

First Words

with Amigo, the friendly robot

Manual and Workbook

Smartbox

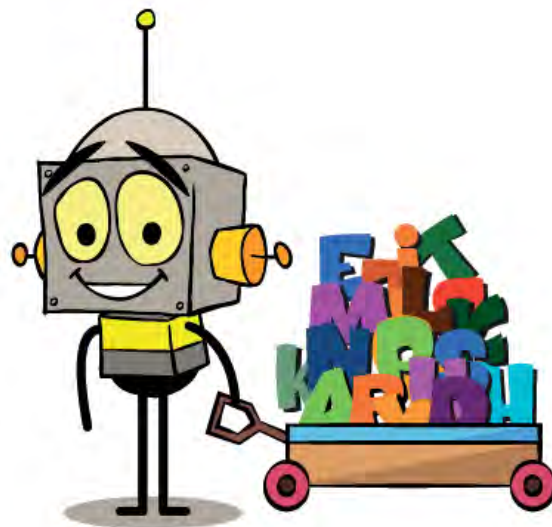
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Welcome to
First Words
with Amigo, the friendly robot

First Words is a fun and interactive learning tool included with Grid 3. The grid set is an exciting and engaging resource for children at the very beginning of their communication journey. Included in First Words:

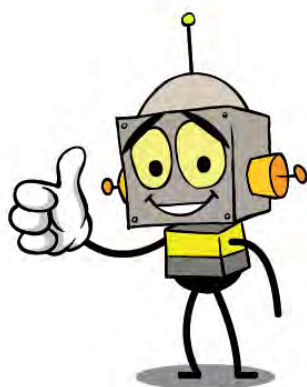
- Six collections of activities
- Most commonly used first words
- Introduction to core vocabulary
- Introduction to phrases
- Introduction to meaning and multi-meaning
- Over 200 animations



Manual by
Andrea McGuinness
Speech and Language Therapist
and Smartbox Assistive Technology

About First Words

Each motivating collection of no-fail activities helps children progress towards using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). First Words uses symbols, text and animation to encouraging play and exploration with language. Amigo, the friendly robot, is on hand to help users learn and speak their first words.



Built on many years' experience, the resource has been developed in partnership with Speech and Language Therapist, Andrea McGuinness. The grid set incorporates key language acquisition techniques, such as modelling, in completely new ways that can be used at home and school. Everyone can support an individual using First Words and have fun along the way.



Non-verbal children should be given every opportunity to learn and speak the same first words a verbal child would. The words and phrases used in First Words were chosen from pragmatic user research that identified the most commonly first spoken words used by children.

This belief, in combination with working with people at the very start of their communication journey, has taught us that activities need to be engaging and motivating to aid progression towards communication. First Words provides an essential but refreshing collection of activities for this crucial stage of learning language.

Who should use First Words?

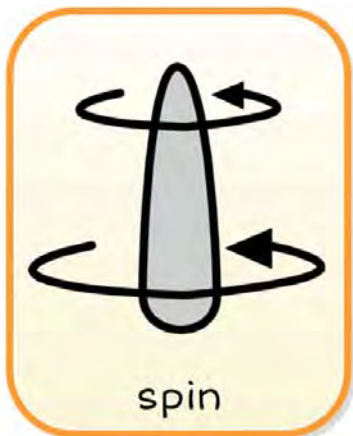
First Words is a resource that is useful to any child showing signs that they are ready to move on from cause and effect and choice making activities to the early stages of communication. Whether the focus is on learning symbols, experiencing text for the first time or constructing simple sentences, First Words helps children achieve their communication goals.

First Words is designed to support individuals developing a number of skills including:

- Increasing vocabulary knowledge
- Developing symbol knowledge
- Early alternative communication (AAC)
- Literacy

Language development

The vocabulary has been chosen to reflect the first spoken words typically learnt when children are learning to speak. The words chosen also include vocabulary that will be very powerful when starting to use an AAC system (for example 'more' and 'stop') as well as vocabulary heard and used frequently within classroom activities and experiences.



