Non-Specialised Symbol-Based AAC app evaluations

This resource is designed to give an overview of some symbol based AAC apps using our app evaluation table.

These apps range from free to high cost and may be useful to trial with a person who requires symbols for communication.

They could be beneficial for someone who is new to AAC or requires a less complex AAC system.

The apps covered are:

• Clicker Communicator	Crick Software	Page 2
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Name of App: Clicker Communicator

Developer: Crick Software Ltd

https://www.cricksoft.com/uk/clicker-communicator/ipad

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	Core-based ready-made vocabulary sets or can create your own.
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Multiple keyboard layouts. Can have up to 8 prediction options set.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			Can choose to write in message bar with or without symbols.
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		Apps available to purchase in all symbol sets*
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import from camera roll	Import from web browser			
Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings available	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		SuperKeys keyboard for direct access. Can turn on 'show touches' features.

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Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells		Swiping, multi tap or long presses needed for any features		Scrolling and swiping is turned off.
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	Modified Fitzgerald Key.
Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?	N/A	Acapella child and adult voices available.
Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	Google Drive, OneDrive, mail, WebDAV.
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			Clicker Core 3 Grid could be considered as Intermediate.

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Editing	Minimal editing needed to set up for demonstration	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour across whole package)	Instructions for editing	Curriculum based vocabulary learning grids available to download.
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			£199.99
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				iPad only

Any other comments:

- Three pre-set vocabulary grids available*:
  Clicker Core 1: A 6 x 4 cell location vocabulary that enables simple, phrase-based communication
  Clicker Core 2: A 7 x 5 cell location which enables some combining of concepts with phrase-based communication.
  Clicker Core 3: A 9 x 6 cell location with most comprehensive vocabulary enabling more combining of concepts.
- Can move quickly between main vocabulary sets and Learning Grids by using the Favourites tool. This enables you to select favourite/recent vocabulary sets and stores favourite and recent message.
- QWERTY, alphabetic left to right, alphabetical clusters, and SuperKeys keyboards available.
- Toolbars only visible when editing. Need to open toolbar menu from top of screen.
- Free 40-minute online webinar to learn how to use the app is available on the website.
- Useful support section on website: Technical support - Crick Software UK.
- Enable Toolbar setting in the iPad Settings app. This can be turned off to prevent users from changing settings or editing grids.

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*If you wish to use a combination of all three symbol sets in one app you must purchase the SymbolStix version of the app in which the Widgit and PCS symbol sets are available at an additional cost as an in-app purchase (£48.99 each). You cannot purchase additional symbol sets as an in-app purchase for the Widgit version or PCS version of the app.

Suitability:

- Children of school age (Learning Grids link to education/curriculum)
- User at beginning of AAC journey or moving toward more comprehensive symbol vocabulary
- iOS device users (iPad only)
- Direct access

Name of App: Go Talk Now

Developer: Attainment Company

https://www.attainmentcompany.com/gotalk-now

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Depends on page set used. Can Download 4-36 cell Core Words boards and Pre-Made communication books (extra cost). Can add a Keyboard page with word predictions.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			Can add photos as background and edit cells as hotspots or to the side of the image as a visual scene.
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		Comes with Go Talk image library – other symbol sets can be added at a cost (PCS

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							and PCS High Contrast, Widgit, SymbolStix and METACOM)
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import from camera roll	Import from web browser			Import photos and images from camera or the internet. Can combine multiple images in single cell.
Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings available	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		Scan pattern settings can be adjusted within app settings. Could use iOS accessibility settings for mouse.
Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells				
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	Add spoken labels to any button as auditory prompts.
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	Consistency of number of cells per page depends on package used.

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Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	Can trim videos in-app and play them from any cell. Can link songs from a playlist to a cell and control them with Play/Pause, Next, Previous functions.
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?	Non-word sounds	Comes with 1 voice in free version. Other voices can be downloaded at a cost. Uses Built-in iOS voices in paid version. Can download your BeSpoke VocaliD banked voice.
Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	Can also backup via Google Drive. Can Export PDF to print.
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			
Editing	Minimal editing needed to set up for demonstration*	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour across whole package)	Instructions for editing	Requires editing before can be demonstrated (non-core pages).

