WordPower

Getting Started

Smartbox

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Introducing WordPower

WordPower is designed to help you say exactly what you want to say in the most efficient way possible. It combines core words, intelligent jumps, logical next words and smart grammar to help AAC users build complex sentences in as few selections as possible.

This vocabulary was created by Speech and Language Pathologist Nancy Inman, and is ideal for symbol users who are developing literacy.

It is available in three different sizes to suit the needs of different AAC users:

- 100 cells
- 60 cells
- 25 cells

Access methods

The WordPower grid sets work with the following types of access:
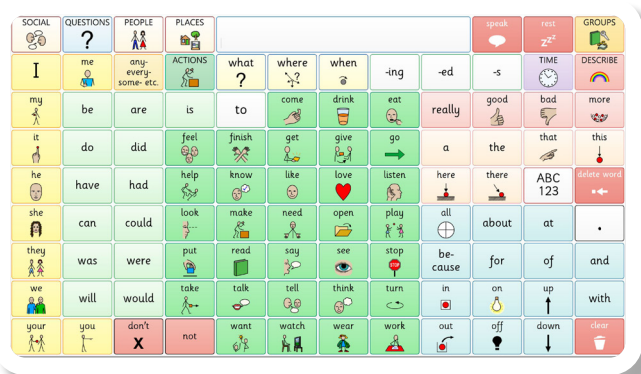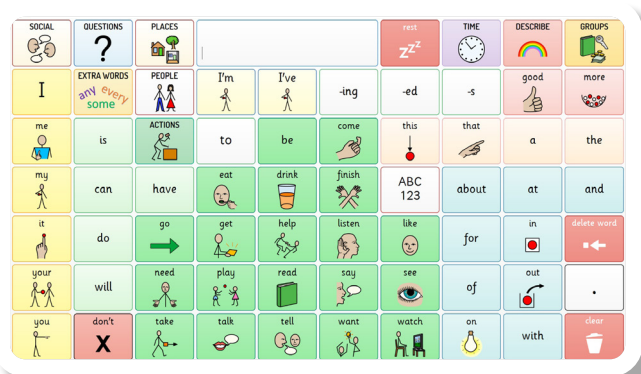
 Touch   Eye gaze   Switch   Pointer

WordPower 100, 60 and 25

WordPower 100

WordPower 100 is suitable for users who are able to accurately access grids with a large number of cells. It gives them quick and efficient access to vocabulary with the fewest number of selections and grid jumps.

WordPower 60

WordPower 60 offers users the same robust vocabulary and efficiency as WordPower 100, but can be accessed by users who require larger and/or fewer cells.
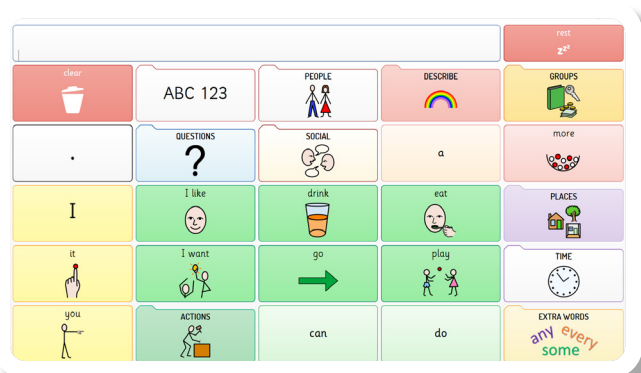
WordPower 25

WordPower 25 also contains the same language as WordPower 100, but with even larger and fewer cells. It uses automatic jumps to allow users to access core vocabulary easily and efficiently.

Choosing which WordPower

Choosing the version of Word Power that is most suitable for different users depends on a number of things.

WordPower 100 gives access to lots of words on one grid and minimises jumps needed to create a sentence. As there are so many cells on each grid, these cells are harder and may be difficult for some users to access.

WordPower 60 and 25 offer larger cells which can be easier for users with motor, visual or developmental difficulties to access accurately. These grid sets may also be more appropriate for users who find a large number of cells overwhelming.
As there are fewer cells on each grid in these versions, some words may take more selections to get to, however automatic jumps and logical next words ensure that sentence building is still easy and efficient.

