses an AAC device to talk. He used to poke at the letters with his hand, but now he uses a switch to access his Apple computer. The computer freaked out and said "I am going to sleep." The computer slept. I was so sad because I couldn't hear my brother cheer anymore.

I was the winner. I got the metal! I won the metal + a golden piece of the pie. I was proud of myself.

The next day at 3 a. m., they showed the video on CW56 and at 10:30 a.m. channel 7. It was also shown on GBH 2 at seven after the news hour. I took Nichola to CW56 to watch the video in the studio. His Apple said "Honk" and the spelling page came up. There is the keyboard the keyboard is like ABC but there was 3 word banks. Nichola was happy because his computer woke up. Nichola said "good job Luca!"

Maggie Serda Age 28 USA

Maggie's story

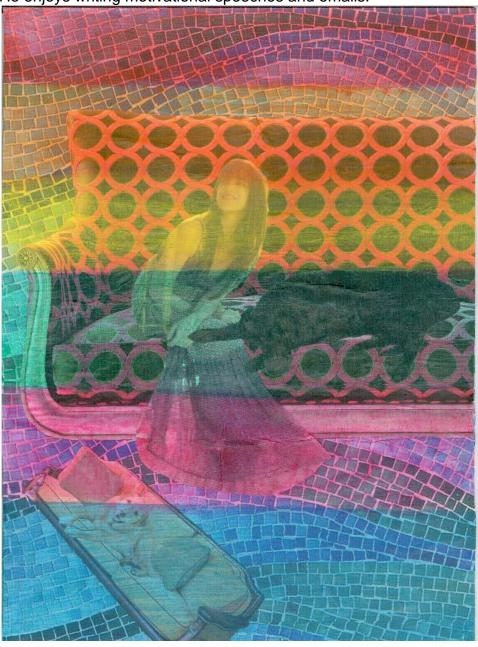
By: Maggie Serda

My Device helps me say alot of things to communicate to my staff and peers. It helps me to speak my mind and say what I am feeling. It helps me to keep important doctor dates and visits in my device. It helps me to spell. It helps me to take out my furstration. It helps me to tell people what I need. Most of all and very improtant My device gives me a voice.

### Max Grange Age 21 USA

Max uses a Vanguard communication device from PRC. He wrote his story independently and saved it in a Notebook in his communication device. Once all the ideas, characters and main theme was in place, his speech therapist, job coach and mother assisted him in forming it into the story by giving him a lot of choices and asking a lot of open ended questions. We did assist with some suggestions, but if Max did not agree, it was not included. Max loves to write and will spend hours in his room independently writing.

He enjoys writing motivational speeches and emails.



#### The Launching Couch

#### By Max Grange

Once upon a time there was a girl named Ablyn who liked to fly. She lived in Honolulu with her dogs, Www.com and B2w. Www.com has the most dramatic talker for acting. It turns his barks into words!

Honolulu has the most magnificent rainbows. Ablyn, Www.com and B2w fly magically to the other side of the rainbow to play with empty toy boxes. All the actual toys stayed with children on this side of the rainbow. Ablyn and the dogs go swimming in the rainbow ocean. They bowled with rainbow balls during doggy bowling day. How will they find their way back home?

They have heard of an island in the rainbow ocean with a launching couch. They know they must find the launching couch to bounce them back to the other side of the rainbow when they are ready. They decide they must visit a library to find a map showing the location of the island with the fun launching couch.

They begin their journey to the island by riding on a bus singing. Do we want to make a stop at the concert school? The dogs wanted to visit this school where the curriculum is taught through songs. What a great way to learn! The dogs are happy! They dance and do gymnastics to the songs. They want to stay, they want to play games. Ten games. Do the want another game? Yes, but Ablyn reminds them it is time to go home. They must get back to riding on the bus. Ablyn and the dogs play games on the bus.

There is an actor sitting on the bus listening to music through a Vanguard. Ablyn asks him if he knows the best way to get to the island of the launching couch. He knows! Using his communication device, he tells them they must ride the bus to the air train station. The air train will stop at the island.

They love the air train! It is fast and fun. Finally, they descend onto land. It is the island of the launching couch. They quickly get in line to jump on the couch and get bounced back home.

1,2,3,4 they all get bounced very high. They land. Wait a minute, they landed in Kentucky. Oh no! They looked around and decided to take a vacation at the Kentucky castle. It turned out the actor from the bus happened to own the Kentucky castle! He invited them to stay for as long as they wanted. Ablyn, Www.com, and B2w enjoyed their vacation so much they decided to live there! read

# Min Hunt-Neu, Age 7, United States

Min is in the 1st grade in an AAC class in Maryland. The class contains 6 students who all use high end communication devices. She uses a Dynamyte 3100 to communicate and access the curriculum. The assignement for this writing activity was to create a story about someone that wanted to go somewhere or get something but no one could understand what they were saying so they had to use they communication device to be understood. Mrs. Donohue is the teacher of the class, she did not edit the stories that the students wrote since she wanted them to be in the students own words and wrting styles.

# Using a Talker

There was a boy Dylan. He have talker he don't like use talker. Mrs. Donohue don't know what he saying. He want go Kids Zone he use talker to talk to Mrs. Donohue. I want go to Kid's Zone to play. Mrs. Donohue talk to Dylan you can go to Kids Zone. Dylan is happy playing at Kids Zone.

