



The Dynamic AAC Goals Grid 2

DAGG-2

Developed by Tobii Dynamox in conjunction with Dynamic Therapy Associates of Kennesaw, GA. (2014).

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Introduction to the DAGG-2

The primary objectives of the Dynamic AAC Goals Grid-2 are to provide a systematic means to assess (and reassess) an individual's current skills in AAC and to assist partners in developing a comprehensive, long-reaching plan for enhancing the AAC user's communicative independence. This tool strives to assist with the team's consideration of the myriad of components that make for successful AAC use.

A comprehensive assessment should help us determine the level at which the individual is currently communicating. During the evaluation stage, the DAGG-2 serves as a checklist for ensuring that all areas of Light's (1989) communicative competencies are considered. It allows the AAC team to analyze patterns of strengths and weaknesses to better assist in determining the appropriate next steps for intervention.

During reassessment and progress measurement, the prompting hierarchy (Chain of Cues) for each goal allows a team to acknowledge increased independence at even the most dependent level of communicative ability. It allows the individual to demonstrate progress towards independence in very small increments. Goals can be set and met based on minor improvements.

It is our goal that the DAGG-2 presents a big picture view of the individual when assessing and developing goals for today and tomorrow. Today goals are reflected in promoting success within the individual's current level of communicative independence across the four competency areas. Tomorrow goals are based on projections of future opportunities, needs, constraints, and capabilities resulting from instruction within those competencies (Buekelman & Miranda, 2005).

How to Use the DAGG-2

There is no "one size fits all" to use the DAGG-2 in assessment and intervention planning. Consider the following steps*:

If using the DAGG-2 for initial assessment:

STEP 1: For initial assessment, use the Ability Level Continuum as a starting place to determine target goal areas. The Ability Level Continuum helps to provide insight to current and potential skills and strengths based on an individual's observable communication behaviors.

STEP 2: Choose appropriate goals to address in one or more areas of communicative competence. Mark the level of cueing currently needed for successful communication.

STEP 3: Use the AAC Goals Worksheet to write specific long and/or short term goals for the individual. Think about what the individual does during the course of his/her day to identify activities and communication partners in which to address the target skills. Activities that occur frequently and are motivating will provide more opportunities to practice skills.

When using the DAGG-2 for reassessment:

STEP 1: Return to the Dynamic AAC Goals; mark any progress in the level of cueing using a different color pen or by date of reassessment.

STEP 2: Use the AAC Goals Periodic Progress Report to record progress towards goals in each competency area and/or at each Ability Level at intervals appropriate for your facility or setting.

STEP 3: Revise goals to reflect progress.

Note:

Using this tool, an individual's progress could be measured in several ways:

- Movement along the Ability Level Continuum
- Mastering more goals in a specific communicative competency
- Mastering more goals in more areas of communicative competence
- Mastering more goals within an Ability Level
- Reducing the levels of prompting needed to meet a specific goal
- Increased complexity of a goal

*For a more detailed description of the DAGG-2 components and case study, please refer to the addendum on page 17.

Ability Level Continuum*

Use this guide to help provide insight to current and potential target skills and strengths. Mark the statements that best describes an individual's observable communication behaviors. You may not check all of the boxes in any skill area. You may also find that you check boxes in more than one Ability Level.