All of the WordPower grid sets contain the same vocabulary so users can explore the options to find the one that best suits them.

Features of WordPower

Core vocabulary

While we may have a normal speaking vocabulary of between 10,000 and 40,000 words in total, a core vocabulary of just 100 words accounts for approximately 50% of these. The home grids in WordPower 100, 60 and 25 are based on this concept, giving you quick access to the words we use all the time. Many of the category grids also include core words alongside the more specific fringe vocabulary.

A study analysing written language samples for word frequency found that:

- The top 10 words account for 24% of written text
- The top 50 words account for 41% of written text
- The top 100 words account for 48% of written text

(Kucera and Francis, 1967)

Word classes

The core words in WordPower are categorised, colour-coded and alphabetised.

Questions	What, when, how, why
Pronouns	I, me, my, it, your, you
Negatives	don't, not,
Helping verbs	is, can, will, do
Verbs	eat, drink, get, say
Articles	a, the, this, that
Prepositions and conjunctions	at, and, in, out
Describing words	good, more, really, great
Indefinite pronouns	any, every, some

Intelligent Jumps

WordPower has been designed to give users access to vocabulary as they need it, so at times when a cell is selected this will automatically jump to another grid with additional related vocabulary. For example, if you create the sentence "I want to drink..." you can jump straight to the **drinks** grid with a list of common drinks and associated language to finish your sentence.

Logical next words

WordPower uses logical next word prediction and word completion to help users create simple and complex sentences, using a robust and sophisticated AAC vocabulary.

Prediction cells appear under the chat area and change each time you select a word, providing some suggested next words and word endings.

If you select the word "my", some common next words are "favourite", "turn" and the suffix "-self" and these can be seen in the prediction cells. Similarly if you select "I can", the prediction cells offer logical next words like "know", "look", "call" and "give".

Smart Grammar

The Smart Grammar built into Grid will help you form your message, including grammatically correct options and words. For example, if you want to say "I am going to go now", the verb "go" will change to "going" to enable you to easily create your sentence. The suffix "-ing" will also appear in the word prediction cell for you to select when needed.

You can also add other suffixes to words and Smart Grammar will automatically correct the spelling, for example selecting "easy" and "-ly" will give you "easily". Similarly, in many of the category grids you can add "-s" to make words plural and this will automatically correct if needed.

Categories

There are a number of category grids within WordPower, many of which jump to further vocabulary and provide space to add your own. These offer category specific words, such as types of clothes, food, animals etc. They also include high frequency core words related to each category, to enable users to build sentences without leaving the category grid. This also helps reduce the distraction of seeing core vocabulary which may not be relevant to that category.
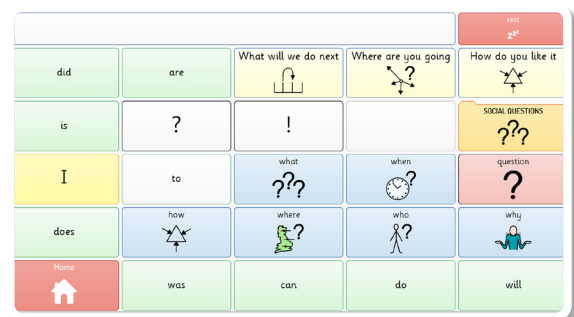
Here is a list of the different categories:
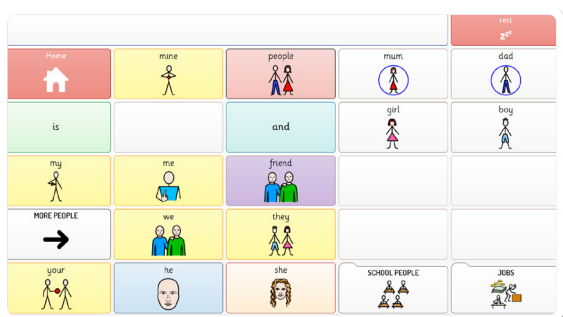
Social

Including greetings, interjections, personal information, social questions, and a jump to a grid for storing News.