Nick Warfle Age 10 USA

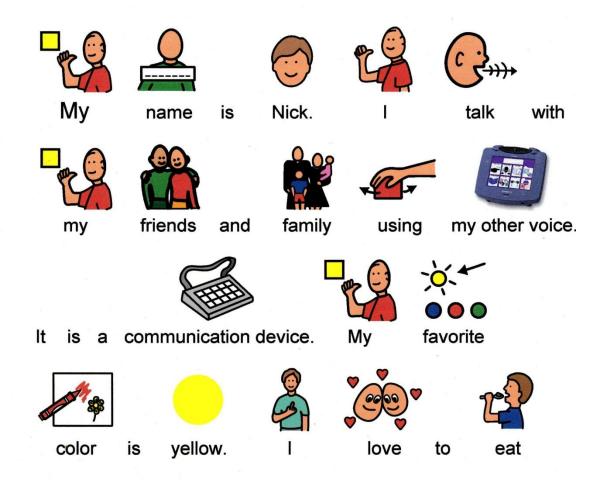
Nick is a ten-year-old boy who uses a Dynavox MT4 to communicate. Nick loves to learn and share his knowledge with friends and family. He had the opportunity to participate in many community learning events this past year and wrote a story about how his «other voice» allowed him to learn and participate in each activity. He dictated the story to his Speech Therapist (Graduate Student Clinician) using his MT4 and the story was typed using Writing with Symbols 2000 software.

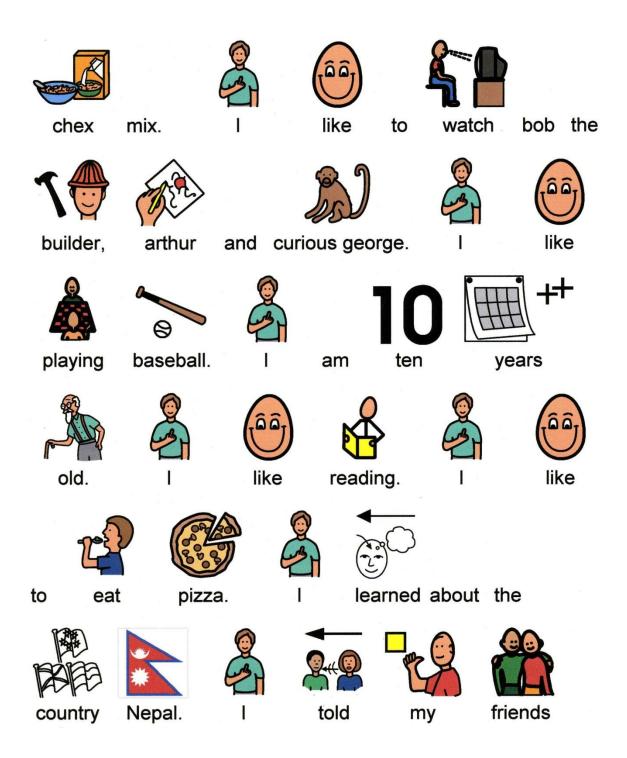


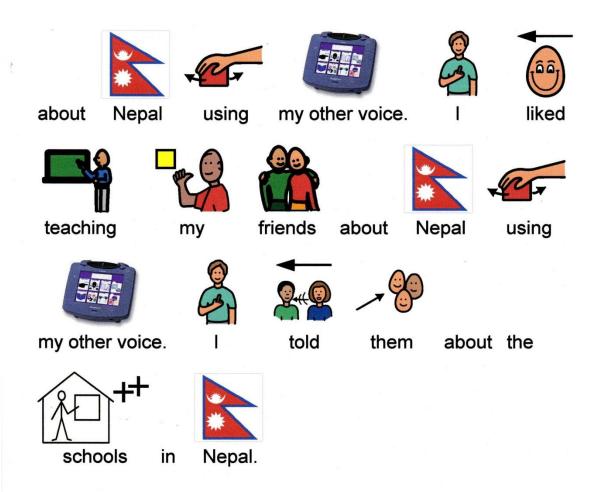


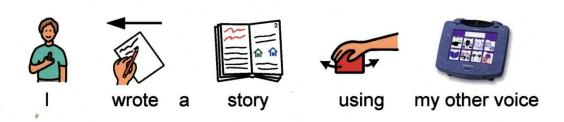


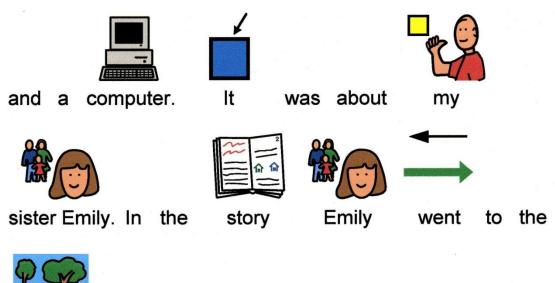
# My Other Voice: a True Story



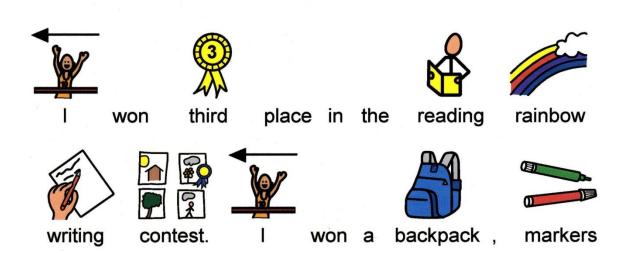


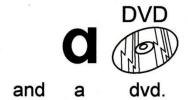






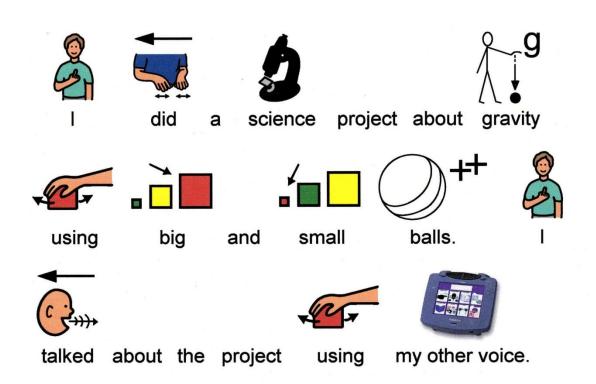


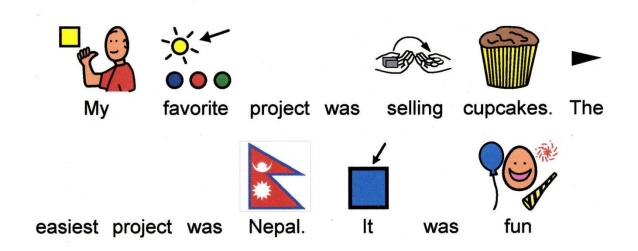


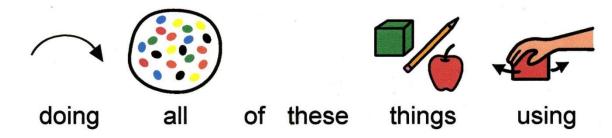


my other voice.











my other voice.