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							Can download core word pages and demonstrate with minimal editing.
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			Free trial version Standard version £100
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				

Any other comments:

- Requires in-app purchases for backing up, creating multiple books with unlimited pages, sharing interactive templates online, and downloading and editing premade templates from Attainment's collection.
- Also includes extra features to enable access to EC and iPad controls.
- Instant access to a page set of core and fringe vocabulary. Can download core word page sets of 4, 9, 16, 25 or 36 cell location layouts.
- Offers four page styles for communication: standard, scene, express and keyboard.
- Stores an unlimited number of messages.
- Can add multiple images per cell from Go Talk symbol library and adjust text and image format within each cell.
- Can add or remove a message bar for combining concepts.
- Can purchase pre-made communication books within the app.
- Can use left and right arrows for navigating between pages or create automatic jumps within button actions.
- Also have option to create visual scenes and pages with hybrid scenes and cells with stored words/phrases.
- Highly versatile app but requires a lot of customisation if not using core word pages.
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- Some functions are not self-explanatory (e.g. use three fingers to drag on screen to exit Player mode, clicking on the name of the communication book in the main menu page to change books if have more than one created/downloaded).

Suitability:

- Alternative access requirements (e.g. visual impairment);
- Access to alternative picture formats (e.g. GoTalk photo symbols and photos);
- Highly personalised vocabulary required/ wanting to develop customized non-core vocabulary
- Adults or children;
- Enabling access to web links and videos;
- Users new to AAC
- iOS device users
- Direct access or switch-access

Name of App: Grid Player

Developer: Sensory Software International Ltd

Grid Player on the App Store

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	Comes with four grid sets: Symbol Talker A, Symbol Talker B, Talking Photographs and Text Talker Phrasebook.
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Dependant on grid set used.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		Can use both symbol set grid sets within app.
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import from camera roll	Import from web browser			

Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings available	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		Mouse/joystick use within iOS accessibility settings.
Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells		Swiping, multi tap or long presses needed for any features		
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	Can turn on Voice Over from within iOS accessibility settings to speak menu items when they are selected.
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	
Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?	N/A	Only two Acapela synthesised voices available (male and female)

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Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			
Editing	Minimal editing needed to set up for demonstration	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour across whole package)	Instructions for editing	To add or edit grid sets for Grid Player, you must use either Grid 3 or The Grid 2 on another device.
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				iPhone and iPad

Any other comments:

- This app is now legacy software. Please note that legacy software is no longer updated and Smartbox can only provide limited support: Support and resources on Smartbox Hub.
- You need an Online Grids account to use Grid Player. You can create an account for free within the Grid Player app, or sign in to an existing account.
- Can turn off the ability to access the Settings menu or to close grid sets from within the app from the Grid Player tab within iOS settings.

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Suitability:

- Adults or children
- Basic symbol vocabulary (stored words/phrases) or whole phrase-based pages
- Users new to AAC
- iOS device users
- Direct access

Name of App: LetMeTalk

Developer: AppNotize UG (haftungsbeschraenkt)

LetMeTalk on the App Store

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Basic vocabulary pre-stored.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		ARASAAC symbols
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import Photo				Only when adding new symbols to a category.
Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings available	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		

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Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells				
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	Can manually change cell background colour.
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	
Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?	N/A	Not straightforward to set up voice output initially.
Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	Can save to iPad Files and share backup file via email
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			
Editing	Minimal editing needed to set	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour	Instructions for editing	Some settings for whole vocabulary changes (e.g. auto

	up for demonstration				across whole package)		navigation or clearing of sentence bar, image sizes).
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					Also sends symbols with text. Easy share function.
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				Also available on Amazon App store. Can download to iPhone and Android mobile devices.

Any other comments:

- Various video tutorials available on YouTube to support use.
- Supports multiple languages: English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Chinese, Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, Polish, Dutch, Bulgarian, Romanian, Galician, Catalan, Basque.