Questions

This grid provides question words as well as helping verbs and other core vocabulary to build a range of questions. "!" or "?" will add punctuation and speak a sentence.

People

This grid has a number of useful pronouns and people words as well as space to add the names of family and friends.
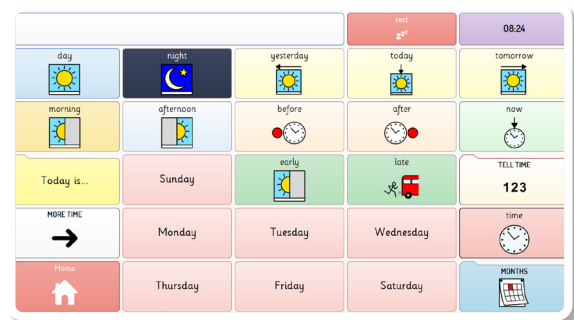
Places

Common places arranged by buildings, home, outside and school appear on this grid. Eating out and Shops will take you to related grids with further vocabulary, such as "McDonalds" and "supermarket".
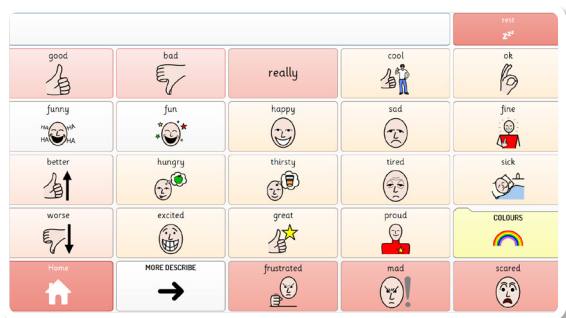
Actions

A range of useful verbs are shown here. A-Z gives access to a wider selection of verbs, listed alphabetically.

Time

Here you will find time related words, including phrases like "Today is..." which use intelligent jumps to support the user to say the date.

Describe

Describing words including feelings and colours are listed here, as well as other adjectives, grouped around opposites such as "better", "worse", "big" and "little". A-Z gives access to a wider selection of adjectives, listed alphabetically.

Groups
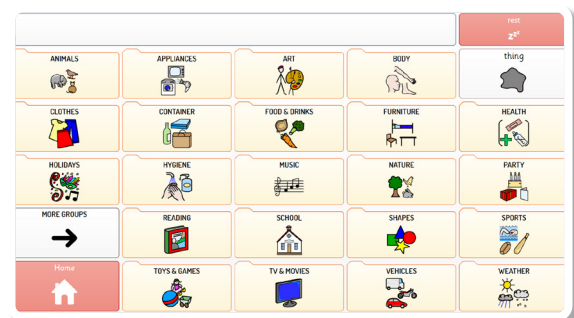
This grid has access to semantic categories like holidays and pets. This grid also includes a jump to the built-in accessible apps which are stored in the Special Functions grid.

Special Functions

Accessible apps such as **email** and **text messaging** are built into the grid set, giving users the ability to write text messages and emails using their symbol vocabulary.

Users can also access media files stored on their device, including **photos, videos** and **music**. There is an area to create and store **notes** as well as environmental **control grids** and device **settings**.
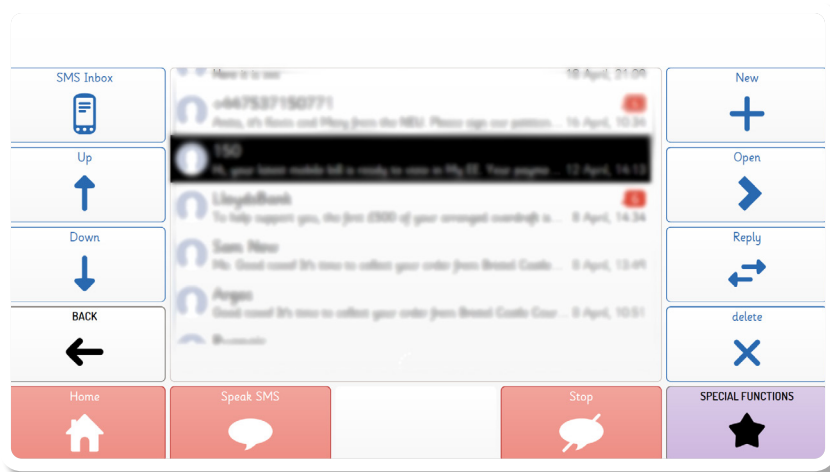
Some of these apps will require some initial setup:

Adding contacts

To make calls and send emails or text messages using WordPower, you will first need to add some contacts. You can do this by selecting the Menu bar and going to **Settings** – **Contacts**.
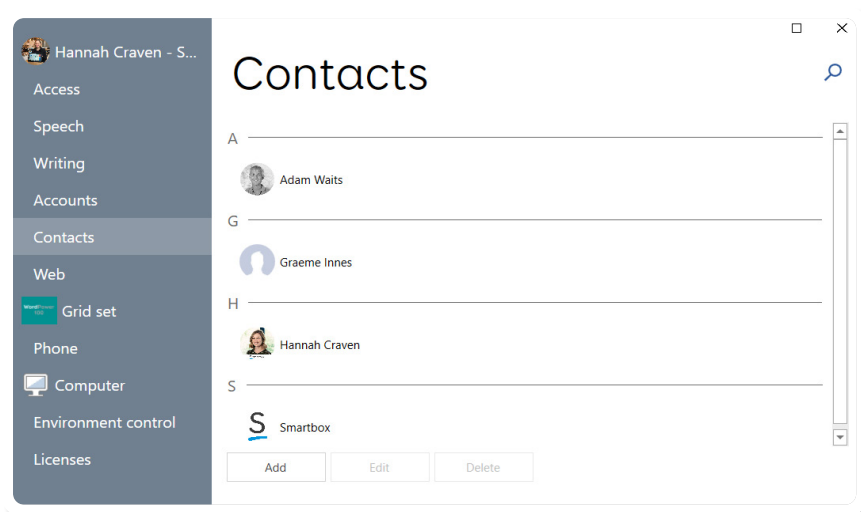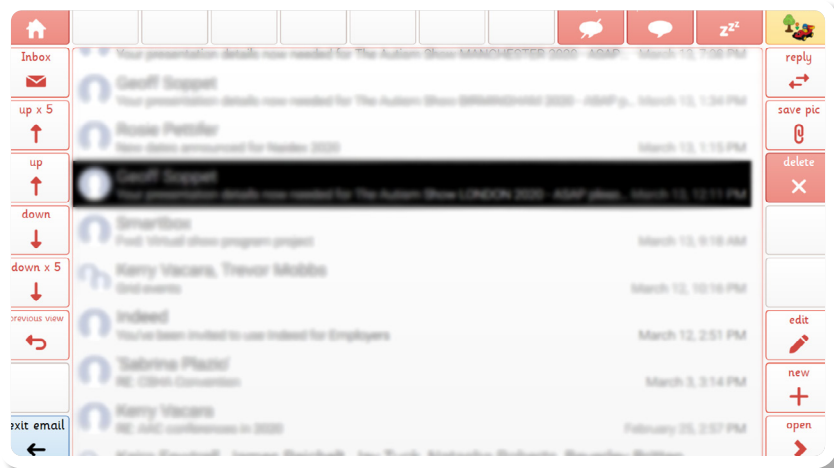
Text messaging

The Text messaging grid will display a list of messages from your phone. You can use the arrow keys to navigate the list. **Speak SMS** will read your message aloud. Selecting **open** will show you the full conversation.

You will need to add a contact before you start a new message.