# Rebecca Barbush Age 26 USA

I have been writing since high school. In college, i majored in English and journalism. I enjoy spreading the word about AAC and advocating for disability rights.

#### Playtime is for Everyone

Both Zack and Jeremy stayed home from school today. They went to different schools, formed a different circle of friends. They had different likes and dislikes: their favorite foods toys and games. The two boys, who had never met, find out they have a lot more in common than they think and they share viewpoints allowing them understand each other better.

Zack's mother put the thermometer in his ear, while Jeremy's mother placed it under his tongue. Their mothers shook their heads after reading the results. "Looks like you're going to the doctors, they said to their sons. Zach got dressed by himself, while Jeremy's mom helped. Jeremy, who prefers being independent, uses sign language to tell his mom that he can do it by himself. She says "I know you can, but we're in a hurry to get to the doctors so you can feel better faster." She puts his leg braces on and helps him into his wheelchair. Then she hooks what looks to be a computer onto his chair. Zack's father works from his office-at-home, so he drops Zach and his mother at the doctor's office. Jeremy and his mother take the bus. They get there at the same time and recognize each other from school, but they just wave. The waiting room was yellow and bright. There were lots of windows to let the sunlight in.

The receptionist gave their mothers paperwork to fill out while they waited for the doctor to see them. Zack sat in a chair, looking around at other adults flipping through magazines. He too grabbed a magazine and started flipping through it. Zack went straight for the table with beads on the curly cue wires. There were several other kids at the table. At first they were surprised that a boy in a wheelchair wanted to play with them. They looked at their parent to see if it was okay. The parents urged their children to keep playing with all the kids.

Except Zach, who was looking at his magazine. He was only pretending to look at it; he was really gazing at the scene before him.

It only took Jeremy a few minutes to pick out the words he wanted to say and let his computer speaks it for him.

"Hi, my name is Jeremy. I'm in the third grade. I have a hard time speaking so I have this communication device to speak for me." Jeremy said as he waved his hands enthusiastically. The other kids joined in. They understood Jeremy through his gestures, like when he had to use his computer to speak for him. The kids were so interested in their game they forgot they were sick.

Zach wanted to join in, but being eleven years old, his mind filled with questions. He had never been around someone who couldn't speak: how should I act? Could I touch him? What if something happens? What if I can't understand him? Zack walked over to the coffee table to pick out a new magazine.

Jeremy smiled at Zach and motioned him over with his hand. He typed something into his computer. "Do you want to play?" His computer spoke for him in a kid's voice.

Zach walked up to Jeremy looking puzzled.

"This is a communication device," Jeremy's computer spoke. Jeremy had typed in a standard explanation that remained in his computer ready to explain why he needed to use a computer instead of his voice. He used it when he met new people.

"My muscles are weak. That includes the muscles I use to speak. So I have to introduce myself and share my ideas in different ways. I use my fingers, gestures, and an alphabet board to tell people when I want something.

"That must be really hard," Zach said.

"Mostly family members understand me better. They're used to my AAC device." "What's AAC," Zach asked him.

"AAC is a name for anything I use to communicate. Technology is growing. Cell phones, Blackberries and computers are an example of this. AAC, augmentative alternative communication, is also growing rapidly. I can program a message ahead of time and use it whenever I need it. I can point to words or pictures of things I want to say."

Zach wondered what was wrong with Jeremy. "How come you're here? Zack asked.

"I have a fever." Jeremy's computer answered after he typed in his response. "Me too," Zach laughed.

Jeremy and Zach began to play with the other kids at the table. Zach realized they didn't need language to communicate. After all, playtime is fun and easy for every kid. After a while, they forgot they were sick.



# Taffy the Dog Goes on an Airplane Trip

By Sam and Kerri



Taffy the dog belongs to my cousins, Bryna and Liana.



In 1995, my cousins lived in Thailand with my Uncle Paul, Aunt Shelley, and Taffy the dog.



That summer, my cousins decided to come to visit my family in Seattle, Washington. We live in the United States.



They took Taffy the dog with them to the airport. Taffy was in a wooden box made especially for pets, and had to be loaded in the cargo hold section of the airplane.



The plane left Thailand, with Taffy in the cargo hold.



My cousins stopped in Japan to change planes for the long trip across the ocean to Seattle.



When the plane landed in Japan, the flight attendant called my Uncle Paul's name over the intercom system. He spoke to her before he exited the airplane. She told him that Taffy the dog had chewed her way out of the box during the flight, and was loose in the cargo hold.



Uncle Paul had to walk up the conveyor belt to go inside the cargo hold of the airplane and find Taffy the dog. Taffy was hiding behind all the boxes and suitcases, and was running away from the baggage handlers.



My Uncle Paul found Taffy inside the cargo hold. She was happy to see him and wagged her tail. The airline workers got a hammer and some wood to fix Taffy's pet carrier at the Japanese airport. Taffy had to go back into the box and back into the cargo hold of the airplane.



My Uncle Paul, Aunt Shelley, and my cousins finally landed in Seattle. They re-built Taffy's box at our house to make it extra strong. Taffy was tired. She slept for 24 hours straight.