Ability Level 1: Emergent	Ability Level 2: Emergent Transitional
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited or no understanding that symbols (e.g., pictures, words) represent ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures may or may not help increase understanding and expression. <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult to determine how much he/she understands verbally. 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to common gestures (e.g., come here, go away, greetings). <input type="checkbox"/> Shows understanding of the use of common objects. <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures seem to help increase both understanding and expression. <input type="checkbox"/> May be starting to follow simple directions within familiar routines and activities.
<p>Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May communicate most successfully using facial expression, body language, gestures, and/or behavior (either socially appropriate or challenging). <input type="checkbox"/> May indicate acceptance (e.g., smile) or rejection (e.g., turn away) but does not reliably answer other yes/no questions. <input type="checkbox"/> May desire or try to communicate in familiar and motivating activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Requires help from communication partner to communicate successfully (e.g., narrowing choices, interpreting gestures/body language/behavior). <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory behavior is very important for calming (e.g., rocking, mouthing objects) and determining likes and dislikes. 	<p>Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understands symbols (e.g., objects, pictures) for basic, common or concrete items. <input type="checkbox"/> Starting to use clear and simple symbols (including objects, photographs and picture symbols) in motivating situations or favorite activities. <input type="checkbox"/> If using picture symbols, he/she will use one picture at a time to communicate messages. <input type="checkbox"/> May use gestures, body language, facial expression or behavior intentionally to communicate (e.g., pointing, showing, giving); however, reliability varies from day to day or activity to activity.
<p>Social Interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reacts to familiar people and/or motivating activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns in familiar and motivating routines (e.g., "high five" or when someone spreads arms to receive a hug). <input type="checkbox"/> May respond to close physical interaction by looking, smiling, or reaching. 	<p>Social Interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shows clear preference for certain objects, activities, and people. <input type="checkbox"/> May be starting to show some interest in social interactions, especially in specific situations. <input type="checkbox"/> May not use symbols to interact socially.
<p>Literacy Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May not be interested in reading or book activities. 	<p>Literacy Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May demonstrate a beginning interest in participating in shared reading and/or is beginning to engage with books more independently. <input type="checkbox"/> May be able to identify own name and a few other frequently seen words.
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Performance with forms of AAC may be inconsistent. <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits from help from his/her communication partner as skills are developing. 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Performance with forms of AAC may be inconsistent. <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits from help from his/her communication partner as skills are developing.

*Adapted from Patricia Dowden, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, University of Washington, Communicative Independence Model.

Ability Level Continuum

Ability Level 3: Context-Dependent		Ability Level 4: Transitional Independent	
Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understands photographs or picture symbols representing objects, common actions (e.g., run, paint, eat), people or situations. <input type="checkbox"/> Starting to understand more abstract picture symbols (e.g., think, big, hot, few). <input type="checkbox"/> Follows simple instructions in both familiar and unfamiliar routines. <input type="checkbox"/> Understands and follows general conversations. 	Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understands conversations as well as same age peers. <input type="checkbox"/> Follows simple to complex directions given verbally.
Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a combination of communication methods to express messages (e.g., gestures/pointing, symbols, speech/vocalizations, and device). <input type="checkbox"/> Uses symbols and objects spontaneously to communicate basic needs and make a variety of requests. <input type="checkbox"/> Beginning to use symbols to comment and/or ask questions with support. <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates best in routines, about familiar topics, and with familiar communication partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Beginning to combine two or more symbols to create longer messages (e.g., uses carrier phrases "I want; I like; I see ___"). 	Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates about a broad range of topics with both familiar and unfamiliar communication partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently combines 2 or more symbols to create longer, more complex and/or an increased variety of messages for different communicative functions (e.g., comments, questions, or sharing information). <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a wider variety of vocabulary or communication tools within his/her communication device.
Social Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Initiates conversations and social interactions with familiar communication partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits from help to take additional turns in conversation. <input type="checkbox"/> Answers routine questions appropriately with familiar communication partners. 	Social Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses socially appropriate comments/questions to initiate with familiar communication partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately answers routine questions with a variety of communication partners.
Literacy Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy skills growing to include: identifying letters of the alphabet, connecting some letters with corresponding sounds, understanding word boundaries, reading a small number of high frequency sight words, reading and writing name, beginning to spell words but not necessarily with conventional spelling. 	Literacy Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy skills growing to include: increased letter-sound awareness, additional sight words, conventional spelling of simple words; adding word endings as appropriate (e.g., past tense "ed", plural "s" or "ing), and solid understanding of the connection between spoken words and print. <input type="checkbox"/> May be beginning to utilize word prediction with symbol support. <input type="checkbox"/> Reads printed material that is somewhat below an age-appropriate level.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May continue to benefit from the help of his/her communication partner to communicate successfully, especially when the topic, partner or environment is unfamiliar. <input type="checkbox"/> Able to use simple strategies (e.g., repeat) to repair communication when not understood with support from the communication partner. 	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strong "mental mapping" of where things are in his/her device including navigational symbols. <input type="checkbox"/> Able to use a variety of strategies to repair communication when not understood; and, in some cases, with the support of communication partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Programs content in the communication device when it's desired or missing given support as needed (e.g., add favorite foods in Word List food category).