"Amigo, spin around!"



"Amigo, pull a funny face"



"Amigo, use your eye gaze"

How to use First

During each activity children using First Words are assisted by Amigo, the animated robot. Each word is displayed, with a supporting symbol. The child is then able to make a choice, prompting the words to be spoken aloud. Once the word is spoken Amigo springs into action – acting out (modelling) the word, phrase or instruction.



Homonyms

Some words in English have more than one meaning (homonyms), for example 'go' can mean 'go away' or 'ready steady go'. It is important that individuals are taught the various meanings of a word.

Simple phrase building and use of pre-stored phrases are also skills learnt and experienced within these activities. This will support future use of AAC systems.

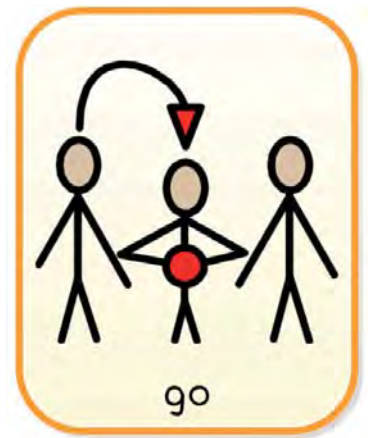
Each activity is error free, meaning the learner can choose any cell and cannot get it wrong. Every selection will speak the word and Amigo will model the animation.



Go Away



Ready,
steady, go!



It's your go

How to use First

Supporting the user

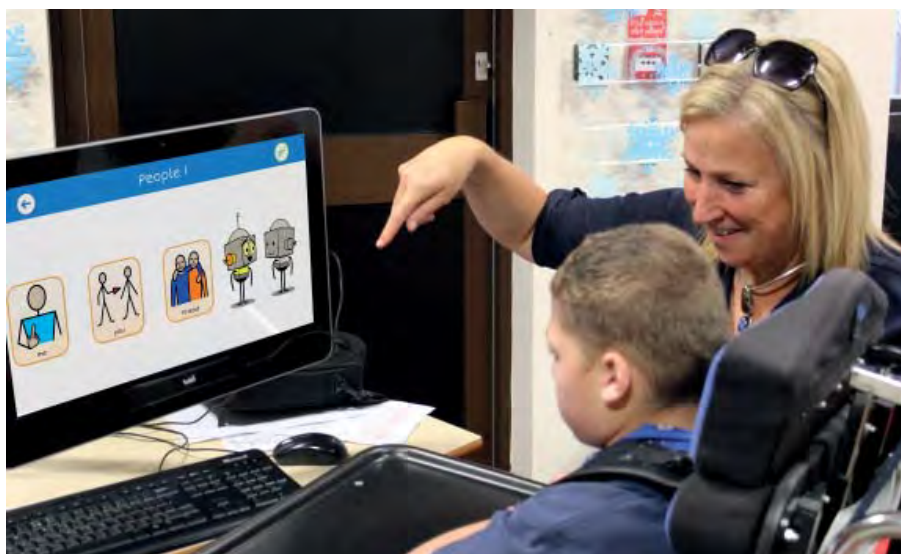
Supporting adults should always presume competence and react as if every selection from the individual is intentional, even at the early stages of using the resource. This is important as the activity then remains fun and enables the student to see the reaction from their selection without feeling tested or under pressure.

It can be very tempting to 'test' the individual by asking 'where's.....?' or 'can you find.....?' but this will increase pressure and decrease fun and learning. You will probably do this at some point but try and keep testing to a minimum.

Most students enjoy turn taking in an activity and learn from watching others as well as trying things out themselves. Model your choices on the system and take turns with the individual to select the words. If the individual is happy to, let them explore the resource independently. Recognise when you are 'modelling' and when you are 'prompting'.