Email

Use the arrow cells to move through your inbox. Here you can send emails to your contacts or email addresses that you know. When you open an email, you will be able to read the whole email chain.
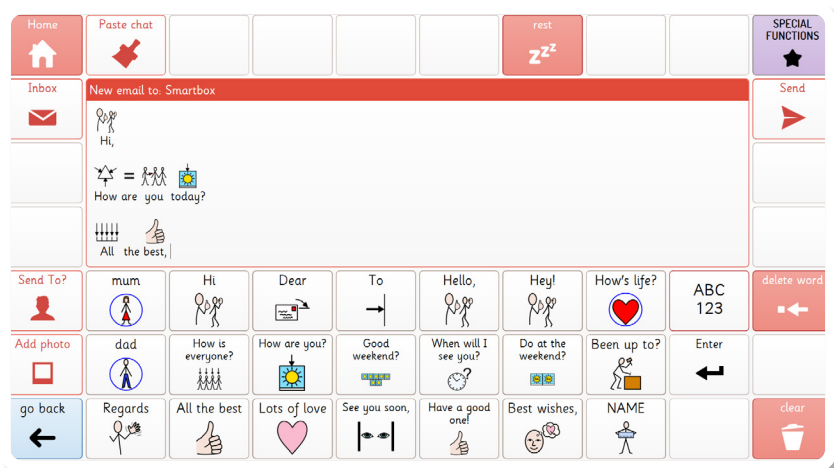
To create a new email you will need to select new and pick a contact. Note that you need to add the email address as a contact before you start writing an email. Then you can start writing your email.

Connecting your email account

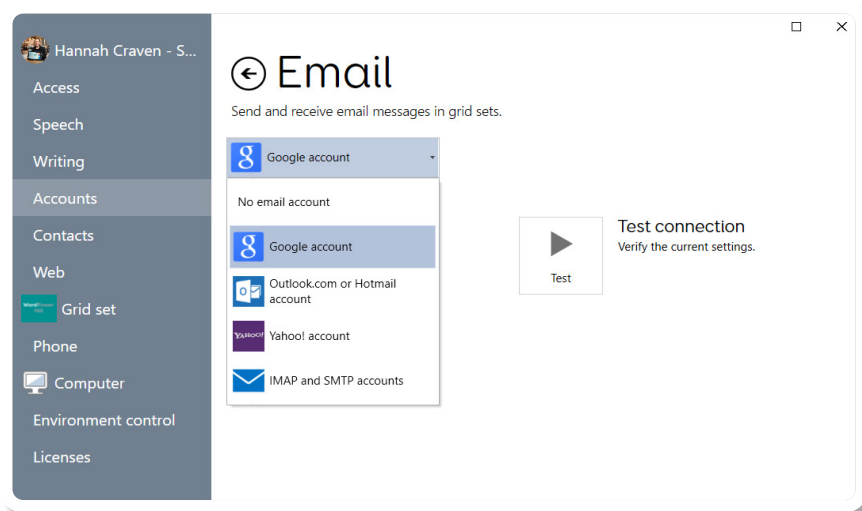Before you can use the email grid you will need to configure your account.

Go to the Menu bar and open **Settings** – **Accounts** – **Email**

In the dropdown menu select your email provider. If your provider is not listed select IMAP and SMTP. You will be asked for your email address and password.

Gmail and Yahoo

If you use Gmail or Yahoo, you will need to enable Grid 3 to connect via your account settings. To do this login to your account in a web browser and find the account settings.

In Gmail you are looking for the option to **Allow Less secure app access**.

In Yahoo you will need to setup an account specific password. For more information on how to do this visit: **thinksmartbox.com/answer/email-account-settings-in-grid-3**

Once you have enabled Grid 3 to access your account, head back to Grid 3 and select **Test connection**. If everything is working you will see 'Connection successful'.

Personalising WordPower

There are blank cells throughout the three grid sets where additional vocabulary can be added. In the larger cell versions such as WordPower 25, these blank cells may be located on a subsequent grid, accessed via a "more" cell. Here is a list of grids that you might to personalise in WordPower.

People

Add in the names of people who are important to the learner. These might be members of family, school teachers, friends and neighbours.

Special places

Add in any place the learner likes to go that isn't already included in the places grid. This might be the name of a certain shop or restaurant, or anywhere that would normally be referred to by a specific name that the learner is familiar with.

Groups

It really important that AAC users can talk about their favourite things. There are lots of category grids in the Groups area that you can add favourite words to, including toys and games, TV and movies, reading, etc. Additional words can be added to any blank cells in these grids .

