Table 3

Forms of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) as Defined by ASHA

Unaided	Aided	
No-tech	**Low-/Light-Tech**	**High-Tech**
Gestures **Manual signs** **Facial expressions** **Vocalizations** **Verbalizations** **Body language**	- Pictures - Objects - Photographs - Writing - Communication boards/books	- Speech generating devices (SGD)* - Single-message devices and recordable/digitized devices - AAC software that enables dynamic symbol/language representation and that is used with some form of technology hardware (e.g., computer, tablet, smartphone)

Source: Augmentative and Alternative Communication. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Retrieved from
http://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589942773&section=Key_Issues#AAC_Populations

Choosing an AT Device

As you learned earlier in this section, AT can be classified as low- mid-, or high-tech. In the various scenarios that follow in Table 4, you will have the opportunity to try to match an AT device with a student need and then classify it as low-, mid-, or high-tech. Correct responses are provided at the end of the device descriptions.

Table 4

Choosing an Assistive Technology Tool

Need	Possible Tool	Rationale	Low-, Mid-, or High-Tech?
Marciano is 7 years old and currently in first grade. His native language is Armenian, and he is an EL at intermediate proficiency. He has a diagnosis of intellectual disability (ID). He is having difficulty learning/retaining English word families. This difficulty is greatly impacting his emergent writing ability.	Portable dictionary/spelling assistant This type of device includes a spelling assistant feature and speech output. (Many "everyday" devices, such as iPads, Android devices, and others now have these features as well.)	The device will reduce the processing demands on Marciano; it will provide a visual model of the correct spelling of any word, and the speech output function will allow him to hear how the word is pronounced.	Mid
Louisa is 11 years old and is currently in the fifth grade. She is at an advanced proficiency level and has a diagnosis of visual impairment. She has difficulty seeing standard-size print and print contrast combinations.			
Arjun is 9 years old and currently in the third grade. He is in an early stage of language production. His native language is Hindi. The school suspects he may have SLD, but he has not been formally diagnosed. He is having difficulty composing written materials in multiple environments.			
Nihla is a 5-year-old kindergartner who has been diagnosed with multiple			

disabilities due, in part, to being born to a drug-addicted mother. She has low muscle tone and has difficulty writing on flat surfaces. She is also at an early stage of language production in English, and she has disability-related deficits in her ability to understand and use her native language as well.			

Table 5

Potential Options to Match With Students

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)		Graphic Organizers		Slantboard
This tool provides enlargement, color adjustments, and contrast adjustments to a wide variety of print and 3-dimensional devices.		Organizational software is designed to assist with the brainstorming of idea formulation. This visual may enable the student to systematically order their ideas in preparation for sequential writing.		This tool supports hand muscles as the student writes. It also encourages better posture and reduces stress on the eyes.

As you might have guessed, the closed-circuit TV is a high-tech solution for Louisa; the graphic organizers are a mid-tech solution for Arjun, and the slantboard is a low-tech solution for Nihla. With a colleague or team members, discuss the rationale or possible benefits of each tool for the student in question, using the example above as a model.