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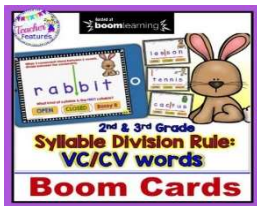SPE 637B: Social Emotional Support & Mental Health
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ASSISTIVE/ AUGMENTATIVE TECHNOLOGY:

Assisting Students with Speech or Language Impairment

What is Assistive/ Augmentative Technology?

Assistive Technology is "any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability" (IDEA, 2017).

1. Syllable Division Flash Cards

- **Low-Tech**
    - o Helps students with a Speech or Language Impairment learn to break apart syllables into different morphemes and phonemes.

Image courtesy of
Teacherspayteachers.com

Syllable division flashcards are useful visual supports for learning language. These flashcards are inexpensive and can be found through a number of different language programs. The flashcards can be sued for individual or group work and are easy to store in the classroom for repeated review.

2. Handheld Communication Board

- **Mid-Tech**
    - o Helps students with Speech or Language Impairment to speak by pressing pictures.

Image courtesy of
talktometechnologies.com

Handheld communication boards are great tools for students who have severe speech limitations. These devices are useful in the classroom because they do not require a computer or a phone (which running a spell-checking app would require). The boards are easy for students to use, are affordable, and allow students with minimal speech to communicate by pressing up to 45 programmable multi-level messages.

2. Text to Speech Software

- **High-Tech**
    - o Text to speech software helps students with SLI who have difficulty following written or spoken text or can type but have impaired spoken communication ability.

Image courtesy of naturalreader.com

Text to speech software can read typed or downloaded text out loud. This software is compatable with smartphones and computers. While the subscription to many text-to-speech apps can be expensive, the technology allows students with SLI to hear text read at their optimal pace and volume, and to also speak through typed text. download audiobooks and other printed material.

References

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IDEA. (2017, May 2). *Sec. 300.5 Assistive technology device*. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.5.