Suitability:

- Adults or children (but some pre-stored vocabulary is more child-based)
- Users new to AAC
- Basic vocabulary
- Symbol and text forwarding to messenger apps/social media
- iOS or Android device users
- Direct access

Name of App: SymboTalk

Developer: Elad Elram

SymboTalk - Communication Boards AAC

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Basic vocabulary pre-stored.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		ARASAAC, Sclera, Mulberry, Tawasol symbols available. Need to specify in settings.
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import from camera roll	Import from web browser			
Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		

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Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells				
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	Quick resizing of font option
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	
Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?	N/A	Default is using device voices
Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	Need to pay subscription for backups. Can print PDF version using Web Version of the app.
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			

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Editing	Minimal editing needed to set up for demonstration	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour across whole package)	Instructions for editing	Some settings for whole vocabulary changes (e.g. auto navigation or clearing of sentence bar, image sizes).
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			Need to pay subscription for backups.
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				Downloadable on iPhone and Android mobile devices. Also available on any device via web browser (with WiFi connection).

Any other comments:

- FAQs on app and website: www.symbotalkapp.com
- Support multiple languages: English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Chinese, Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, Polish, Dutch, Bulgarian, Romanian, Galician, Catalan, Basque.

Suitability:

- Adults or children (but some pre-stored vocabulary is more child-based)
- Users new to AAC
- Basic vocabulary required
- iOS or Android device users
- Direct access

Name of App: Twinkl Symbols

Developer: Twinkl Limited

Twinkl Symbols Product Guide (teacher made) - Twinkl

							Comments
Purpose	Assessment	Access practice	Resource-making	Introduction to AAC	Progression from simple to complex AAC, symbol-based	Text-based AAC	
Language features	Full symbol vocabulary	Basic or user added language only	Ability to combine concepts	Phrases	Prediction	Symbol supported prediction	Example book templates provided.
Format	Symbol / Image only	Symbol / Image and/or Text	Text only	Visual scene			
Symbol Set	PCS	Widgit	Symbolstix	Other	N/A		Twinkl symbols
Image Options	Symbol	Take photo	Import from camera roll	Import from web browser			
Access Options	Tablet touchscreen settings	Tablet switch settings	App specific touchscreen settings	App specific switch settings	Mouse or joystick		

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Support for motor impairment	Buttons of consistent size	Ability to change cell size	Ability to move position of cells				
Support for sensory impairment	Auditory prompts	Auditory fishing	Alternative colour schemes	High contrast option	Highlighting/enlarging cells	Adjust size of cells	
Support for cognitive processing and learning	Consistent number of cells per page	Consistent location of commands	Consistent visual presentation	Ability to hide language or simplify	Appropriate labels for categories for developmental level of user	Consistent colour coding	
Additional tools for communication support	Visual countdown	Social scripts	Access to camera app/ photos within app	Ability to add language around photos in app	Embedded web links from buttons in app (e.g. YouTube)	Whiteboard drawing tool	Templates to create visual timetables, Now and Next boards, Sequence boards, Reward charts
Voices	Preset synthesised voice	Additional voices available free download	Additional voices available at a cost	Record own voice	Accepts voice-banking?*	N/A	*Can download Apple Personal Voice if one has been created
Backup Options	Dropbox	iTunes	Airdrop	USB	Email PDF	Printable for paper based back up	
Vocab Packages	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	N/A			

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Editing	Minimal editing needed to set up for demonstration	Easy to edit for support team	Easy to edit for user	Options to personalise	Whole vocabulary editing option (e.g. change font colour across whole package)	Instructions for editing	
Other features	Copy/paste text to other apps (e.g. email, WhatsApp)	Split screen or slide over view (iOS only)					
Cost	Free	Low	Medium	High			
Operating System	iOS (Apple)	Android	Windows				Downloadable on iPhone and Android mobile devices.

Any other comments:

- FAQs on website: Twinkl Symbols for AAC App – TwinklCares (US)

Suitability:

- Adults or children (but some pre-stored vocabulary is more child-based)
- Users new to AAC
- Basic vocabulary or symbol boards
- iOS or Android device users
- Direct access

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