

Prologuo2Go (P2G) is an app for the iPod touch, iPhone, and iPad that gives nonspeaking students a voice. It functions as an alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) device, but without the huge price tag. Dynamic screen AAC devices can run several thousand dollars. This app, produced by AssistiveWare, costs \$189, plus the cost of the device, from \$229 for an iPod touch to \$499 for a basic iPad.

This may be a great app for students with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, developmental disabilities, and apraxia of speech.

P2G is customizable, allowing educators or parents to create a unique matrix or vocabulary set for each student. It contains thousands of words, phrases, and symbols from the Synboleix library, and even lets users swap in photographs in place of symbols. Because you can customize the matrix, this app can meet the needs of varying levels of students.

For students who want to say something that has not been added into the vocabulary matrix, P2G has a keyboard feature with word prediction that allows students to type a word or the first few letters of a word and then select “speak.” This is a nice feature for students who are motivated by text and who can read and spell at a basic level. You can also construct sentences within the keyboard feature and then add them as full messages into the matrix. The program also allows users to

construct a message by linking categories to create sentences. For example, “I want” would link to several options, such as “to go,” “to eat,” “to play,” and so on. Those categories would link to another set of choices, so “I want > to

eat > lunch” is an example of how it might all come together. “I want > to play > Uno” is another. Each selection goes into the message display at the top of the screen, and when touched, the entire sentence will be spoken: “I want to play Uno.”

For users who have trouble constructing sentences, the entire message could be compacted into one symbol, such as an icon of Uno cards, and the message would say, “I want to play Uno.”

In the life-skills classrooms that I serve, students use P2G to answer questions during circle time or morning group lessons, request a snack or break, make comments, ask questions, and even participate in academics.

P2G loads with a full communication template, but teachers or parents can customize this symbol for each user. So if I want a student to expand his use of communicative functions, such as informing others about past events, I might add a category that says, “I have something to tell you,” which then links to a menu of icons that represent different activities the student did over the weekend. Each icon can contain a complete spoken message, such as “I went shopping with my mom,” or “I went to the movies.” To build language skills, students could also construct the same message using three different symbols, as in: “I went + to the mall + with Mom.” Similarly, I can create a category so the student can tell her mom or dad what she did at school that day.

Not all users need to know how to read. By default, messages are represented by both symbols and text, but you can also use just text or ignore the text and rely on symbols or photographs. For example,



a message that says, “I want to go home,” or asks the question, “Is it time to go home?” could be represented by an actual photograph of the student’s home or a photo of the school bus, whichever is more meaningful to the student.

P2G has opened up a whole new world for many students who, for whatever reason, did not take to other AAC devices. One sixth grade boy is motivated to talk but can speak only a handful of words. As soon as he got his iPod touch with P2G, he went around his classroom and gleefully asked all the teachers which football team they were cheering for at the upcoming game.

Another student who could say only a few words was able to invite a peer to look at her box of necklaces—her favorite thing. She was also able to say, “I like necklaces,” using her device.

By **Marta Runyan**

