

CORE WORD: **Strong**

For Educators, Related Service Providers and Parents

Descriptive Teaching Model

The Descriptive Teaching Model is a strategy used by many teachers and therapists to help individuals with complex communication needs, learn to use core vocabulary to describe topic or curricular specific vocabulary or nouns. (Van Tatenhove, 2009). By providing open-ended questions to foster the expression of ideas, individuals can learn to use core vocabulary more flexibly to answer questions by describing words if they do not have the specific vocabulary word programmed on the device. By focusing on the use of core vocabulary to express the concepts, ideas and features of the target word, this can build more flexible use of core vocabulary and lead to increased communicative competence.

WAYS WE CAN USE THE WORD

PROVIDE INFORMATION (e.g. They are **strong**.)

DESCRIBE: (e.g. She is **strong** enough to lift that.)

EXPRESSION: (e.g. He **strongly** believes in you.)

ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES

Snack/mealtimes: Adults can teach students which foods, and drinks help people to be **strong**. For example: the adult can give the students fruits to eat and then teach them that fruits and vegetables make people strong. The adult can then model the word 'strong' on the student's AAC device. While eating their food, students can also tell the adults which one of their snacks can make people strong. For example, they can use the AAC device to say "strong" or "apple make me strong"

Circle: Adults can create a structured activity where the opportunity to use the word **strong** is high. For example, the group can sing "What I Am - Sesame

Street" listed in the videos below. The teacher can model 'strong' to the students and then tell the students to follow along. The students can also use the word 'strong' while modeling these actions. The more repetition, the better. If this is a new concept, visual support for choices for a response is important.

Sesame Street | Will.i.am Sings "What I Am"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyVzjoj96vs>

PLAY

Dolls: The adult can model '**strong**' by using the word strong on the AAC device or saying the word 'strong' out loud while simultaneously making the doll lift a 'heavy' item. The adult can then instruct the student to do the same thing with their doll.

Stuffed Animals: The adult can model '**strong**' by using the word strong on the AAC device or saying the word 'strong' out loud while simultaneously making the stuffed animal lift a 'heavy' item. The adult can then instruct the student to do the same thing with their stuffed animal.

Puppets: The adult can model '**strong**' by using the word strong on the AAC device or saying the word 'strong' out loud while simultaneously making the puppet lift a 'heavy' item. The adult can then instruct the student to do the same thing with their puppet.

Action Figures: The adult can model '**strong**' by using the word strong on the AAC device or saying the word 'strong' out loud while simultaneously making the action figure lift a 'heavy' item. The adult can then instruct the student to do the same thing with their action figure.

Recess

Sandbox Competition: The adult can instruct students to make the strongest sandcastle. The adult can structure the competition so that while the student is building a strong castle, the adult can model the word '**strong**' on the student's AAC device. Once all of the students have built a strong sandcastle, the adult can instruct the students to talk about their strong castles. For example, the students can say "My strong castle is big," "My castle is strong."

Swings: The adult can structure an activity using a swing set. The adult can push the student on the swing and say, “I am giving you a **strong** push, I am pushing you stronger.” The adult can then model the word strong on the student’s AAC device. If the students want to be pushed on the swings they can also indicate “Push me stronger” or just indicate “stronger” to get a stronger push.

READING

Here are some suggested books on YouTube that can assist in teaching the core word. Adults can model the word **strong** on the student’s communication system each time it is read. This creates lots of opportunities to practice using this core word.

1. My Strong Mind | Storytime with Annie & Rocco

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJ671iGO80U>

2. BEAUTIFUL WONDERFUL STRONG LITTLE ME | Happy Cultivated

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWdyQAUcedM>

3. Biggest, Strongest, Fastest | Ready Read Alouds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tanQb3KUzQM>

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND VIDEO MODELING

A student’s ability to express personal qualities in themselves and in other people is important as this provides their communication partners with useful new information. This video shows us how the word strong can be communicated through American Sign Language. Adults can also model using words to say “strong” or “he is strong.” By coordinating gestures with words, the student can learn different ways to communicate the word strong.

