Self-Reflection: Descriptive Teaching

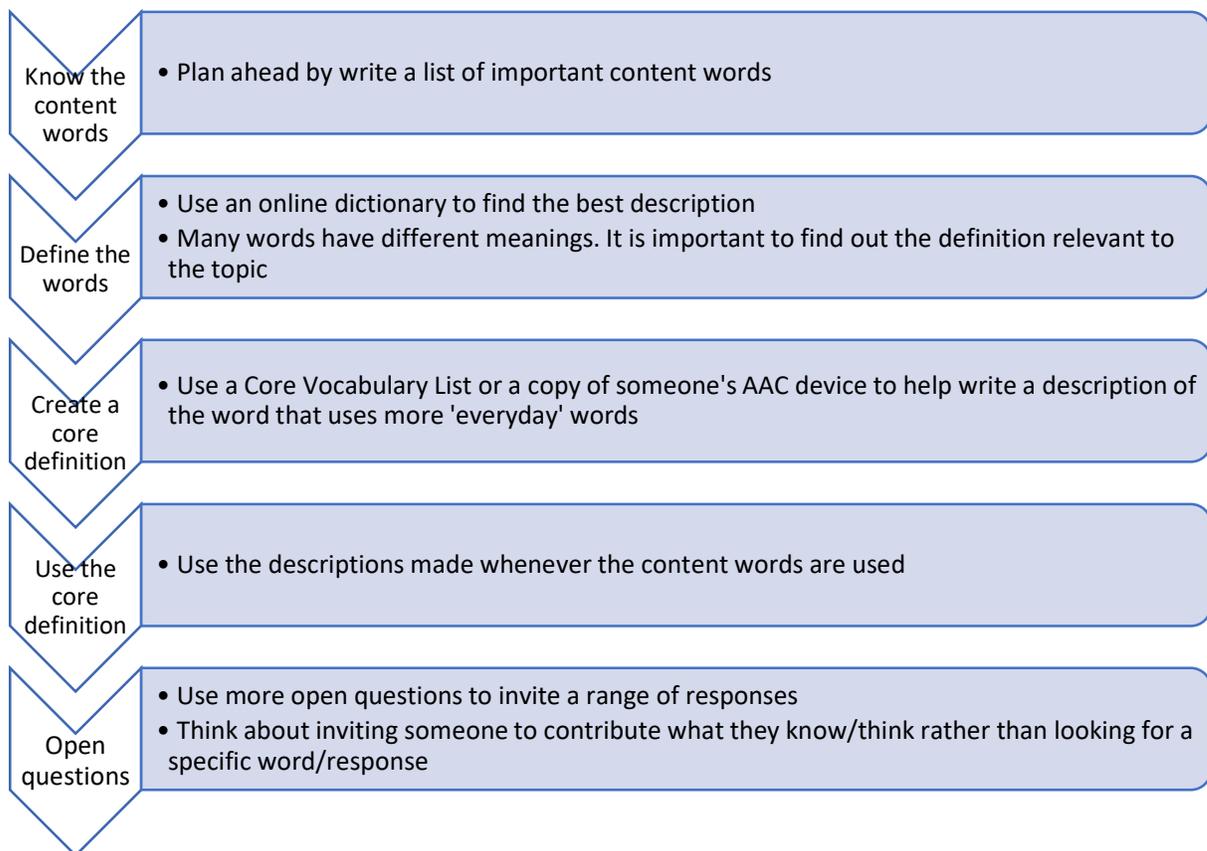**indigo.** | Formerly Independent Living Centre WA

Purpose:

This sheet is designed to establish a snapshot of the sub-skills that contribute to the overall skill of effectively using a descriptive approach with someone with a complex communication need (CCN). It can act to guide personal goal setting and development as a communication partner. Place a mark under the number which reflects current performance in each area.

The reflection can be revisited regularly as part of personal or professional development. Some people may demonstrate different areas of strength.

If you have their consent, videoing yourself during an interaction with an individual is a good way to evaluate how you are going with each of the elements.

Key elements of using a descriptive approach:

Know the content words
- Plan ahead by write a list of important content words

Define the words
- Use an online dictionary to find the best description
- Many words have different meanings. It is important to find out the definition relevant to the topic

Create a core definition
- Use a Core Vocabulary List or a copy of someone's AAC device to help write a description of the word that uses more 'everyday' words

Use the core definition
- Use the descriptions made whenever the content words are used

Open questions
- Use more open questions to invite a range of responses
- Think about inviting someone to contribute what they know/think rather than looking for a specific word/response

Get consent before using an individual's aided communication system.
Respect their right to refuse. **Do not assume** that a yes yesterday is a yes today

Reflection Recording Sheet: Descriptive Teaching

Person completing reflection _____   **Role:** _____

Date 1 (x): _____   **Date 2 (o):** _____   **Date 3 (/):** _____

Skill	Never		Sometimes		Half the time		Usually		Always	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Know the content words										
Find the best definition										
Write a new definition using 'everyday' words										
Use the new definition alongside the content words										
Use an open approach if asking questions										

Ideas on how to improve:

Know the content words	Find the best definition	Write a new definition using 'everyday' words	Use the new definition alongside the content words	Use an open approach if asking questions
☐ Use any documents associated with the topic to find the key words ☐ Make a list first ☐ Add to the list over time ☐ Share the list with others to create a new dictionary	☐ Use an online dictionary ☐ Write the definition with the content words ☐ Use an electronic format to make this process quicker	☐ Find and use a core vocabulary list ☐ Reword the dictionary definition – sometimes it just needs a slight tweaking ☐ Get help from other people	☐ Print or have the list available when discussing the topic for quick reference ☐ Share with others so they can use the same descriptions	☐ Ask questions that could have more than one answer ☐ Plan questions ahead of time ☐ Rethink goals to look less at 'labelling' and more at 'describing', 'predicting'