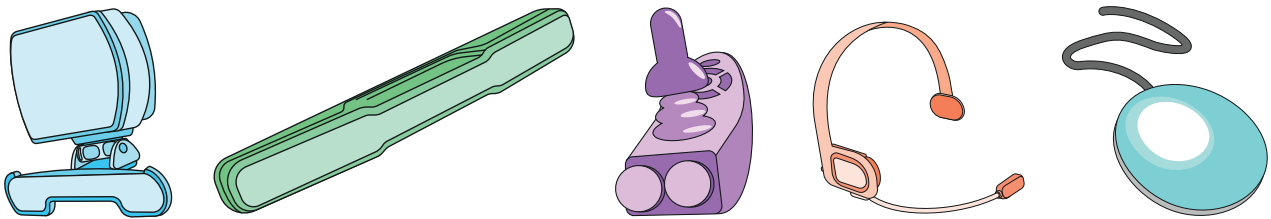
You are modelling when you are selecting the words yourself. You may provide a simple verbal commentary for this, for example 'I'll choose 'want' then touching the corresponding symbol. You are prompting if you are providing physical guidance (for example placing the students hand or finger on a location) or asking them to select a certain location. Modelling can continue throughout the activities, even when the student is very familiar with First Words. You should always aim to reduce prompts as the student increases their independence.

Providing simple verbal commentary during the activity will support the student's learning. For example 'You chose more, Amigo is getting more!'

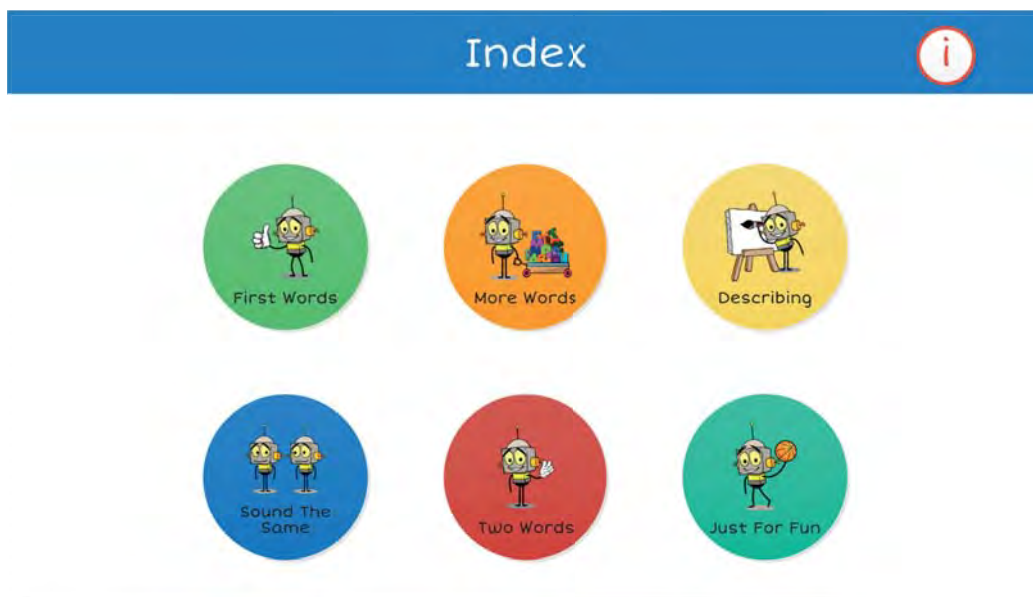


Access

The First Words activity sets can be accessed using all the alternative access options available in Grid 3. There are rest cells in the corner of each grid to support people using eye gaze or mouse pointers. These can be used by the facilitator to pause the access method, giving time to talk through the options on that page and give the student time to look at the activity before making a choice from the screen.



Opening the Amigo grid set



When you open the Amigo grid set you will see the following categories for the vocabulary.