Personal Qualities Vocabulary | ASL That | (2:18 = timestamp)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syulgJH4PsU>

SENSORY MOTOR

Sensory Water Station

Adults can create a mini gym station with mini dumbbells, small heavy balls, and jump ropes. Adults can then introduce the concept of exercise and strength to the students while modeling the word '**strong**' on their AAC devices. Students can practice using their strength or getting strong by holding balls, lifting mini dumbbells, or jumping rope. After the student has engaged in one of the activities for a few minutes, the adult can prompt them to use their AAC device to state that they are getting strong. This activity helps students involve their whole body in the experience, which can better help them to remember the word 'strong.'

STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Adults can refer to circle time activities (under schedules/routines section) for more structured activities.

ART ACTIVITIES.

Coloring Pages

Students can color these coloring pages which include the word **strong**. Adults can instruct students to describe Iron Man. For example, "strong," or "Iron Man is strong. "This activity would be a great activity to introduce students to the concept of strength and the word strong.

Strong Iron Man

<https://coloringonly.com/pages/strong-iron-man/>

Stronger Together (Free) | Miss Kissingers Korner

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Stronger-Together-Coloring-Page-5679766>

USE OF APPS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Adults can use the Pokémon Go App to get students to talk about which Pokémon are stronger than another Pokémon. Students can indicate why they are **strong** and how they are so strong. Whenever the student uses the word strong, the adult can model 'strong' on the student's AAC device. The student can also practice using the AAC to select the word 'strong.'

The following apps are available both on iOS and android systems.:

Pokémon Go | Discover Pokémon Worldwide | IOS System

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/pokémon-go/id1094591345>

Pokémon Go | Discover Pokémon Worldwide | Android System

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nianticlabs.pokemongo&hl=en_US&gl=US

Adults can show students how to maintain **strong** health by tracking steps and heart rate on the Apple Health App. The adult can indicate that walking, running, and playing sports can make the student strong. The adult can also model the word 'strong' on the student's AAC device

Health App | IOS System

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.funbuddy.applause_sound_s&hl=en_US

VIDEOS, MUSIC, ANIMATED SHORTS

Adults can target **strong/ stronger** with any of the following songs using pull-off song boards (homemade or purchased). After pulling off each item, encourage students to put them back on where they belong.

Stronger | Kelly Clarkson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn676-fLq7I>

Stronger | The Score

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNld-AHw-Wg>

WORD WALL: Create a Word Wall and add 'strong' to the list.

READING and the Word Wall: Sound out the letters together. Have the students find the word on the AAC system.

WRITING and the Word Wall: Using a pencil or alternative pencil, have students try to type the word on the keyboard or write the word together.

For specific questions or more ideas regarding this core word Activity Sheet, please contact [Shanaz Faisal @ sfaisal1@mail.sfsu.edu](mailto:Sfaisal1@mail.sfsu.edu). Shanaz Faisal is a second-year graduate student and candidate for the Master of Science in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences at San Francisco State University. Shanaz is specializing in AAC through San Francisco State University's federally funded Project Building Bridges. Through Project Building Bridges, she has joined the [Nika project](#) and is providing resources for individuals with complex communication needs both locally and across the globe.

Thank you!

CORE WORD: **Heavy**

For Educators, Related Service Providers and Parents

Descriptive Teaching Model

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WAYS WE CAN USE THE WORD

SHARE INFORMATION (e.g. this is too **heavy**)

ASK QUESTION (e.g. is that **heavy**?)

NEGATE (e.g. not **heavy**)

ASK FOR HELP (e.g. help, this is **heavy**)

DESCRIBE (e.g. this is **heavy**!)

ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES

Snack/mealtimes: Students can use **heavy** during snack time to ask for help with their lunchbox.

Circle: Students can point out something heavy in the classroom during circle time (e.g. "table is **heavy**").

PLAY

Recess: At recess students and adults can go on a survey around the playground and identify things that are **heavy**.

READING

Here are some suggested books on YouTube that can assist in teaching the core word:

Shira's Story Corner-Whimsy's Heavy Things - Shira's Story Corner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgQMgaUSyPA>

So Light, So Heavy! by Sussane Strasser read aloud by ChinkiK Kumari

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjjDuFpiwmE>

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND VIDEO MODELING

Adults can talk to students about how some topics are light and easy to talk about and other topics are **heavy** and difficult to talk about. It's okay for a topic to be light or **heavy** but some people may not want to talk about **heavier** things and that is okay!

