Classroom Lesson Simulation: Socializing with Friends

This lesson teaches students the social skills of appropriate greetings, engaging in reciprocal conversation, and ending the conversation appropriately. Schedule this activity two to three times per week at a consistent location. Have multiple individuals (student/adult student or staff/volunteer) available for the student to choose to socialize with. If possible, it is suggested that the conversational partner be a typically developing peer. Students should participate in activities, such as, selecting a conversation topic, locating the topic area, selecting a friend to interact with, greeting the friend, initiating social interaction, responding to questions and comments, ending conversation appropriately, and leaving the social activity to return to class.

Lesson Set-Up

- Identify 2-3 locations in the classroom for Hang Out Time.
- Create a social area in those locations with a table and chairs or a space with a couch and/or arm chairs.
- Post the topic signs in each location (consider rotating topics so each Hang Out Time has different topics).
- Place a table near the hang out area with the choice wheels, choice boards, and written lists.
- Set a timer for the duration of the activity to simulate a bell ringing.

Visual Supports

- Socializing with Friends Simulation Visual Strip
- Topic Signs
- Conversation Partner - Essential
- Conversation Partner - Intermediate
- Conversation Partner - Advanced
- Choice Wheel Topics - Essential
- Choice Board Topics - Intermediate
- Written List Topics - Advanced
- Conversation Supports - Essential/Intermediate
- Conversation Supports - Advanced
- Hang Out Invitation
- Greetings
- First/Then
- Clean-up sign up

Reinforcement Available

- Token board
- First/Then Visual
- Social Reinforcement

Teaching Ideas

Lesson Steps	Essential	Intermediate	Advanced
Students transition to the *Socializing with Friends* routine simulation (i.e., Tuesday/Thursday afternoon Hang Out time).	Provide a picture schedule and match picture to activity location.	Provide a picture/written schedule to identify location of activity.	Provide a written invitation or e-mail inviting the student to the Hang Out Time.
Student selects a topic.	Show the *Choice Wheel Topics - Essential* visual and encourage student to make a topic choice.	Show the student the *Choice Board Topics - Intermediate* visual and ask the student what he/she wants to talk about. Encourage the student to answer in a complete sentence, such as, "I want to talk about ___".	Provide a two-step direction to "Choose what you want to talk about and then find the topic area." If needed, reference the *Written List Topics - Advanced* visual.
Student identifies the location of the topic they chose. Once in the topic area, student chooses a person to talk to, if more than one person is available.	After making a topic choice, the student matches the picture to the topic location. Show the *Conversation Partner - Essential* visual and encourage the student to select a conversation partner.	Say, "Go to the area where students talk about ___" (student's selected topic). Provide the *Conversation Partner - Intermediate* visual and ask the student who he/she would like to talk to.	Cover up or remove the topic sign in the classroom. Encourage the student to initiate asking questions about where the area is for that topic. Have the student select a conversation partner from the staff/students in the topic area. Provide the *Conversation Partner - Advanced* visual if needed.

Lesson Steps	Essential	Intermediate	Advanced
Student initiates social interaction by greeting conversation partner appropriately.	Provide an augmentative communication device if needed. The conversation partner should greet the student first. Model responding to the greeting by waving and saying, "Hi" to the conversation partner and encourage student to imitate.	Provide student with the *Greetings List.*	The student enters the specific location for the topic selected and greets conversation partner. Throughout different simulations, encourage the student to vary the greeting such as "Hi," "Hey," "What's up?" etc. Depending on the age of the person (peer vs. staff member), the student will use appropriate greetings for the person he/she is talking to.
Student responds to questions and comments from the conversation partner.	Provide an augmentative communication device if needed. Assist the student in locating the answers to the question on the communication device and model use of the device. Encourage the student to imitate. Provide the *Conversation Supports - Essential/ Intermediate* visual and encourage the student to point to a picture or communicate verbally.	Provide the student with the *Conversation Supports - Essential/Intermediate* visual. If the student does not reply to the conversation partner's question, prompt the student to "Answer ___'s question. Use the list if you need help." If necessary, model using the *Conversation Supports - Essential/Intermediate* visual and encourage the student to use the answer list to respond.	If the student does not reply to the conversation partner's question, gesture to the *Conversation Supports - Advanced* visual. Occasionally, the conversation partner can make off topic/odd comments, or speak unintelligibly. Encourage the student to ask for clarification or to otherwise respond appropriately. Sometimes, the conversation partner can appear upset. Encourage the student to ask if he or she is okay and wanting to talk. Ask the conversation partner to vary their emotions from time to time, and encourage the student to make an appropriate comment (e.g., "You look happy today.").
Student asks questions related to the topic.	If student uses an augmentative communication device, show the student how to navigate to the conversation page and tell the student to "Ask ___ a question". Provide the *Conversation Supports - Essential/ Intermediate* visual and encourage the student to point to or verbally imitate asking a question.	After the student answers 1-2 questions from the conversation partner, prompt the student to ask a question related to the topic by saying, "Ask ___ a question about ____." If needed, provide the student with the *Conversation Supports - Essential/Intermediate* visual. If necessary, model using the written question list and encourage the student to use the list to ask questions.	If necessary, reference the *Conversation Supports - Advanced* visual and say, "You can use the question list to ask __ some questions." Occasionally, have the conversation partner misunderstand the student or interrupt the student and encourage the student to repeat his/her question, rephrase, or respond appropriately.
When the student has finished talking to the conversation partner, the student ends the conversation appropriately.	Model ending the conversation by saying, "Goodbye," "Have a great day," "See you later," etc. Encourage the student to imitate using his/her mode of communication.	Across simulations, encourage the student to end the conversation in different ways, such as, "Goodbye," "See you later," "Have a great day."	Encourage the student to respond to his/her conversation partner's termination of the conversation. On occasion, the conversation partner does not end the conversation and keeps talking. Encourage the student to respond appropriately and end the conversation. Across simulations, encourage the student to end the conversation in different ways such as "Goodbye," "See you later," "Have a great day."

Lesson Steps	Essential	Intermediate	Advanced
If there is still time left for the social time activity, the student will select a new topic.	Show the *Choice Wheel Topics - Essential* visual and encourage student to make a topic choice.	Refer to the timer and ask the student if there is enough time to talk to another conversation partner. Show the student the *Choice Board Topics - Intermediate* visual and ask the student what he/she wants to talk about. Encourage the student to answer in a complete sentence, such as, "I want to talk about ___".	Provide a direction to "check the timer to see if there is enough time to talk to someone else." If there's enough time, provide a two-step direction to, "Choose what you want to talk about and then find the topic area." The student then finds the location of their chosen topic. If needed, reference the *Written List Topics - Advanced* visual.
Repeat the routine simulation steps until the time scheduled for the activity ends.			
Assign an ending job for each student (put away tables, put away chairs, put away materials).	Say, "Do this" and model the assigned job.	Provide student with a picture schedule to complete the job.	Student signs up for preferred job.

Collect data on this lesson by measuring student success on the steps of Links Routine #23 (Socializing with Friends) or create a custom classroom routine. Student simulates all steps independently for three consecutive simulations. Generalize this simulation to community settings such as:
- During passing periods in the hallway/classroom
- In the cafeteria during lunch
- Before and after school
- Community social locations (community centers, social outings)

General Prompting Strategies:
If the student is unable to perform the expected behavior follow the Least to Most Prompting Strategy outlined below:

Least to Most Prompting Strategy
1. Allow the student to complete the step independently
2. Use a gesture/visual/verbal prompt
3. Use an intermittent physical prompt
4. Use a continuous physical prompt