

# AT Tech Tip:

## Communication Strategies For: Using an Etran with Color Encoded Eye Gaze



### InterACT Team

#### The Interdisciplinary Augmentative Communication & Technology Team



*When a student can use a large number of symbols for eye gaze-based communication, it is time to introduce “encoded eye gaze”. Using a location-color encoding method of communication, the Etran can be expanded from 8 to 32+ symbols. Symbols are grouped together and color encoded. The student eye gazes first to the general location on the Etran and then eye gazes to the color of the selected symbol.*

Communication Partner	Student Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position yourself facing the student</li> <li>• Hold or position the Etran with PCS or word choices facing the student at his/her eye level</li> <li>• Establish joint attention with the student</li> <li>• Review the symbol locations on the Etran if the student is unfamiliar with the choices</li> <li>• Look directly at the student as you present the question (do not in-advertently look at the preferred symbol)</li> <li>• Carefully watch the student’s head movements and eye movements to determine their selection</li> <li>• Once the student has indicated the location of the symbol, confirm his/her selection. (i.e. “ You’re telling me your choice is in this section.”)</li> <li>• Next, tell the student to go ahead and find the color</li> <li>• Once the student has indicated the border color, confirm the exact symbol selected. (i.e. “You’re telling me it is this red one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student locates and fixes his/her eye gaze on the chosen group of symbols for about 3 seconds and then looks back at communication partner for confirmation</li> <li>• The student then looks at a color symbol for 3 seconds to indicate the color of the border outlining the selected symbol and then looks back at communication partner for confirmation.</li> </ul>

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which means you are thirsty.)	
<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <p>“What letter does the word “snake” begin with?”</p> <p>“How are you feeling right now?”</p>	<p>The student locates the group of letters that contains “S”. Then he/she gets confirmation from the communication partner that they know which section was selected. Finally, the student looks at the blue symbol since the “S” is outlined in blue.</p> <p>The student locates the group of symbols which contains the word “sleepy”. He/she receives confirmation of the selection and then looks at the yellow symbol since the picture of “sleepy” is outlined in yellow.</p>
<p><b>Pros:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is an effective method for communication when a larger range of symbols need to be available for a student who uses eye gaze</li> <li>• Vocabulary can continually be modified and re-arranged</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student needs to be able to visually locate symbols from a large field</li> <li>• The student must understand the two-step eye-gaze process.</li> <li>• The student must be provided regular opportunities to use the overlays in order to recall the symbol locations quickly</li> </ul>