After visiting us, Taffy had another long airplane ride. This time she flew from Seattle to Massachusetts to visit my grandparents.



I was happy to hear that Taffy stayed in her wooden box inside the cargo hold for the whole airplane trip.



I wish I could go down inside the cargo hold of an airplane. I wonder if Taffy was running around in the cargo hold while the plane was in flight.

The End.



About the Storyteller

Sam is 17 years old and loves to travel by airplane, train, bicycle, and skis. He uses his speech, signs, gestures, pictures, symbols, maps, and assistive technology devices to share his many stories.

#### Acknowledgements

Sam told the Taffy story to his mother, father, and siblings using a combination of speech, signs, maps, and gestures. His mother videotaped his narrative on one occasion, and on another occasion, she took notes regarding his narrative about Taffy the dog. Together they emailed (mother typing) his Aunt, Uncle, and cousins for further details. Finally, Sam's mother made a talking book using Clicker5 (www.cricksoft.com) and then made it into a MS Word document. Sam's Mom augmented the sentence structures to help with the flow of this true story. The photographs are of Sam, Taffy, Sam's cousins. We used some maps, airplane photos (it was a Northwest Airlines flight), and airport photos from the Internet.

June 2008

#### **Internet Photo Credits**

Page 3: Map of Thailand http://www.divetheworldthailand.com/map-of-thailand.htm

Page 5: Cargo hold w/conveyor belt

http://www.boeing.com/commercial/news/feature/images/reliefk62197\_n.jpg

Page 6: NWA Take Off

http://www.airplane-pictures.net/images/uploaded-images/2007-2/2732.jpg

Page 7: Map of Japan

http://www.spacetoday.org/images/Japan/JapanMap.jpg

Page 8: Stewardess photo http://www.labornotes.org/files/images/stewardess270.jpg

#### Page 9: Cargo loading picture

http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://bp3.blogger.com/\_ERJ3VTs4Tho/R1hJYU MUgbl/AAAAAAA\_4/KY5\_zbsJbVQ/s320/iStock\_000003677182XSmall.jpg&imgrefurl=http://travelsentry.blogspot.com/2007/12/confessions-of-baggage-handler-can-you.html&h=320&w=280&sz=24&hl=en&start=11&um=1&tbnid=9t4M9k5iUMXIjM:&tbnh=118&tbnw=103&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dbaggage%2Bhandler%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG

Page 11: NWA plane at Airport tarmac

http://static.flickr.com/19/116947360\_9ea0468625.jpg

Page 12: USA map

http://county-map.digital-topo-maps.com/united-states-map.gif

Page 13: NWA plane banking left http://www.avsim.com/pages/1200/pss/pss04.jpg

Samantha Whitman Age 19 USA

Sam lives with her Mom, Dad, brother and 6 pets. She loves to write and hang out with her friends. Sam is a big fan of Elvis. When she graduates from high school, Sam wants to become a short story writer.

I used gestures, sign language, my DynaVox with an onscreen keyboard and Picture Word Power software. I had help with grammar, verb tense and agreement and sentence structure. I had fun. Next year, I want to write 10 stories.

# The Princess and The Space Bat by Samantha Whitman



# The Princess and The Space Bat by Samantha Whitman

One night a Princess in a tall castle heard a strange sound. She wheeled herself slowly to see what it was. There was a big black bat on the ceiling. The Princess talked with her hands and said, "Friend, come here!" The bat flew down and landed on her shoulder. This was a talking bat. "I come from outer space." said the bat. Suddenly, the bat kissed the Princess on the neck. The Princess fainted.

"Oh no, What have I done?" said the bat. He shook her but he couldn't wake up his Princess. The bat reached into his wing and pulled out his cellphone. He dialed 911. The batmedics answered the phone, "Hello, Bat Emergency". "Help me with my Princess!" the bat said. "We will be there right away." The batmedics drove to the castle. "Here comes the ambulance." said the bat. The bat carried her to the ambulance.

The batmedics drove quickly to the hospital. The bat put his Princess down in the hospital bed. The doctors came in and checked her out. His princess had a seizure. The doctors put a breathing mask on her. Her friends came walking into the room to see her. Her friends had a flower for her. The Princess was still in a deep sleep. All of a sudden the bat kissed her hand. The bat had a ring. He put the ring on her finger. He wanted to marry her. All of her friends were surprised. They gasped 'AHHH" and covered their mouths. "Who are you?" her friends asked. "I am the King of Rock and Roll" he said.

Just then the Princess woke up and looked at everyone in the room. Her friends shrieked, "Look at your hand!" The Princess said, "What?" with her hands. "The bat wants to marry you!" said her friends. The Princess gasped "AHHHH" and covered her mouth. "I think I love him" and she kissed him on the cheek.

1

The bat began to sing "Blue Suede Shoes". The doctors heard the singing. They came running into the room. The doctors said, "Bat, are you the King of Rock?" "Yes" said the bat "and this is my Queen!" "Can I take her home?" "Yes" said the doctors.

The bat gently put the Princess over his shoulder and drove back to the castle in his pink car.



2

Sara Perkins Age 34 USA

My Name is Sara Perkins. I use this Vanguard Communication Device to help me speak. My Vanguard helps me talk. My vanguard cooks. My Vanguard calls. It helps me read to Children. My vanguard helps me Say "Bingo!" durring the game Bingo. June 2nd and 3rd Rebbeca and I will be going to a work shop. My Vangurd helps me say what things are fun. It helps me play checkers. It helps me listen to music. It helps me color and paint. It helps me when I help in nursery at church. My Vangurd allows me to help jane in the workshop. It helps me sing. Tell important dates. Thank you for listening.