SENSORY MOTOR

Students and adults can work together to push something **heavy** together (e.g. a chair, a table). Students can wear a weighted vest or use a weighted blanket and talk about how it is **heavy**.

VIDEOS, MUSIC, ANIMATED SHORTS

How Heavy - Kid's Math Storytime Read Aloud - Ms Tori's Read and Learn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkuZQ2HF1I8>

Heavy and Light | Comparison for Kids | Learn Pre-School Concepts with Siya | Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQml21BB8mA>

Is It Heavy or Light? courtesy of Jack Hartmann Measurement Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUOQrXmfwDM>

STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Adults can explicitly teach students what “**heavy**” means.

[Sesame Street - Ernie's HEAVY and LIGHT game courtesy of TheOriginalTellyMonster](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bULgZSFOV98>

ART OR SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

Students and adults can create a collage with photos of objects that are **heavy**.

Students and adults can practice weighing objects on a scale to visually understand what is **heavy** and what is light.

[Kindergarten Math Weight- Heavier than, Lighter than and Same courtesy of Motion-Tutor.com](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTsrgGBVb7k>

[Comparing Objects by Weight with Child 14 \(Early Math Collaborative at Erikson\)](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyuL7W1E_9E

USE OF APPS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Toca Kitchen Monsters: This app can be used to talk about if different food items might feel **heavy** or light if we could hold them in our hands.

WORD WALL: Create a WordWall and add **'heavy'** to the list.

READING and the Word Wall: Sound out the letters together. Have the students find the word on the AAC system.

WRITING and the Word Wall: Using a pencil or alternative pencil, have students try to type the word on the keyboard or write the word together.

[Choosing Words for the Classroom Word Wall with Dr Caroline Musselwhite Video](#)

Courtesy of Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium

For specific questions or more ideas regarding this core word Activity Sheet, please contact Beth Lytle @ blytle@mail.sfsu.edu or Alisa Lego on Instagram

[@newfriendscollective](#)

Thank you!

CORE WORD: **Middle**

For Educators, Related Service Providers and Parents

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WAYS WE CAN USE THE WORD

DISAGREE: (e.g. No, I don't want to be in the **middle!**)

ASK A QUESTION (e.g. Who is going to be in the **middle?**)

ANSWER A QUESTION (e.g. Yes, I'll be in the **middle.**)

DIRECT (e.g. You need to move to the **middle** of that area.)

ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES

Snack/mealtimes: Students/Adults can line up different snacks and food and talk about which item is in the **middle**.

Calendar: Adults and students can talk about the days of the week and go over which day of the week is in the **middle** of the week.

PLAY

Toys and Games: Students and adults can line up toys and talk about which toys are in the **middle**.

Recess: When students line up and leave recess, there is normally a line leader and someone who gets to be last. Adults can talk about how the students who are not in the front or in the back are in the **middle** of the line.

READING

Here are some suggested books on YouTube that can assist in teaching the core word:

In the **Middle** of Fall by Kevin Henkes, courtesy of Reading with Robert:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yle6vJzin0&ab_channel=ReadingWithRobert

This book talks about what the world looks like in the **middle** of fall. It has beautiful pictures that illustrate what fall looks like and how fall will be gone soon and it will change into a new season.

The Wall in the **Middle** of the Book by Jon Agee, courtesy of AHEV Library:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Xq4q0uhS30&ab_channel=AHEVLibrary

This book talks about how there is a wall in the **middle** of the book. The wall separates the two sides of the book into safe places and not safe places. Eventually, the safe side is no longer safe and the character realizes that what he thought was unsafe was safe all along.

Bunny in the **Middle** by Anika A. Denise, courtesy of Jaewon Nicky Hyun:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-q01DH_EcU&ab_channel=JaewonNickyHyun

This book talks about Bunny and what it means to be in the **middle**.