- First Words
- More Words
- Describing
- Sound the same
- Two words
- Just for fun

Opening the Grid Set

There is a small information button at the top right of each menu grid. This will give you hints, tips and ideas on using activities within that category.

Each page stays consistent to help those supporting the learner and the learner themselves understand the activities and the navigation.

If you are supporting the learner, use the small navigation buttons at the top left to go back a level. These buttons are small to enable those supporting the individual to navigate to a different page without the learner using the navigation buttons in error. You might find the learner using the system can access these independently and they may be able to change the pages themselves, even with the small target. If you would like the individual to use these buttons independently with more ease, these can be resized.

The animation will play until complete. The individual will not be able to select the next animation until the first has finished.

Widgit symbols are used throughout these activities. However, it is possible to change the symbol set if required. Labels and spoken aloud and can also be changed easily within Grid 3.



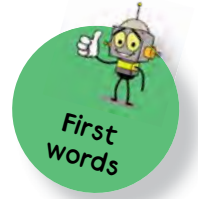
Monitoring progress

The worksheets included are designed to record and monitor progress. Some qualitative information can also be gathered on this form, for example was the symbol selected independently, was a prompt or model provided prior to access and is the individual watching the corresponding animation.

First words	Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system
	Greetings	Hello					
		Bye					
		Gone					
	Yes and no	Yes					
		No					
		Like					
	Instructions	Go					
		Come					
		Help					
Playing	Turn						
	More						
	Stop						
People 1	Me						
	You						
	Friend						
People 2	Amigo						
	Mum						
	Dad						

Activities

First Words

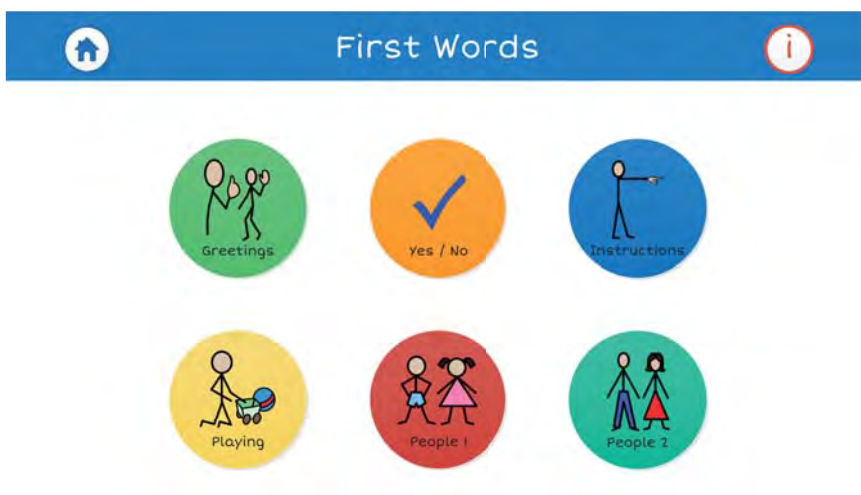


There is no specific order to introduce these sets of words. Use whichever motivates the person you are working with. Some individuals like a frequent change of grids and activities, whilst others might prefer the consistency of frequent repetition of a limited number of pages. There is no right or wrong way to introduce each activity and keeping the individual engaged and motivated should always be the priority.

These words are based on core vocabulary, i.e. words that are frequently learnt as first words and are easy to teach as they can be used across lots of different situations. Children learning these first words will hear them spoken very frequently throughout every day. By seeing the symbol, hearing the word and experiencing the animated response, this resource will support the student to learn these first words.

At this level, there are three large target words within each activity set.

These words are arranged into the following sets.



Vocabulary starters

- Greetings
- Yes and no
- Instructions
- Playing
- People 1
- People 2

Activities

More Words



These words build on the first words activities. The number of words per page increases for this activity set with four, five or six words per activity. They continue the core vocabulary approach and add some commonly used nouns and actions.