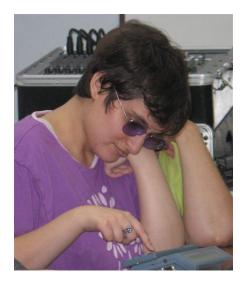
- Sara Perkins

# Sharisa Joy Kochmeister Age 29 USA

I'm a graduate of Denver University with a 3.6 GPA and a dual degree in Psychology and Sociology; a speaker, consultant, trainer and advocate in the areas of disability rights, inclusion, and alternative methods of communication; president of AUTCOM and advisor to ASA, and have cerebral palsy and autism.

I use a Lightwriter and Pathfinder, used those and a laptop with word expansion and prediction to write and revise this via one-fingered typing. This fairytale is a story I have told in Sunday schools, classrooms, colleges, and at conferences in both longer and abbreviated versions, but have never had published. I also write essays and poetry and speeches to explain disabilities and inclusion and how they are ameliorated via communication – in my case, AAC. I have spoken all over America and in Canada, trained others, and continue to do so and am, as mentioned above the President of Autcom, an advisor to ASA and Autism Perspective, a member of the Executive Committee of the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council, a board member of COAPSE, scheduled to speak at 2 upcoming regional conferences on Assistive Technology and AAC.

I have won university, private and governmental awards for advocacy, influencing public policy, scholarship (despite being thought to be retarded before becoming a user of alternative communication at age 13), writing, composing, and distinguished community and college service. I am a published author and performed composer and am using AAC to write my autobiography. I consult, train and advocate for people with disabilities and their families and other care and educational/employment/residential and medical providers; and promote literacy by using my own example of being thought to be illiterate before I typed at age 13 and having gone on to college and honors once people were able to recognize my literacy and intellect.



#### THREE WISHES FOR PRINCESS SHARISA JOY

One faraway day, a **princess** was born. Her father named her "Sharisa Joy, Princess of Happy Music", showering her with love, toys and delightful books. Everybody marveled at her warmth, charm and melodious voice as Sharisa grew strong and HAPPY!

Nearby was an invisible realm called **Autisma-land**, ruled by **AWFUL AUTISMA**. Her "fortress" had a crowded, eerily quiet dungeon occasionally shattered by mournful moaning, crazy cackling, endless echoing or shrill screams; but the **usual** sound was **DEAFENING SILENCE**. The **Prisoners** were **cursed children** whose minds were twisted out of shape. Their **truth** was locked in unbreakable cages. They couldn't tell pain from pleasure or understand language. Their voices were too loud, soft, mechanical, garbled, echo-y or completely gone! **Robot-like shells** were left behind that couldn't explain their sad fates and **nobody** knew what really happened, so families and friends who cared truly **suffered**.

AUTISMA was cruel and ugly, hating happiness, beauty, music, children and love. Her creepy spies were everywhere to ensure there wasn't much love, happiness, beauty or music anywhere. When Sharisa was still very small, the creepiest spy told Autisma about the beloved princess. Autisma flew into a rage, stormed out, strapped on her jetpack (Modern Witches DON'T Use Brooms!), soared to the Valley, sneaked into the dining room (Invisibility Makes Sneaking Easy!), and knocked Sharisa cold! She cast her spell, stole Sharisa's spirit and mind, left a shell-like body, and headed for her fortress.

Time dragged as Sharisa grew in Silent Darkness, longing for Light and Love. In the summer before her 13th birthday, she saw Daddy and her little sister, Amy, with the "robot-child", crying and begging her to speak. The "child" simply looked through them. Sharisa felt VERY sad, called to Daddy, thought their eyes met and heard him say: "Talk to me... Daddy loves you!" She had believed it was unreal because Autisma always said Sharisa was hers and Autisma was the "only reality". FINALLY, however, Sharisa believed it was real, thinking: "I wish I could make them happy."

The dungeon suddenly filled with light and a bearded man with starspeckled cloak appeared, holding a long, pointed, glowing spear-wand, looked directly at Sharisa and said: "Greetings! I'm the mystical Knight of Light. Your UNSELFISH wish summoned me. It's MY power to grant unselfish wishes." Sharisa was QUITE new at wishing, but thought: "I wish Autisma never imprisoned ANYONE!" Autisma appeared and ran towards the Knight shrieking wildly while he held out his spear-wand. Autisma tried to grab it but vanished. The castle became visible, but the prisoners were confused and couldn't communicate.

Sharisa thought: "I wish THEY ALL could speak and understand." The Knight sadly said: "That isn't reversible, Unselfish Princess, but I'll provide other ways to communicate, understanding will return, and they'll find their 'voices'. I'll also return YOU to YOUR FAMILY with a magical 'speaking board'. Your smile, love and unselfishness will make EVERYONE happy for many years."

Sharisa and her family all try to live and love sweetly FOREVER after.

ONLY THE BEGINNING

# Snoopi Botten Age 43 USA

#### ONE VOICE

I was born with a speech impediment, so my one God given voice was hard to understand. Because of this, people around me thought that I couldn't understand things. So many people shared that same opinion that to me it started to seem like one voice.

When I was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, it seemed like one voice held the key to giving me a chance at an education. One voice out of so many people, how could this be? But I was sent to a special school where all the teachers and staff saw us as just regular kids and their one voice sent a message that let us all know that no dream was beyond our reach, and they all had nothing but high expectations for us.

Graduating from grade school and going into high school was a big wake up call. I had to be that one voice that now taught all the new teachers around me that I was no different. But the voice of not having the equipment I needed maid it seem like I couldn't do the work. A typewriter was not allowed in the classroom, I couldn't tell my aid answers to a test because it would give the answer to everyone in the class, the workload was too great for me to keep up, and I slowly got depressed. But one voice of hope inside of me kept telling me not to give up.

I finally got a communication device, it was one voice that everyone could understand. It could not only talk, but it could be programmed to sing. With great excitement I thought I was free. I learned how to use it and proudly went out into the world to use my one voice. Starting with ordering a basic hamburger a voice spoke back asking "He wants a hamburger"? The question wasn't to me, but to the person I was with as if to ask permission to take my order. It's not always verbal, sometimes it's a look, a smile, a gesture, and they always think that I have no idea what they just asked, but I know. Spoken or not I know that one voice that always asked if I'm my own guardian, or if I can make my own decisions.

