Stage 5

Playing with switch scanning – Error-friendly learning
Flourishing Fatima the Flamingo
Kite/Blue (Expert)

Definition

Flourishing Fatima is the stage where you are introduced to the concept of switch scanning. This is where you use two switches to scan and select/get. The 'scan' switch moves through options by repeated presses and the 'select' or 'get' switch is pressed to activate or confirm a choice. Here you are more explicitly learning about choice. Choice will now progressively grow as you develop through this stage.

Switch scanning activities at this stage are very simple, error–friendly learning. This means activities are really easy to make a choice but there is little pressure on the outcome of the choice. 'Oops' are the best way we learn and it is helpful for someone to give us feedback if they notice. For example, Oops I think you wanted to choose the apple but you choose the banana instead and you looked unhappy/frustrated?

You can use one switch with timed options (automatically scans the options, switch is set to start scan and then select/get) but this is a lot more tricky than using two.

Milestones

- Playing with switch scanning: You've started to master switch scanning! You understand it well and can use it confidently. You can move through options using the 'scan' switch and confirm your choices independently with the 'select/get' switch.

- You're becoming very independent in your decision–making! You can choose from a increasing range of options on your own and showing preferences in your choice (rather than just making random selections).

- You are familiar with playing/using a range of switch scanning games and activities

SWITCH HEROES

- You don't have to use specialist software, you can manually teach scanning with two audio output switches (or one with two switch option) with 'move' and 'get' recorded on them. Then you can use a finger or a cut out frame to become the scan box.

- Start with two options and slowly add more choices as the child develops

- Do not attempt to influence the switch user to the choice they should make

- Use the phrase 'something different' if the child seems frustrated with the options

- Introduce the scanning method in a clear and structured way

- Use activities and materials that are motivating and engaging for the user

- Provide clear and consistent feedback to reinforce successful scanning and switch activations

Activities

Use software such as Choose and Tell to write your own nursery rhymes by choosing the characters and story lines

Use the software Choose it Maker to make choices in an activity

Write a story using two switches. Use an audio output switch programmed with a list of motivating options such as animals, colours, people etc. Then programme another switch to say, 'that's it!' (Alternatively use a Smooth Talker set to Prompt)
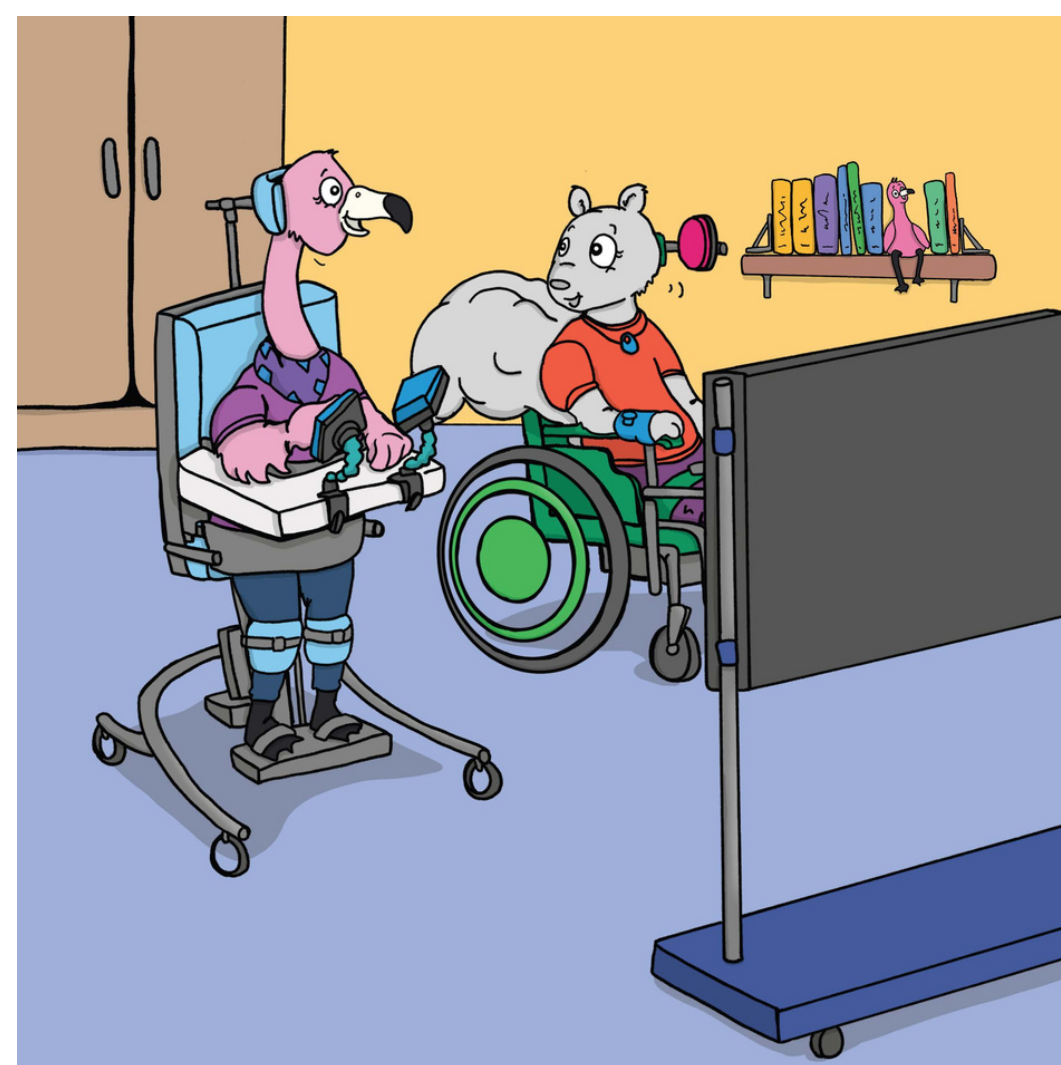
If you would like additional support, please contact us directly via AT@thepacecentre.org

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