News

The News grid is designed to store short stories and anecdotes that the user can tell people what is new for them. WordPower has space for Special News, Home News and School News and in WordPower 60 and 100 there is space to add a number of stories to each area. This grid can be found via a jump to "News" in the Social grid.
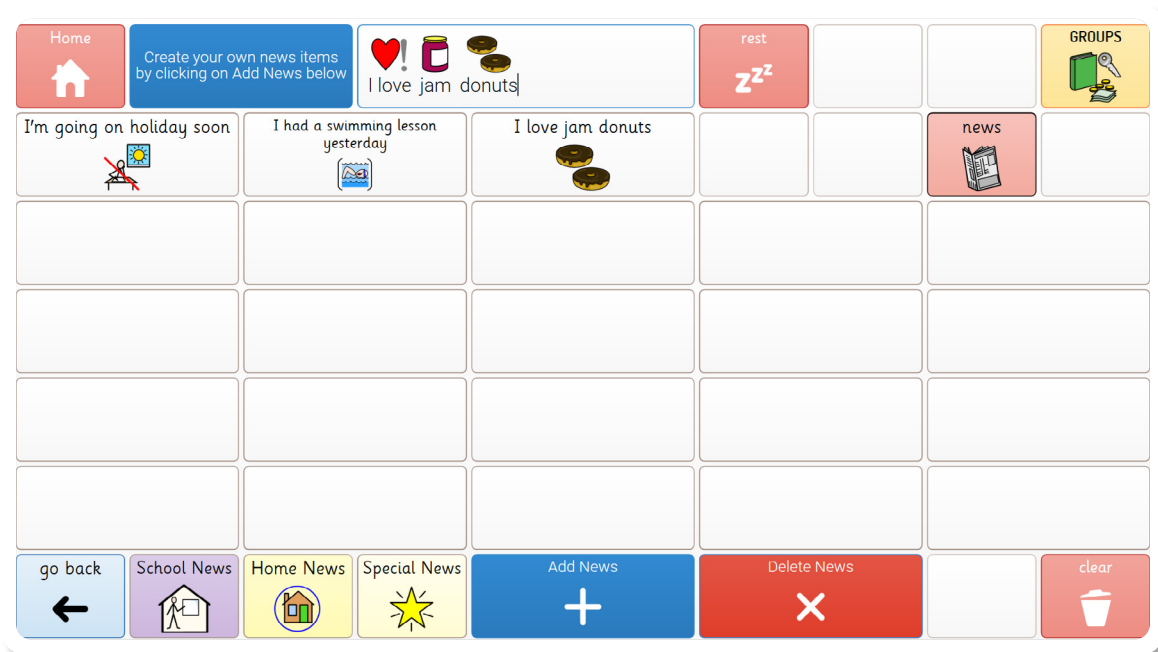
Printable low tech resources

Low tech versions of WordPower are available to download on our website, with Widgit symbols, PCS and SymbolStix. You can print them out to make it even easier for AAC users to have access to symbol communication at all times.
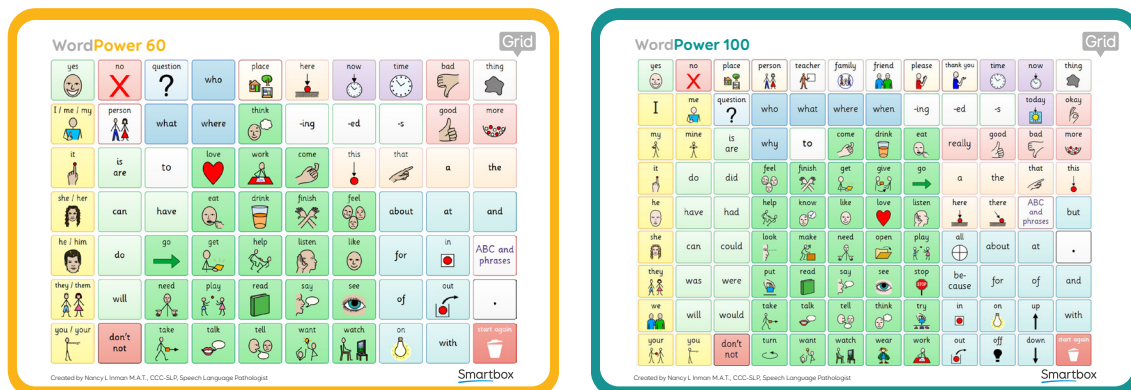
Each low tech communication grid has core vocabulary, an alphabet for spelling and some useful quick phrases. These are split over two pages.