Vocabulary starters

- Toys
- Places
- Talking about things
- Actions
- Movement
- Requests

Describing



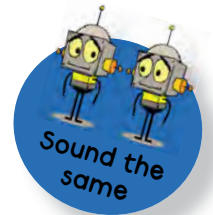
This set of activities looks at attributes, descriptions, prepositions and feelings.

Activities

Vocabulary starters

- Describe
- Colours
- Opinions
- Feelings
- Position

Sounds the same



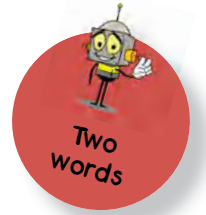
Lots of words have two meanings (homonyms), and to learn language it is important that all meanings of all words are learnt. These activities recognise this and aim to give the students experience of words having multi meanings. This can seem like a difficult concept, but the students will already be experiencing the different contexts of these words in spoken language. This activity bank and the clear animations will help students learn these words that have more than one meaning.

Vocabulary starters

- Go
- Play
- Open/ close
- On/ off

Activities

Two Words



Putting two words together is the next step in language development. These activities let the student build their own two word phrases and see Amigo's response. The phrases are built with a left to right orientation on each page. Students are given help with this by initially only making available the choice of the first word, then when this selection has been made only making available the choice for the second word. Students are shown which words are available to choose by highlighting the symbols that can be chosen and greying out the words that cannot be chosen at that point. The chosen words will remain highlighted as the animation plays to give the students a visual reminder of the choices they made and help the student make the link between the words chosen and the animation played.



Vocabulary starters

- Greetings
- Animals
- Toys
- Food
- Drink
- Transport
- Colours
- Actions
- Turns
- Want/ don't want
- On/ off
- In/ out

Activities

Just for fun



Students using this resource may well be on a pathway towards using AAC. The AAC system they use may contain whole phrases stored under a single button as well as the ability to build their own phrases and sentences. In this section the grids contain pre-programmed phrases and sentences. Students select a single cell to hear a whole phrase and to see Amigo carry out the action. Of course he's a robot, so he can do lots of things that we can't do! This a chance to see Amigo's fun side!



Vocabulary starters

- Body movements 1
- Body movements 2
- Boxes
- Objects
- Activities

Moving on

First Words is not designed to be a functional AAC communication resource, but rather a fun learning tool on the journey towards AAC. You will need to consider other grid sets for students requiring support with expressive communication. Many different ways to organise vocabulary for communication are available. Look at the options and ask advice from Speech and Language Therapists to make sure you have a long term language learning plan for your students.

A wide range of AAC resources are available for Grid 3, for more information see <https://thinksmartbox.com/product/grid-3/symbol-communication/>

First Words Workbook

How to use these worksheets

These sheets accompany the First Words grid set and enables you to track progress within the First Words resources. The record sheets are intended to be completed by parents, teachers, therapists and assistants to ensure progress is tracked effectively.

First Words activities are split into categories. Each category has a series of activities within it and, in turn, specific vocabulary within each activity. There is a work sheet corresponding to each category. There is also a blank worksheet to enable you to easily record which words have been used when you are quickly moving between categories within one session. These allow you to record the following:

- Name of the student
- Name of facilitator
- Location: where the session took place
- Student position: Whether the student was positioned in supportive seating, standing frame etc. or whether this is not required
- Access method: choose the access methods used by the student

The vocabulary within each category is listed on the record sheet. By each vocabulary item, you can indicate whether the student chose the word following:

- Modelling - the facilitator using the system to have a turn
- Verbal prompts - the facilitator telling the student to choose a certain item
- Physical prompts - supporting the student physically to access the words
- Independently - student selected without the above support

Recording this information will help keep track of the support a facilitator is providing during the sessions. It will help facilitators phase out prompts and record emerging independence.

Facilitators can also use the 'add to AAC system' column to indicate which words would be useful on the student systems. This can be to help develop a new AAC system or to be added to an existing system.