One voice wrote this story, and when read aloud it is heard by one voice. You the listener might think the person reading this also wrote this. You might also feel how much power is behind one voice. Through AAC, we now have one voice to communicate with. But now we need to make it known that our one voice has equal authority. We all need to unite as one voice to educate the public so that when alone people will listen to our one voice.

### Gilbert Steve Age 51 USA

Gilbert uses a DynaMyte 3100 device from DynaVox. This story was put together from pieces of stories performed with playback theatre, where the clients from Valley of the Sun School and Habilitation Center told a story and a professional performance group (Essential Theatre) acted it out. We have been doing this « Stories of Ourselves » project for over 9 years. This project was written up in a newletter for USSAAC (v20) and for Closing The Gap (June/July 2003).



My Name is Gilbert Steve

Hi everybody! My name is Gilbert Steve.

I like writing and telling stories. I'm happy now to have a communication device because I can tell people how I feel. We are all learning how to use it. We started a literacy program with the DTA. It is a beginner reader project, creating books for young kids who are learning to read or are having difficulty reading.

I feel better about myself because of bowling in Special Olympics. I am proud I won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Special Olympics wheelchair race. I feel happy to do better than other Special Olympics people. I love the medal and the special attention.

Let me tell you about my family. I have been with Valley of the Sun for over 47 years. By now they became my family. But I originally came from a very large family. I have 7 sisters, 2 brothers and I also have 8 nieces and 8 nephews. Now that I have a way to communicate somehow with my family I want to know more about them. I have learned so many things in the past few years that I never knew all my life, and the feeling is so good. Rebeca helped me to meet with my sisters at the Day Program. I was so sad because I missed them. It had been so long since I saw them. Rebeca helped call them. I was so happy.

What have you been doing?

# Sue Hankins Age 56 USA

I am Tammy Paulus. I am a communication assistant where Sue attends workshop. I assisted Sue in writing her essay. Sue uses a Mercury with word power and scanning using a head switch. Writing remains a tedious process for Sue and her spelling is sometimes and issue. She is presently looking at software that might improve the rate of her writing. Sue is a gifted poet but chose to write an essay instead. Her original version was 1186 words. It consisted of thoughts and ideas she had written for speeches she has given in the community, her original answers to questions I asked her about her use of AAC throughout her life, and her thoughts and feelings regarding how AAC has impacted her life. She put much thought and work into it and we worked together to put it together and I typed it for her. It was a big job to pare it down to 500 words and I hope what we have come up with shows adequately the impact AAC has had on her life. She has had many supportive and creative people in her life that have given her opportunity to communicate. I am proud to have assisted Sue in sharing her thoughts with others in the AAC community around the world.

#### HARD WORK PAYS OFF

I am Sue and I am 56. I was born with CP but that doesn't define who I am. It challenges me because it's hard to control my muscles which make it difficult to use my hands and fingers and to control my tongue and mouth to make many sounds needed to speak. Thanks to my determination and creative people in my life, I have been and am able to express my needs, feelings and dreams. I have always dreamed of being a poet and living in a home with my own caregivers and that dream is becoming reality.

As a child my parents read my actions and expressions to know what I needed, wanted or was feeling. They were my voice.

In elementary school I used pictures to communicate. Then a teacher discovered that I could point to an alphabet board to spell. This was less limiting but hard. It took much time. But being able to spell I wasn't limited to pictures.

In high school I took my work home. Using a typewriter my father made, a board drilled with holes placed over the keys, and using a head stick I typed my work.

Later I began attending a workshop in my community. My speech therapist recommended I look into a SGD. I was hesitant but tried several devices before deciding on the Dynavox 3100. At first it was overwhelming but benefits outweighed the challenges. I could save thoughts to tell family and coworkers and letters and poems for others to read. I was able to run my CD player and TV. I had freedom to do things for myself.

In 2004 I got a Mercury which opened up the world of the internet and e-mail. It was challenging also. My mercury has words and a keyboard. It took me awhile to get used to using the words on the screen instead of spelling each word. Now I am looking at software that will help me communicate even faster.

Having a device in school would have helped making friends. I tried using my letter board but other children didn't want to learn how to talk to me. I often felt frustrated, sad and sometimes mad. Now my voice is my Mercury.

I laugh to myself when people look around me to find who is talking and think to myself, "I am not invisible." Some people see me sitting in my wheelchair and moving my body around. They assume I can't think because I can't use my mouth to talk.

Sometimes conversation is still challenging. Preprogrammed phrases help me communicate more quickly though. I have been honored and stunned to be asked to give speeches to organizations in my community to let people know that a person who has disabilities can do things like others but in a different way.

My motto in life is "Never give up". My challenge to you is, "If you have a dream, try to make your dream happen for you."



# Susan Barton Age 33 USA

Susan is 33 years old and uses a Dynavox MT4 to aid in her communication. Attached is a short Susan she decided she would like to write that includes the use of her device at home with her dogs! Animals are a huge motivation for her and she dearly loves their company. She came up with the entire story plot from beginning to end and it is a true story of how she interacts with her dogs that she felt she wanted to share. She only needed little help to modify some of her run-on sentences. Susan has intellectual disability and uses the Dynavox to help her communicate when she has difficulty expressing herself verbally. With the Dynavox she is able to communicatie more rapidly and clearly under pressure, and is better understood by people who are not familiar to her when she uses it to supplement her verbal speech. She told her mother that she wanted to 'use her mouth' to tell her story too. Her story was written with her verbal telling as well as her use of the Dynavox to find the words she was trying to say, but could not immediately express. Her mother then wrote the words as Susan either said them to her verbally or used her device that she calls her 'machine' as the story reads.