For consistency the core vocabulary layout is similar to the high tech version. Cells you wouldn't need when using a printed communication grid, such as prediction cells and the chat area, have been replaced with additional vocabulary to maximise what can be said.

Why use low tech?

Low tech grids can help communication to continue in times when you might not have access to a communication aid, such as a P.E. lesson or bath time.

For AAC users who are learning to use WordPower the low tech grids can also be used alongside WordPower on a communication aid, to model language to the user. Modelling language means pointing to the symbols or words on the grid at the same time as speaking to the AAC user. There is a lot of evidence that this is a great way to teach AAC users vocabular and support their language development.

Practice sentences

Here are some useful practice sentences to help you get started and explore the vocabulary in WordPower 100, 60 and 25. Create your sentence and select the full stop or speak cell to speak it.

WordPower 100

1. I am good at this.
2. I really don't know.
3. I would love to talk to you.
4. I went to the (PLACES) library (TIME) yesterday.
5. (QUESTIONS) Why did he do that? It was (DESCRIVE) wrong.
6. I have been reading a magazine. (Use yellow prediction cells)
7. (QUESTIONS) What colour do you want? (use yellow prediction cells)
8. Will you come over to see me (TIME) tomorrow?
9. I love to play (GROUPS – TOYSS) with bubbles.
10. (GROUPS – VEHICLES) Can I have the car and the bus?

WordPower 60

1. I want to play.
2. I don't want to do that.
3. I am going to go.
4. I am doing really good listening. (Use the verb endings below the chat area)
5. I want to see (PEOPLE) grandma.
6. I want a hug. (Use yellow prediction cells)
7. You need to get ready to go (TIME) now.
8. Do you like to watch (TV/MOVIES) cartoons? (use -s)
9. I really love to eat (FOOD) popcorn.
10. (GROUPS – ART) I like drawing pictures with you.

WordPower 25

1. I want to drink lemonade.
2. I like playing with my blocks and bubbles.
3. I am going for a walk.
4. I am going to (ACTIONS) read a book.
5. (QUESTIONS) What do you want to do?
6. I will be ready to go with you (EXTRA WORDS) in a little bit.
7. I like to (FAV THINGS) ride my bike and go swimming.
8. I love eating pizza with mushrooms and cheese.
9. I am feeling really excited.
10. I want you to read a story to me.

The design of WordPower

WordPower was created by Nancy Inman, a Speech and Language Pathologist from the United States of America. It is based on her extensive experience in the world of AAC, alongside robust research findings from this field.

WordPower is a largely symbol based vocabulary, however it is also designed to support the development of sight-reading and early literacy skills. Some words in WordPower do not have an associated symbol to encourage users to begin to recognise these high frequency core words on sight.

Fitzgerald Key

WordPower was originally inspired by a man communicating with a green 'Talking Board', a word and letter based low tech board (Ghora Khan Groto, 1988). This communication board included high frequency words and spelling and the arrangement of was consistent with the Fitzgerald key format:

Pronouns / articles / questions	Verbs	Prepositions / conjunctions
Alphabet		Adjectives / adverbs

The design of WordPower also uses the Fitzgerald Key arrangement. This format follows a left to right linguistic order. Question words and pronouns are positioned on the left of the display, followed by action words, and then descriptors (Fitzgerald, 1954).

Colour coding

WordPower is colour coded according to the general guidelines set by the Picture Communication Symbols Book, indicating that people and places should be coded in yellow and verbs should by coded in green.

Word list

The word list used in WordPower grid set was constructed from a study from 1984 that looked at the 500 most frequently occurring words in the language produced by five adult AAC users (Beukelman et al. 1984).

Smartbox

WordPower manual (Version 1.0)
English (UK)

For support, video tutorials, webinars and further information visit us at

thinksmartbox.com