

Partner Assisted Scanning

Partner assisted scanning is a method in which a communication partner indicates all possible choices by showing / pointing and / or speaking the names of all available items. The communicator confirms or rejects each item using a previously established “yes” or “no” response. Messages can be conveyed more quickly because the physical effort required of the communicator is minimized.

Your Child and Partner Assisted Scanning

Above is a general outline of how partner assisted scanning is approached. Below, please find specific directions for how to approach partner assisted scanning with your child. These directions may change as your child progresses with this skill.

1. Present choices

- Inform your child that you are going to present choices. e.g. *“OK. Here are your choices for snack. Listen to all of your choices.”*
- State the choices one by one. e.g. *“Applesauce.” “Cookie”. “Cheese.”*
Confirm the end of the choice list. e.g. *“Those are all your choices.”*

2. Have your child make a choice

- Ask them to make a choice. e.g. *“Which one do you want? Tell me ‘Yes’ when you hear/see the one you want.”*
- Repeat the choices one by one and PAUSE between choices, allowing your child sufficient time to respond.
- At first, it will be important to remind your child to indicate which item they wants. e.g. *“Say yes when we get to the snack that you want.”*

3. Confirm the choice

- After your child has indicated that they want an item, confirm the choice that was made. e.g. *“You said you want the applesauce”*
- It is important to follow through with any requests that your child makes, especially when they are learning this new method of communication.

Partner Assisted Scanning Tips

- Identifying the activities where choices will be offered (e.g. choosing: music, a snack, an activity for free time).
- Identify the choices to be given within each activity (e.g. “Shania / Great Big Sea / Madonna”, “Shrek / Happy Feet / Mary Poppins, “cookie/ cheese / applesauce”, “nail polish / hair brushing / foot massage”). Document the choices so that all facilitators can present them in the same order.
- Present choices in a consistent manner so that your child can anticipate and respond. Write them down so that others can provide the choices in the same consistent manner.
- Once your child is appearing to make intentional and consistent choices, you can start to add in some new choices.
- You can also begin to offer category choices. (e.g. “*What do you want to do next?*” Music, Eat, Free Time). Once they have selected a category, you can then present the specific choices within that category.
- You can also introduce some other messages such as “*something different*” to allow your child an option not to pick the choices presented.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the above procedure.

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