#### Annie, Wake Up!

Waking up my Beagle Annie on her pillow and blanket is hard. I shake her on her back bone to wake her up. I use my machine (Dynavox MT4) to say "Annie, wake up Annie". After she hears me, she gets in the floor and scratches her belly and ear drumlets. Next, she gets her toy and wants to play. She plays so much it makes her tired and she goes back to sleep. I have to wake her up again! I use my machine again to say "Annie, Annie wake up." Sometimes I use my mouth too to say it. My machine helps me to find the words I can say with my mouth too. It doesn't matter how I say it-with my machine or with my mouth, she just looks at me and goes to sleep again!

When Annie won't wake up, I go talk to my other dog, Lucy the IuIu (I call her that sometimes) who stays outside. I open the back door and she comes inside with me and with Annie who is still asleep. She looks at me when I sit on the sofa beside Annie. She wants me to pet her on the head. Then, Annie wakes up and wants me to pet her too. That's how I wake Annie up!

Timothy Thielen Age 44 USA

My Computer helps me communicate and get around daily. Without my computer I would not be able to write or talk to anybody in the US or throughout the world. It is fun and interesting to learn about my device so I can better understand to learn how to use it. Without rebbeca and Deanna's help, (my speech therepist) I would not know about all the ways I can use my device. Thank you,

- Tim Theilen

# Tom Younkerman Age 56 USA

I am a 56 year old man with Cerebral Palsy. I use a DynaVox DV4 to comunicate with, however i wrote the story on my computer using MS Word. I use a regular keyboard and type with one finger. The only aids that I use are sticky keys and mouse keys.

I am a former member of the Writers Brigade and Johana Schwartz helped me make minor edits to the story before submitting it.

#### **Carey Talks**

Another summer was about to end and Carey was out shopping for school clothes with her mother. As Carey strolled through the aisles in her wheelchair looking at clothes she felt a certain sadness. Her mother Mary sensed Carey's mood but couldn't figure out what the problem was. After shopping, Mary tried to cheer Carey up by treating her to lunch at a restaurant that always made Carey happy. But she remained quiet.

"What's wrong honey, aren't you excited about school starting?", the mother asked.

Carey just shrugged and looked at her word board.

After several attempts to get to that bottom of what was bothering her little girl and getting nowhere, Mary decided to take her home. Once school started Carey's spirits picked up. She was in sixth grade now in a regular classroom and she liked her teacher, Ms. Blair, who showed a genuine interest in Carey. The two shared glances and smiles in class, and the teacher knew that Carey was very smart.

One day after school the teacher asked Carey to stay and at first the girl protested. She was worried about missing her ride, but after being assured that she would get home safely, Carey relaxed.

"Carey, I've watched you in class and I can tell you are very smart. I bet you know the answer to most of my questions, don't you?", Miss Blair said.

Carey nodded and smiled.

"Then why don't you participate, young lady. Share your knowledge with the class."

Carey asked for her word board and pointed to the words she wanted to say: "It takes too long to answer and the other kids get mad at me."

"I kind of figured it was something like that, but you have too much to offer not to share with others. I want you to meet someone."

In walked a lady carrying a large bag. "This is Karen, and she is a speech therapist and she has some things to show you.", Ms.Blair said,

Karen was nice and made Carey feel at ease as they worked with different speech devices. Soon the moment came Carey pressed a button and in one fell swoop said, "Hi, my name is Carey and I can talk". This was just the start, Carey began answering and asking questions in class, making new friends and talking her mother's ear off. She used the device to say something special to her teacher and it was "Thank you".

Toni Parago Age 34 USA

My name is Toni Parago and I have Cerebral Palsy. I use gestures, sounds and a Dynavox to help me communicate. I go to Easter Seals throughout the work week. That is where I found out about the AAC contest. My program Instructor, LaToya, told me about the contest. My mother assisted me with writing the contest entry. When I brought the story and pictures to LaToya, she helped me edit the story so I could turn it into ISAAC. This is my first contest entry and I am soooooo very excited!!! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

My name is Toni Alicia Parago. I'm 34 years old. I live with my mom and dad in Dover, Delaware. I have Cerebral Palsy with multiple disabilities. Due to my disabilities, I use Augmentative and Alternative Communication. When I want to tell someone something I use sounds and gestures. I also use a DynaVox to communicate.

My favorite things to do are listening to music, watching old sit combs on television, drawing, traveling and shop, shop, shopping till I drop. I also love going to Easter Seals and riding the Dart bus every day during the week.

I really want to tell a little bit about the special women who take care of me and keep me healthy and happy. I'll start with my mom (Hazel Parago). She says that I am an extension of her. Mom really loves me. I can tell because she takes such good care of me and makes sure that everyone does the same. She is also my best friend and my voice. Mom still calls Baltimore, Maryland "home" because all her sisters, brothers and her mom still live there. She takes me there all the time and we have so much fun. Mom works part-time at this great museum — The Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village. She said it's the best kept secret in Dover.

Aunt Ruggie (Helen Brown) is my most favorite aunt. When we go to Baltimore

I always stay at her house. Mom said she is my shopping partner and she treats me like
a queen. Ha! Ha! My Aunt Ruggie takes such good care of me and my mom. She

works a full-time job but she makes sure that mom takes some respite time. She takes

vacation time to keep me so that my mom can take a vacation and visit her best friends in Georgia. Mom said God must have a special place in Heaven for her. She calls her a Saint. I really love her.

My Aunt Linda, Lo (Delois) and Des (Deasora) help Aunt Ruggie and Mom when I go to Baltimore and whenever mom needs them. Aunt Linda always comes with Aunt Ruggie when she comes to Delaware. She teases me the whole while she is here about men on my favorite sit combs. We have so much fun.

