



5 Reasons to “Comment like Crazy”

(when modeling AAC)

COMMENT:

a verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction.

1. Always Relevant

Commenting is used across contexts in interactions with all manner of communication partners, ALL THE TIME. There are no right or wrong responses when commenting. Comment on preferences, features, situations, environments, etc. There is no end to the comments that can be made throughout one’s day.

2. Engagement

Commenting varies interaction patterns to get beyond the pitfalls of question-answer or request-respond. Commenting fosters engagement because it lends itself to natural interactions in which the pressure to respond is minimized (though an opening or opportunity to respond is often provided). Specifically, commenting provides an INTERACTIVE, rather than directive, way for a communication partner to engage with an individual’s communication tool, even when the individual is NOT engaging with his/her tool. In educational environments commenting expands teaching opportunities or exposure to content meaningfully (through priming, repeating, reframing) , while limiting excessive ask/respond patterns of interaction.

3. Meaningful Feedback

Commenting provides meaningful feedback about what is happening in the environment. For individuals with slow or impaired processing skills or who have difficulty understanding social cues, commenting can provide important context for making sense of activities, and events in the environment, or related to his/her communication partner’s preferences or perspective.

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4. Fosters Social Closeness / Builds Rapport

Commenting moves interactions beyond the rote and predictable. Commenting allows for spontaneous, casual, and personal interactions that are flexible and fluid. Comments give insight about one’s personality, sense of humor, and belief systems. Commenting makes it personal whether on the surface or on a much deeper level, and opens the door to connection with those around us. Think about how much we learn about one another from “Comments” on social media.

Once interactions get personal, then they can really get FUN!! Every social group, culture, generation, etc, uses its own slang to comment and show membership in a given group or community. Words and phrases for commenting are part of the social fabric of humankind. Think *OMG, wicked, far out*, etc.

5. Grow Language

Commenting provides openings and opportunities to expand communicative functions! Ensure meaningful and motivating comments are included in AAC tools, from low-tech language boards to high-tech devices, for efficient access.

Comments such as...	can elicit...	For example...
<i>That’s interesting. I wondered about that. That reminds me of something. It was awesome. Look at that Wow!</i>	questions	What is it? Why? What happened? Where did it go? What did you do/see? What is he/she/it doing?
<i>See that! (looking at an animal book, magazine, out the window, etc.) I didn’t know that. Let’s see (the map, schedule, toy, etc).</i>	sharing of information	He is a big one. He eats _____. It’s goes faster than _____. It goes there (pointing).
<i>Oh, look at those (cupcakes, shoes, etc). These are neat!</i>	requests	I want one. Can I see / have.
<i>I think you’ll like it. Your turn / You try. Let’s do it.</i>	negation	I don’t like. I don’t want to. I don’t understand.
<i>That’s my favorite. That is a great (show, book, restaurant, etc). My mom always makes that. She (actually) did it! I had fun.</i>	MORE comments	Oh, yes Me too Yum/yuk No way Awesome

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