Matilda in the **Middle** by Cori Doerrfeld, courtesy of Teacher Sarah Middle Grove 3pm:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u33BSxJ7y0&ab_channel=TeacherSarahMiddleGrove3pm

This book is about Matilda and her big family. It talks about how Matilda feels being in the middle of her big family and how she wants her family to support her in her ballet recital.

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND VIDEO MODELING

Students can talk to each other about things that happen in the **middle** of the day and if they like the activities that happen in the **middle** of the day.

SENSORY MOTOR

Students and adults can play tug-o-war and talk about how the flag in the **middle** of the rope shows who is tugging on the rope more based upon the flag's location.

VIDEOS, MUSIC, ANIMATED SHORTS

There's a hole in the **middle** of the ocean, courtesy of Pinkfong! Kids Songs and Stories:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWHNL4t1Qxs&ab_channel=Pinkfong%21Kids%27Songs%26Stories

In the **middle** of the night (Halloween songs), courtesy of HooplaKidz:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcdpCFJScIQ&ab_channel=HooplaKidz-OfficialNurseryRhymesChannel

The **Middle**, courtesy of Kidz Bop: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFU268F-kqE&ab_channel=KIDZBOP

In the **middle** of starting over by Sabrina Carpenter, courtesy of Sabrina Carpenter:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLcdPpjKKHo&ab_channel=SabrinaCarpenterVEVO

Young adults:

The **Middle** by Zedd, Grey featuring Maren Morris, courtesy of SyrebralVibes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQzS3JnZQZM&ab_channel=SyrebralVibes

The **Middle** by Jimmy Eat World, courtesy of Jimmy Eat World:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKsxPW6i3pM&ab_channel=JimmyEatWorldVEVO

Stuck in the **middle** with you by stealers wheel, courtesy of Stealers wheel topic:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ln7Vn_WKkWU&ab_channel=StealersWheel-Topic

STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Adults can teach their students about how to find the beginning, **middle** and end of a story or a set of pictures. The adults and students can sequence pictures together or write down what is happening in each part of the book and review it as a class. Here is a video from Teach For Life about how she teaches story structure and sequencing:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otbzPmMatxs&ab_channel=TeachforLife

ART OR SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

Students/Adults can make a shaving cream rain cloud. All you need is a clear cup, water, shaving cream and some food coloring. You put the water in the cup, put shaving cream on top of the water, and then squeeze small quantities of food coloring into the shaving cream. Slowly, the food coloring will trickle down through the shaving cream and appear in the water below. During the experiment, adults and students can talk about how the food coloring has to go through the **middle** of the cloud in order to reach the water below.



*Photo courtesy of laughingkidslearn.com

USE OF APPS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Tarheel reader: This can be used to create a book to talk about things that happen in the **middle** of something else.

WORD WALL: Create a WordWall and add '**middle**' to the list.

READING and the Word Wall: Sound out the letters together. Have the students find the word on the AAC system.

WRITING and the Word Wall: Using a pencil or alternative pencil, have students try to type the word on the keyboard or write the word together.

[Choosing Words for the Classroom Word Wall with Dr Caroline Musselwhite Video](#)
Courtesy of Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium

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Thank you!

CORE WORD: **Between**

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WAYS WE CAN USE THE WORD

ASK QUESTIONS (e.g. Is it **between** the houses??)

CLARIFY (e.g. The one **between** the small and the big block?)

INSTRUCT (e.g. Put it **between** the chairs.)

NEGOTIATE (e.g. You need to choose **between** one or the other)

ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES

Getting dressed: While dressing, talk about choosing **between** different pieces of clothing.

Circle: During circle talk about who is standing **between** other students.

Free Play: During free play, you can talk about throwing a ball **between** each other or between multiple students and adults.

Snack/Lunch: Have fun with food and put food **between** each other.

Transitions: As students are changing activities talk about going **between** one activity and another.

PLAY

Toys and Games:

Balls: Students love throwing and playing with balls, build cooperative play skills by having students throw different balls **between** each other.

Blocks: have fun building and putting different blocks **between** each other. Build understanding of colors by showing putting blocks between different colors.

Recess:

Run, run run! Set up a game where students run **between** different locations.