I have this great cousin, Tammy. She is like a sister to me. Tammy is Aunt Ruggie's daughter. People think we are sisters everywhere we go because we argue all the time. She is always trying to tell me what to do. I keep telling her that I'm the oldest and she should do what I say. You should see us when we get together. Boy, what a great time had by all!!!

My grandma (Christine) loves it when we visit. Aunt Des makes sure that we get to visit her when we are in Baltimore.

The women in my family make sure that I am healthy and happy. What a joy to be a part of this family.





Hazel

Aunt Ruggi



Aunt Lo

Aunt Des



Aunt Linda

Cousin Tammy

# Tyler Bartlett Age 11 USA

I have Moebius Syndrome and use a speech generating device to communicate. I am a good signer and I began to learn Minspeak on an Alphatalker when I was three and a half years old. I now use Unity 84 on a Vantage.

I used my Vantage connected to my laptop computer to write my story. I write using a mix of Minspeak, spelling and word prediction.

The photo shows me working at my desk at school. I use a lot of technology ;my Vantage, a laptop computer a scanner and a printer. As you can see, I need a pretty big desk!



#### Not All in One Day

by: Tyler Bartlett age: 11 grade: 5

One fine summer's day Tyler's laptop computer broke and he desperately needed money so he could purchase a new one before the school year started. Tyler had an idea, so he called his friend Rosemary who was a speech pathologist and said, "I need money for a new laptop, so I was thinking that maybe I could help you teach Minspeak."

Rosemary told Tyler about a little girl named Lucy, who was four and wanted to learn Minspeak all in one day before she started kindergarten in September. Rosemary had told Lucy that it was impossible, but Lucy was very determined to reach her goal.

Tyler remembered the box of icon toys Rosemary had used to teach him Minspeak and had an idea to teach Lucy how to use Minspeak and help her understand why she couldn't learn it all in one day.

The next day Tyler went to the CDC conference room to meet Rosemary. When he got there, he discussed his plan with Rosemary. After explaining his plan to Rosemary, they went to talk to Lucy and introduce Tyler to her. Rosemary pulled out a big box of icon toys that Tyler was going to use to teach Lucy how to use Minspeak.





When Lucy saw the toys she asked, "Why do we need toys?" "It is for helping you to learn what the icons on your Vantage look like and what they do," said Rosemary. "I can't possibly learn all that in one day," exclaimed Lucy. "Exactly!" cried Tyler. "When I first learned Minspeak, Rosemary and I, took it one step at a time, but it will be well worth all the effort and hard work. Besides you will learn lots in one day."

Tyler got to work teaching Lucy the beginner icons in Minspeak like Mr. Action

Man... who has all the action words which are also called verbs. Lucy was so proud of herself for learning the first icon so quickly. Tyler's favourite icon was the

rainbow and the truck together... because all the colours would appear if you hit the icon once, but if you hit it twice, it contained all forms of transportation.

Lucy enjoyed learning about the icon with the apple and the bee... . If you hit the icon once you can find all sorts of food, and, if you hit it twice you will find all sorts of containers.

Over the next few weeks, Tyler and Lucy worked very hard learning new icons and other features that Minspeak performed. When Lucy started kindergarten she showed all her new friends what Minspeak could do and by that time, Lucy was one of the many kids who knew Minspeak like the back of their hand.

As for Tyler, he earned enough money to purchase his new tablet laptop. Rosemary was so impressed by Tyler's good teaching skills, that she offered him a part time job helping her teach Minspeak to new students.

The End!

Valley of the Sun School and Habilitation Center Ericka, Carl, David, Maggie, Lora, Gilbert, Judy, Lalena, Betsy, Sara, Jessica, Deanna, Barbara, Debra, Misty, Maria, Rebeca, Vera, Ozzie, Crystal Ages 28 – 52 USA

These clients attend an Adult Day Program that is part of the Valley of the Sun School & Habilitation Center in Phoenix, AZ. As part of their program, they wrote a number of grants and received funding to start writing stories for beginning readers two years ago. This helped them to practice vocabulary on their devices. At that time, they were using Dynavox 3100 and MT4 devices, as well as Vanguards. Ericka, Carl, David, Maggie, Lora, Gilbert, Judy, Lalena, Betsy, and Sara are the device users. Some have since upgraded their devices to the Tango!, the Dynavox V, and the ECO. While we wrote the story we used a chalkboard and when we shared it with the kindergarten, we used PowerPoint and a projector. We also used the projector to display the vocabulary from their devices while we were brainstorming the words for the story. Barbara, Debra, Misty, Maria, Rebeca, Vera, and Crystal are staff members at the Day Program who worked hard to learn the vocabulary on the devices and help facilitate ideas while we were writing. Ozzie wrote the grant and set up a visit with the school.

Attachments include the text from the story (which was translated by Maria and Rebeca) as well as the PowerPoint.

#### When is your birthday?

by Ericka, Carl, David, Maggie, Lora, Gilbert, Judy, Lalena, Betsy, Sara, Jessica, Deanna, Barbara T., Debra, Misty, Maria, Rebeca, Vera, Ozzie, Crystal.

#### Cuando es tu cumpleanos?

by Ericka, Carl, David, Maggie, Lora, Gilbert, Judy, Lalena, Betsy, Sara, Jessica, Deanna, Barbara T., Debra, Misty, Maria, Rebeca, Vera, Ozzie, Crystal. We like desserts, bananas, apples, strawberries and chocolate.

A nosotros nos gustan los postres, platanos, manzanas, fresas y chocolate.

What do you like?

Y a ti, que te gusta?

Time to cook.

Tiempo de cocinar.

I need a spoon, bowl, and measuring cup.

Yo necesito una cuchara, plato, y un vaso de medir.

Pour in eggs.

Agregar los huevos.

I will open it and mix it.

Yo lo abrire y lo mesclare.

Put it in the oven.

Lo pondre en el horno.

I want to help.

Yo quiero ayudar.

Yum! It is good.

mmm! mmm! Esta muy bueno.