Ability Level Continuum

Ability Level 5: Independent	
Understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Understands communication and directions the same as same-age peers.
Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Combines single words, spelling and phrases together to communicate about a variety of subjects as others would at his/her age. <input type="checkbox"/> Able to expand on a thought in conversation.
Social Interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Social interaction skills, environments, and activities are similar to other of his/her age.
Literacy Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Literacy abilities are on par with same-age peers.
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Able to use various strategies to repair communication when he/she is not understood. <input type="checkbox"/> Able to utilize rate enhancement features of the device (e.g., word prediction) though he/she may not choose to do so. <input type="checkbox"/> Able to program desired content (e.g., personal narratives, etc.) into device.

Notes: Additional observations of communication characteristics in each skill area such as strengths, barriers, other communication modes, etc.

Understanding

Expression

Social Interaction

Literacy Skills

Other: (e.g., environment, favorite communication partner/s, motivating activities/topics, behavior, etc.)

ABILITY LEVEL SUMMARY

In the chart below, mark the individual's Ability Level for each skill area to provide you with a "big picture" view.

SKILLS	ABILITY LEVEL					Notes:
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent	
Understanding						
Expression						
Social Interaction						
Literacy Skills						
Other						

Linguistic Competency

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues			
Emergent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Communicates behaviorally (e.g., eye gaze, point, pull partner toward) to request/respond/comment and socially interact.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Rejects undesired propositions or items behaviorally (e.g., brief glance, nod, eye contact, smile or touch).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Accepts propositions, activities and/or offered items behaviorally.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Demonstrates intent to communicate with a partner such as selecting single button message in a joint action routine (e.g., repeated story line, request repetition of preferred activity).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Signals a desire for something (e.g., gesture, device, speech).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Engages in turn-taking for one communication exchange (can include gestures, pointing, facial expression, eye movement).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Demonstrates joint attention toward an object with partner.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Emergent Transitional	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses at least 3 reliable signals (e.g., sign/sign approx., obj/pic symbol, verbal/verbal approx.) to control their immediate environment (e.g., "More." "All done." or "Stop!").	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Requests/comments/labels a tangible object with single noun symbol given an array of 2 or more symbols in familiar routine/context.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Requests/comments/labels a familiar concrete action with single verb symbol given an array of 2 or more symbols during a familiar routine/context.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Selects single button messages in familiar contexts to participate in or move an interaction along.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Context-Dependent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses a variety of nouns in categories to include 7 categories with 5 examples in each category.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses abstract descriptive concepts: quantitative/qualitative/spatial (at least 2 in each category).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses learned sentence constructions (carrier phrases) for creative 2+ word phrases (e.g., "I want ___." "I see ___." "I have ___.") in structured or routine activities.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses action concepts (at least 10 verbs across situations).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Generates novel or creative 2+ word simple sentences.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses plural "s" to denote more than one.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Recognizes letter/sound associations.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Demonstrates early use of letter combinations (e.g., initial sound recognition, creative spelling).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Generates simple grammatical sentences using present ("ing") and past ("ed") tense.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Linguistic Competency - Continued

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues			
Transitional Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Sequences information in a logical manner to tell or retell a story (narrative).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Asks and answers a variety of pre-stored question forms.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Generates creative messages (at least 3 words) by combining individual words/phrases/spelling in novel activities.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses abstract descriptive concepts: quantitative/qualitative/spatial (at least 6 in each category).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Able to use available words/messages to convey a new meaning or substitute for a word/concept that is not available (i.e., circumlocution).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes and uses high frequency onsets and rhymes to spell familiar words.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Generates creative messages with more than 3 individual words/phrases/spelling.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Creatively combines existing vocabulary to describe new word/concept not in device (i.e., flexible vocabulary use).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Constructs complex and compound sentences (e.g., uses “because” “and” or “that”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses question reversals conversationally (e.g., “Can I?” “Did you?” or “Are they?”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates independent spelling skills at age level with or without word/symbol prediction.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Understands and uses morphological endings to qualify verbs (“er” or “ly”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Operational Competency

