

How to Use a Conversation Board

'Conversation skills' covers:

- Body language
- Eye contact
- Use of voice and volume
- Listening
- Greeting and initiating
- Taking turns
- Asking questions
- Answering questions
- Commenting
- Being relevant and appropriate
- Ending the conversation

Greeting	Body language	Questions	Comments
Say hello	Eyes looking	Ask questions	Answer questions
Ask a question	Body facing	Stay on topic	Make comments
Talk about weather	Smiling/nodding		Say kind things
Compliment them	Show you're interested		

It is not possible to work on all of these skills at once.

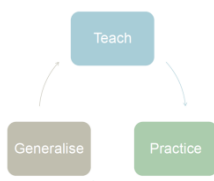
Steps to working on Conversation Skills



1. **TEACH** – first teach a conversation skill , e.g. taking turns.

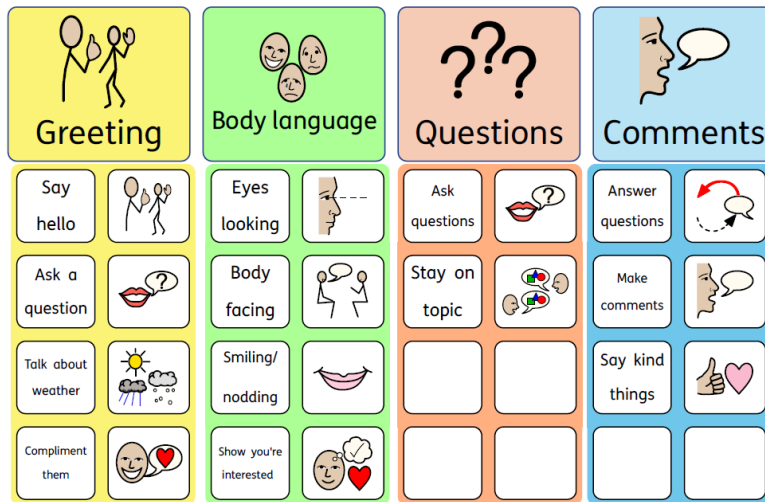


2. **PRACTISE** – next practise the conversation skill.
3. **GENERALISE** – lastly support the child to use the skill outside of practise in real life, e.g. when meeting friends/family.



REPEAT – repeat the cycle of teach – practise – generalise with a new conversation skill, e.g. starting the conversation.

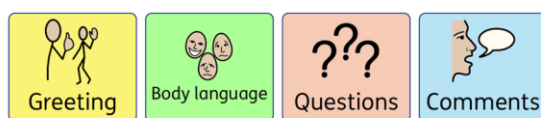
- Once the student has increased their confidence and understanding of a range of conversation skills, it is important to help them to put these skills together, so that they can have more natural conversations with a range of people.
- Use the conversations board to help students to do this.



- Ask your child to first tell you what they know/remember about, 'what makes a good conversation?'
- Write down their ideas.
- Show the child the conversation board and see if they remember that greetings, body language, asking and answering questions and making comments is important.
- Ask your child to decide on a topic that they would like to talk about.
- Once the students have chosen a topic, put the topic card in the centre of the table or write their chosen topic on a piece of paper.
- Provide the child with 5 -10 minutes to have a conversation around their chosen topic.
- Provide your child with feedback, e.g. 'great questions X', 'love that you nodded your head to show you were interested'.
- See if the students can give each other feedback on what they did well.
- Use visuals to provide specific examples of what make the conversation Good and where the gaps were. For example;



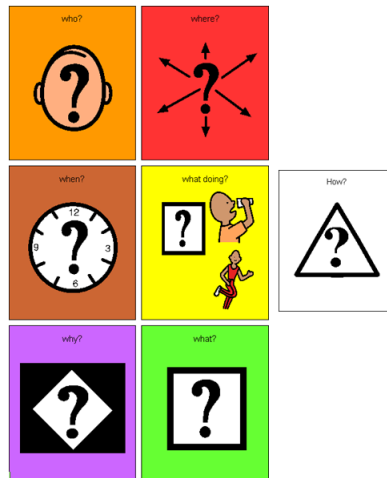
How did I do?



Bill	"hello Bob"	Looking Waved Smiled Nodded head	"where did you go at easter?"	"I went to my cousins house". "my mum and dad" "they made a chocolate cake for us. It was delicious. I love chocolate".
Bob	"hello Bill"		"Where did you go?" "who did you go with" "what was the best thing you did?"	"I went to Spain".

- You could add counters to the conversation board every time your child asks a question/ makes a comment while you listen.

- Give children feedback on whether their conversation was balanced. Does everyone have counters on questions and comments? What could X have asked? What could Y have said to show he was interested in X's holiday?.
- Display the question card visuals on the table and refer to these to help your child think of questions.



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