Record sheet: 'First Words' activities

Student name: _____ Supported by: _____ Date: _____

Location: _____

Student position: _____

Access method: Touch 1 switch scan 2 switch scan Eye gaze Mouse/ mouse alternative Other

Indicate the activities carried out and the results:

Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system
Greetings	Hello					
	Bye					
	Gone					
Yes and no	Like					
	Yes					
	No					
Instructions	Go					
	Come					
	Help					
Playing	Turn					
	More					
	Stop					
People 1	Me					
	You					
	Friend					
People 2	Amigo					
	Mum					
	Dad					

First words

Record sheet: 'More Words' activities

Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system
Toys	Bubbles					
	Book					
	Music					
Places	Ball					
	Home					
	School					
	Work					
Talking about things	Park					
	My					
	Want					
	Have					
	What					
Actions	That					
	Read					
	Drink					
	Eat					
	Play					
	Look					
	Work					
Movement	Sit					
	Stand					
	Dance					
	Jump					
	Sing					
Requests	Sleep					
	Get					
	Put					
	Open					
	Close					

More words

Record sheet: 'Describing' activities

Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system
Describe	Fast					
	Slow					
	Big					
	Small					
	Loud					
Colours	Quiet					
	Black					
	Blue					
	Green					
	Orange					
	Pink					
	Purple					
Opinions	Good					
	Bad					
	Different					
	Same					
	Happy					
Feelings	Sad					
	Surprised					
	Confused					
	In					
Positions	Out					
	On					
	Off					
	Up					
	Down					

Describing

Record sheet: 'Sounds the same' activities

Sounds the same							
Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system	
Go	Go, as in movement						
	Go, as in 'ready, steady, go!'						
	Go, as in 'my go'						
Play	Play with toys						
	Play on playground						
	Play an instrument						
Open/ close	Open a door						
	Close a door						
	Open the curtains						
	Close the curtains						
	Place is open						
	Place is closed						
On/ off	Light on						
	Light off						
	Clothes on						
	Clothes off						
In/ out	Positional 'on'						
	Positional 'off'						
	Inside						
	Outside						
	Positional 'in'						
	Positional 'out'						

Record sheet: 'Two words' activities

Activities	First Word	Second word	Selected word 1	Selected word 2	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Use with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously
Greetings	Hi	Mum						
	Bye	Dad						
Animals	Big	Dog						
	Small	Cat						
Toys	Want	Fish						
	My	Ball						
		Bubbles						
		Book						
Food	Eat	Music						
	Like	Bread						
		Biscuits						
Drink		Cheese						
		Yoghurt						
	Drink	Water						
	Like	Juice						
Transport		Milk						
		Tea						
	Fast	Car						
Colours	Slow	Bike						
		Boat						
		Train						
	Red	Ball						
	Blue	Book						
	Green							
	Orange							

Two words

Record sheet: 'Two words' activities

Actions	Amigo	Sing							
	You	Dance							
		Jump							
		Help							
Turns	My	Turn							
	You								
	Mum's								
	Dad's								
Want/ Don't want	Want	Go							
	Don't want	Stop							
		That							
		More							
On/ off	Turn	On							
	Take	Off							
	Put								
In/ out	In	Box							
	Out	House							
		Door							

Two words (cont)

Record sheet: 'Just for fun' activities

Activities	Vocabulary	Modelled	Used with physical prompt	Used with verbal prompt	Used spontaneously	Add to AAC system
Body movements 1	Spin your head					
	Pull a funny face					
Body movements 2	Shake your legs					
	Stretch your arms					
	Grow taller					
Boxes	Turn into a frog					
	Wiggle your bottom					
	Clap your hands					
	Jump in the box					
	Jump on the box					
Objects	Kick the box					
	Jump over the box					
	Bend a spanner					
	Break a flower pot					
	Fry an egg					
Activities	Throw a basketball					
	Use your Grid Pad					
	Do some maths					
	Paint a picture					
	Use your eye gaze					

Just for fun

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