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues			
Emergent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates visual, auditory or physical attention to AAC system by quieting, orienting to or moving into action.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates active engagement with the AAC system (e.g., exploring, touching screen, hitting the switch, etc.) not necessarily with intent.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Emergent Transitional	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Transports AAC system in routine or familiar activity with partner reminders as needed.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Positions AAC system for use with partner reminders as needed.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Locates high frequency and/or high interest vocabulary in routine or familiar activities (e.g., basic functional categories such as requesting highly motivating objects/activities, feelings, needs, greetings).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates early developing navigational skills to include "next page" or "go back" navigation.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates recognition that AAC system requires adjustment (e.g., volume change or system not working) by looking, quieting or moving into action.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to turn system on/off (or asks) when appropriate.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Context-Dependent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Asks for assistance if equipment requires adjustment.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusts volume appropriate to environment.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to charge and care for device (or asks).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusts screen or position (or asks) for best visibility and access.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Navigates to logical page/message/vocabulary during familiar topic or context.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Navigates by noun categories.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to manage simple Message Window operations (e.g., clear, delete).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Participates in adding vocabulary by selecting symbols, location or choosing from offered message choices.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes the need to transfer AAC system from one activity or environment to another by moving into action or requesting help from partner.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Operational Competency - Continued

Ability Levels	Goals		Chain of Cues			
Transitional Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Recognizes the need for additional topics or vocabulary in system and is beginning to actively participate in programming or in the process of programming (e.g., selects edit/modify button).	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Adjusts volume and speech controls (rate/voice) appropriate to environment.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Navigates to logical page/message/vocabulary for novel topics and partners.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Navigates between different message types or tools (e.g., pre-programmed messages, single words, keyboard).	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Navigates by grammatical categories.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Meets communicative needs by creatively combining different message types or tools (e.g., pre-programmed and/or generative messages/words/phrases/spelling) within system.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Arranges equipment upgrades, troubleshoots, initiates repair procedures.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Independently adds vocabulary specific to constructs of the system.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrates ability to access external equipment independently (e.g., phone, email, text, computer, IR).	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Independently stores files, customized messages and sequences.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrates understanding of the operation of device software features (e.g., word prediction, pronunciation exceptions, editing features).	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Social Competency

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues			
Emergent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Interacts socially through behaviors such as smiling, object-based turn taking or waving (demonstrating basic understanding of social cause and effect).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to communication by facial expression, gesturing, quieting or moving into action.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Periodically references communication partner during interaction through brief glance, nod, eye contact, proximity or touch (joint attention).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Emergent Transitional	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses simple communication to replace challenging behaviors (e.g., "More." or "All done.") with partner reminders as needed.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates conversational turn taking in errorless or familiar interaction/activity.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to initiating or terminating interactions using a single word message such as "Hi!" and "Bye!"	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains attention to partner in conversation (e.g., eye contact, orientation).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Context-Dependent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Comments appropriately when engaged in activity with navigation support as needed.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses polite social forms (e.g., "Please." or "Thank you. ").	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Initiates/terminates conversations using scripted or pre-programmed messages for more than two conversational turns.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Shares several pieces of pre-programmed "news"/information with partner navigational assistance and/or reminders as needed.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates conversational turn-taking (social/activity based) for more than two turns.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses humor.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to continue a conversation by selecting comments or general questions.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Requests a variety of actions (e.g., "Turn the page." or "Get the __ for me. ").	IC	DVC	DPC	PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Social Competency - Continued

