

PUZZLE: Developing easy to read formats for people with intellectual disabilities

Working with Sound – Good Practice Guide

Sound can be a great addition to a PERSON CENTRED PLAN. Sound can add, anchor or reinforce the meaning of text and pictures and add richness, atmosphere and an extra sensory dimension.



To ensure that you use sound effectively, consider the different types of sound you could use and why you would add that type of sound...

Types of sound & why to use them

- 1. Read text aloud** – You can use sound to add easy readability to text and photos by simply recording yourself reading your text out loud. You can then attach the sound file to the same page. In this way a viewer who cannot read may be able to understand the message by hearing it read to them.



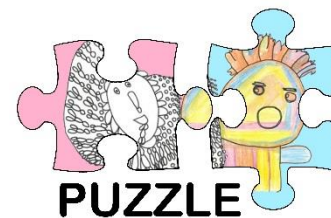
This is the principle of '**reinforcement**' - as you add each element of multimedia to your wiki page, you reinforce/repeat the message, each time adding more clarity to the message.

- 2. Add meaning with spoken voice** - Think about how spoken word can convey additional feeling and add another dimension. Your tone of voice might be cheerful or tearful! This adds further meaning to the same message. A piece of text will not tell you if the author is male or female or positive or sarcastic etc. Whereas by recording sound you can thoughtfully add these extra layers of meaning to your communication.
- 3. Add meaning with spoken words & sounds** - don't stop at simply narrating your text...while your image and text combination could have put the meaning across pretty fully and accessibly, there is still more to convey. For example, adding a picture of a piece of cake and writing *love* underneath is one thing, but by adding the 'yumm!' sound you reinforce the meaning and you add humour and a personal touch to the message.



“Ummm....”





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- 4. Using sound effects** – You can use sound effects to add richness and atmosphere and also to communicate your message to people who are non-verbal. Certain sounds might have a particular meaning for a person with a profound and multiple learning disability, or for a person whose first language is not the same as that used in the written text.



For example in the case of a picture of a train, we could add the text 'I love trains,' and add the sound of the train leaving the station to capture the sensory experience of train travel.

- 5. Using music** - A use of audio that is particularly effective for multimedia advocacy is the use of music. Music can mobilise emotions as well as reinforce your message through the lyrics.



Many people are passionate about their music, this is no different for people with learning disabilities. We all have our favourites and our personal tastes and music could be an excellent way in which to personalise someone's multimedia and add further dimensionality to what is being communicated.

However, it is **important to remember** that music comes with **copyright** control and if at any point you intend to use your Multimedia Advocacy portfolio for public display then you need to consider the rules of copyright infringements. Bear in mind that this would not apply for someone using music sharing at a review meeting, as this is a private context!