Duck, Duck, Goose: This classic game is a great opportunity to model **between**. Every time a student sits between classmates to outrun the duck, pause the game for a moment to model which two classmates the goose is sitting between.

READING

Here are some suggested books on YouTube that can assist in teaching the core word: **Between**

Sequencing books: any book that has a sequencing element provides an opportunity to model the word **between** when discussing the order of events. Talk about how Event-B happens between Event-A and Event-C. Here are some great sequencing books with visuals linked next to each title:

Pete the Cat I Love My White Shoes - [Visuals](#)

Pete the Cat and the Perfect Pizza Party - [Visuals](#)

Little Blue Truck Christmas - [Visuals](#)

Any book in the "Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly" series - [Visuals](#)

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie (and the various spinoffs) - [Visuals](#)

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND VIDEO MODELING

Adults can facilitate a discussion about what things you might share **between** your classmates, friends, or family and what things you might only share between a certain group (i.e. your family). Have students give examples of what they would share between each group.

SENSORY MOTOR

Obstacle course: Set up an obstacle course using cones, bean bags, and (or honestly whatever objects you have that work for you!). Use the phrase “run **between** _____ and _____)

Tunnel time! If you have a tunnel for students to crawl in, let them crawl and model talking about them crawling **between** the tunnel and each end.

Nature Walk: Take a nature walk and focus on commenting on things that are **between** two trees (e.g. I see _____ between those trees). Use the experience to also explore different smells and textures found in nature. You might find a crunchy leaf or a fuzzy moss between two trees!

STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Adults can set up a ‘center’ in class that focuses on the word **between**. Practice modeling by putting various objects between two objects that are the same. For example, use two cars and put action figures or dolls between the cars.

I’m Thinking of a Number: Take turns thinking of a number and secretly writing it on a white board. Other players take turns guessing which number **between** 1 and 20 (or whatever number you choose) is the closest. Adults can originally “guess” a number outside of the range, and then correct to a number BETWEEN the designated numbers.

ART OR SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

Art project: Have a lesson about the color wheel and color mixing, then make your own color wheel paintings. You will have to mix paints together to see which colors go between the primary colors. What color goes **between** blue and yellow? Mix blue and yellow paint to find out! Put the new paint color on the color wheel between blue and yellow.

Science: Learn about static electricity with [this video](#) or by reading [this article](#). Then try an experiment with a balloon and your hair. When you rub the balloon on your hair and then pull away, your hair will stand up in the air **between** your head and the balloon. WOW!

USE OF APPS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY

During computer class you can have a lesson about shortcuts for switching **between** different apps.

Operational competence: Teach students how to backup their AAC-vocabulary to transfer **between** devices.

Older students: You can introduce various money transferring applications. Students can learn how to transfer money **between** accounts.

VIDEOS, MUSIC, ANIMATED SHORTS

The Space Between | Dave Matthews Band | [YouTube video](#)
The chorus talks about the space between various (arguable over-wrought) concepts. Nonetheless, it provides opportunities to model **between**.

WORD WALL: Create a WordWall and add '**Between**' to the list.

READING and the Word Wall: Sound out the letters together. Have the students **Between** find the word on the AAC system.

WRITING and the Word Wall: Using a pencil or alternative pencil, have students try to write the word together or type the word on the keyboard. Try the [Wet, Dry, Try Method](#) for a hands on approach.

For specific questions or more ideas regarding this core word Activity Sheet, please contact Jordan Stuhltrager @ the.read.with.me.slp@gmail.com
Follow Jordan on Instagram @ **read.with.me.AAC**, on YouTube @ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXoXNzu1GIYTo1SkSuG_YA and on Boom Cards @ <https://wow.boomlearning.com/author/read.with.me> Thank you!

Jordan graduated with her Master's in Speech Language Pathology from Teacher College, Columbia University in 2018, and she has been working as an SLP in the San Mateo-Foster City School District ever since. She is a member of the AAC Team and is passionate about serving students in preschool and moderate-severe special education classrooms. Follow her on Instagram @read.with.me.aac, on YouTube @ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXoXNzu1GIYTo1SkSuG_YA and on Boom Cards @ <https://wow.boomlearning.com/author/read.with.me>