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues			
Transitional Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains topic with a non-obligatory turn (e.g., comments “Cool!” “Yuck!” or “Me too.”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Shares personally meaningful novel information using phrases, word lists, core words, and/or keyboard.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Shifts topics smoothly with suggestions (e.g., common segues such as “I have something to tell you.” or “Guess what?”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Selects topic of mutual interest to self and communication partner.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Shifts communication style based on partner and/or situation.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Knows when/how to interrupt an interaction.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Requests information (e.g., “When?” or “Where?”).	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Asks partner-focused questions specific to the conversation.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Requests clarification.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses non-obligatory commenting and/or questions related to conversational topic.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Initiation/closure of conversation using a variety of both pre-programmed and/or generative messages.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Uses partner-focused questions to continue conversation with specific subject related vocabulary.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> GM <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to initiate, maintain, extend and terminate conversations appropriately.	IC	DVC	DPC	PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

Strategic Competency

Ability Levels	Goals	Chain of Cues
Emergent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Understands that his/her communication (regardless of modality) has an effect on the environment or communication partner.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Recognizes the intended message was not conveyed by exhibiting non-communicative behaviors.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
Emergent Transitional	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Recognizes the need to obtain the communication partner's attention before initiating a message.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Recognizes the need to repeat message when intended message is misunderstood, ignored or system did not activate/speak.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses different mode of communication (e.g., gesture, vocalization, behavior) for misunderstood message.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Requests or obtains the communication system when appropriate.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
Context-Dependent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses an introduction strategy with unfamiliar communication partner (e.g., "I use this device to talk." or pointing to the device to show they use it to communicate).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Actively engages communication partner during the interaction to monitor their attention and understanding.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Uses a repair strategy for communication breakdowns (e.g., repeat, rephrase, provide additional key word or information, draw attention to message window, use non-verbal cues, gesture/body or facial expression, first letter cue).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Demonstrates beginning use of simple rate enhancement strategies (e.g., telegraphic strategy).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Persists in repeating message when intended message is misunderstood, ignored or system didn't activate/speak.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
Transitional Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Independently uses an introduction strategy with unfamiliar communication partner (e.g., descriptive instructions on how to best communicate with him/her).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Communicates intent to contribute to a conversation (e.g., "I have a question.")	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Recognizes the intended message was not understood and uses a message to alert ("Wrong try again." "Let me tell you another way." or "Wait.")	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Proactively manages the interaction (e.g., interjects with "Wait." or "Hang on." while he/she retrieves message; or "Yeah." letting listener know he/she is engaged).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Signals a topic change with appropriate message.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Independently utilizes several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdowns.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Plans ahead to contribute effectively in a conversation (e.g., compose and stores messages for the doctor before appointment).	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Selects a communication mode appropriate to a variety of situations and listeners.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Creatively uses system features to communicate effectively and efficiently.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> GM Independently analyzes errors in communication interactions and devises strategies to address it.	<input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

AAC Goals Worksheet

Goal	Skill from AAC Goals Grid	Partner Familiar/Unfamiliar	Activity Routine/Novel	Prompting Type	Criteria % or # of Occurrences
A Long-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
1 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
2 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	

Goal	Skill from AAC Goals Grid	Partner Familiar/Unfamiliar	Activity Routine/Novel	Prompting Type	Criteria % or # of Occurrences
B Long-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
1 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
2 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

AAC Goals Worksheet

Goal	Skill from AAC Goals Grid	Partner Familiar/Unfamiliar	Activity Routine/Novel	Prompting Type	Criteria % or # of Occurrences
C Long-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
1 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
2 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	

Goal	Skill from AAC Goals Grid	Partner Familiar/Unfamiliar	Activity Routine/Novel	Prompting Type	Criteria % or # of Occurrences
D Long-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
1 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	
2 Short-Term Goal				<input type="radio"/> NC <input type="radio"/> IC <input type="radio"/> DVC <input type="radio"/> DPC <input type="radio"/> PA	

Chain of Cues Prompting Hierarchy

GM: Goal Met (Natural Cue) – IC: Indirect Cue – DVC: Direct Verbal Cue – DPC: Direct Pointer Cue – PA: Physical Assistance

AAC Goals Periodic Progress Report

Date:

Notes:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

AAC Goals Periodic Progress Report

Date:

Notes:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Date:

COMPETENCY	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Transitional Independent	Independent
Linguistic	%	%	%	%	%
Operational	%	%	%	%	%
Social	%	%	%	%	%
Strategic	%	%	%	%	%

Overview of the DAGG-2 Components

A. Ability Level Continuum

Influenced by the work of Patricia Dowden, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, the Ability Level Continuum describes an individual's observable communication behaviors to help provide insight into current and potential target skills and strengths. These levels are represented on a dynamic continuum to provide direction in assessing how an individual is communicating right now, what goals to address to support increased independence at the current level, and what "tomorrow goals" to introduce to further develop communicative competency skills.

B. Communicative Competencies

The ability to communicate with others is not inherent. We all must learn the skills required to communicate effectively and efficiently with a variety of people and in a variety of situations. For individuals using an AAC system, competency is impacted by the demands of the natural environment, the communication partner as well as the challenges imposed by the constraints of their disability and communication systems. It is imperative that we address goals across the following four competencies in order to achieve the highest level of communicative independence possible.

- **Linguistic** – Expressing and understanding language; learning and using vocabulary in increasing number, variety and complexity; learning and using linguistic codes unique to one's AAC system.
- **Operational** – The ability to operate and maintain the communication system to the greatest extent possible.
- **Social** – Skills needed to communicate effectively in social situations (discourse strategies).
- **Strategic** – Strategies to overcome or minimize the functional limitations of the AAC system (e.g., speed, lack of prosody) and to prevent or repair communication breakdowns.

C. Intervention Planning

1. Chain of Cues

The Chain of Cues provides a progression and structured (least to most) cueing hierarchy to elicit a communicative response. It can be a systematic way to measure progress as well as teach communication partners. The ultimate goal is that the individual recognizes the opportunity to communicate with the least directive and most natural conversational and environmental cues.

2. Goals

The intersection of Ability Levels and each area of communicative competence determines the goals within the Dynamic AAC Goals Grid. The goals are "dynamic" because they are based on the best we know now—through current research and clinical experience. It is important to keep in mind that the goals reflected in the DAGG-2 are BROAD goals to help keep the bigger picture of communicative competence in the forefront.

3. AAC Goals Worksheet

The AAC Goal Worksheet helps you to plan annual, long-term and/or short-term goals based on targets identified in the DAGG-2. Selected goals would then be transferred to your facility's required documents (e.g., IEP or written plan of care).

4. AAC Goals Periodic Progress Report

Use this tool to record progress towards goals in each competency area and/or at each Ability Level at intervals appropriate for your facility or setting. Record a percentage of goals achieved in a specific competency area/level. For example, under Linguistic, Sarah has met 40% of the goals in Emergent and 10% at Emergent Transitional. Sarah's Linguistic skills are at the Emergent Ability Level; however, she is demonstrating progress towards the next Ability Level.

Note: In your facility's records, you can also address progress at the cueing level to reflect smaller amounts of progress for specific skills/goals. For example, Sarah has met 40% of Linguistic goals at the Emergent Level; however, she continues to demonstrate progress as she now requires only DVC (direct verbal cues) for ¾ of the target goals.

CHAIN OF CUES EXAMPLE

- **Situation:** Entering a room
- **Communication Opportunity Targeted:** Greeting others ("Hi!")
- **Natural Cue:** Others saying hello.
- **Indirect Cue:**
 - **Search light** – randomly moving light/pointer over device
 - **Verbal** – "Did you hear what they said?" or "I wonder if there is something you could say back."
 - **Visual/Gestural** – waving hand or pointing to the people
- **Direct Verbal Cue:** "They said, *hello* to you."
- **Direct Pointer/Light Cue:** Showing the location of "Hi!" on the device without activating it.
- **Physical Assistance:** Brief physical help to select the correct button or picture.

Case Study: Laura

Laura is 4 years old and just received her new communication system. She understands and follows general conversations. She is starting to use clear and simple symbols in motivating situations or favorite activities. In addition, she is beginning to show more interest in social interactions which is one of the main reasons the school SLP suggested an evaluation for a high-tech communication device. Below is her overall picture from working through the Ability Level Continuum.

SKILLS	ABILITY LEVEL				
	Emergent	Emergent Transitional	Context-Dependent	Context-Dependent Transitional	Independent
Understanding			✓		
Expression		✓			
Social Interaction		✓			
Literacy Skills	✓				

CHOOSING GOALS FOR LAURA:

Laura overall appears to be at the Emergent Transitional Ability Level. She is Emergent in Literacy skills; however, we also notice the potential for growth toward Context-Dependent (Comprehension). From the **AAC Goals Grid**, we chose the following goals and marked the type of cues she would presently need to support successful communication:

Linguistic:

A	Uses at least 3 reliable signals (e.g., sign/sign approx., obj/pic symbol, verbal/ verbal approx.) to control their immediate environment (e.g., "More." "All done." or "Stop!").	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input checked="" type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
B	Requests/comments/labels a tangible object with single noun symbol given an array of 2 or more symbols in familiar routine/context.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input checked="" type="radio"/>

Operational:

A	Transports AAC system in routine or familiar activity with partner reminders as needed.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input checked="" type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
B	Locates high frequency and/or high interest vocabulary in routine or familiar activities (e.g., basic functional categories such as requesting highly motivating objects/activities, feelings, needs, greetings).	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input checked="" type="radio"/>

Social:

A	Demonstrates conversational turn taking in errorless or familiar interaction/activity.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input checked="" type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
B	Responds to initiating or terminating interactions using a single word message such as "Hi!" and "Bye!"	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input checked="" type="radio"/>	DPC <input type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>

Strategic:

A	Recognizes the need to repeat message when intended message is misunderstood, ignored or system did not activate/speak.	IC <input type="radio"/>	DVC <input type="radio"/>	DPC <input checked="" type="radio"/>	PA <input type="radio"/>
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Addendum: Part Two – Continued

WRITING GOALS FOR LAURA:

Thinking of her daily schedule and motivating activities, we used the **AAC Goals Worksheet** to create the following goals for her IEP:

1. Long-Term Goal:

Using her communication device, Laura will identify main characters and places with familiar partner during story reading activity with IC with 80% accuracy.

- a. **Short-Term Goal:** Laura will identify main characters and places with familiar partner during story reading activity with DVC with 80% accuracy.

Note: This goal would address both the **Linguistic** (B) and the **Operational** (A & B) goals.

2. Long-Term Goal:

Using her communication device, Laura will initiate interaction and engage in turn taking (at least 2 turns) by commenting (e.g., more, fun, your turn) with familiar partners during game activity (e.g., bubbles, simple board game) with IC with 80% accuracy.

- b. **Short-Term Goal:** Laura will initiate interaction and engage in turn taking (at least 2 turns) by commenting (e.g., more, fun, your turn) with familiar partners during game activity (e.g., bubbles, simple board game) with DVC with 80% accuracy.

Note: This goal would address the **Linguistic** (B) **Operational** (A & B), **Social** (A & B) and **Strategic** goals.

3. Long-Term Goal (Operational A):

Laura will transport her communication device to all activities in her daily schedule with IC with 80% accuracy.

- a. **Short-Term Goal:** Laura will transport her communication device to 3/6 activities in her daily schedule with DVC with 80% accuracy.

REPORTING LAURA'S PROGRESS:

At our first interim reporting, we used the **AAC Goals Periodic Progress Report** to help us write the following narrative for Laura:

Laura continues to make progress towards her long-term goals. She continues at the Emergent Transitional Ability Level in Linguistic Competency. She has made progress in 2/4 Linguistic goals. At time of initial assessment, she required either PA or DPC and presently requires only DVC to support successful interactions. Socially, she is participating in turn taking at least two turns during motivating activities with fewer cues (DVC) from time of initial assessment (PA). In addition, she has met her short-term Operational goal. She consistently brings her communication device to half of her daily activities with DVC.

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~ V. Clarke & H. Schneider