# **Book 1. Learning Readiness**

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# Foreword

For the past month or so (using Chapter 10 in Book 1, on Parents’ Teaching Readiness and Tool Skills) we’ve been replacing tug-of-war with cooperation. We’ve:

1. Tried not to accidentally reinforce problem behaviors.

2. Saved reinforcers---food, hugs, praise, activities---and used these to increase alternative desirable behaviors.

3. Quickly tagged and reinforced [with treat, hug, activity] desirable behaviors **at your child’s point of success,** immediately and just about every time, at first.

The results? Your child is doing problem behaviors less often (because these behaviors get nothing in return) and your child IS doing desirable behaviors more often, because these behaviors get a lot in return. You may feel calmer and more confident. So, *we’ll keep on doing the three things listed above,* AND now we’ll start teaching *specific behaviors*---the most basic skills---Learning Readiness.

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**Chapter 1 - What Are Learning Readiness Skills?**What does it take for a child to join other persons in everyday activities---meals, getting ready for school, going for rides, shopping, conversations, play, cleaning the yard, learning new skills? Answer. It takes certain basic behaviors that we call “learning readiness.” Learning readiness skills are knowledge elements of everything else we learn and do. To join you and to learn with you, a child has to look and listen; watch; sit; come when asked; enjoy being with others (as shown by smiling and going to other persons); cooperate with requests (“Look,” “Touch blue,” “Say, mmmm.”), imitate, and handle objects (reach, grasp, lift, place). Imagine trying to teach your child to play, to put on a sweater, or to talk, if your child does not look at you, does not watch when you show her how (model), does not cooperate with requests, and has trouble using her hands. Not fun.  
  
**Many children are weak on** **the knowledge elements that we call Learning Readiness skills.**  
They do not do them often enough, for long enough, in enough places, in enough tasks, or with enough skill (the right movements).   
Please skim Chapters 1 and 2 in Book 1, on   
1. Descriptions of children.  
2. Learning difficulties your child may have. And  
3. The sequence of the skill areas, beginning in this Book, 2 and continuing through the series.   
In *Learning Readiness 1*, a child learns the most basic elements of living and learning with other persons---responding to changes, eye contact, coming when called, walking with other persons, using good sounds/words instead of yelling and constant noises, cooperating with requests, and imitation.   
In *Learning Readiness 2*, we teach a child to sit and learn with other persons---another basic skill for living and learning.  
In *Learning Readiness 3*, we evaluate and teach large motor skills (jumping) and small motor skills (fitting objects together) that are the elements of play and daily-living skills. So,   
In *Learning Readiness 4*, we teach a child to play.  
And in *Learning Readiness 5*, we begin to teach more complex life skills.   
  
So, Learning Readiness 1-5 skills prepare a child to learn more advanced skills in later books in the series, such as Motor Imitation (an efficient way to learn new skills); Verbal Imitation (imitating mouth movements, sounds, words, phrases and sentences); Functional Speech; and chores and self-help skills.  
  
Question.  
  
Does your child need work on some of the Learning Readiness Skills shown on the table in Book 1? Which ones? *Mark them or make a list.* Before we teach any skill, we’re going to evaluate---to see what kinds of help, if any, your child needs.

***Evaluating a Child’s Skills***  
We’ll evaluate your child’s Learning Readiness skills right before we teach them. It’s easy.  
  
**Steps for Evaluating a Child’s Skills**Each Learning Readiness Skill, below, has its own section. Each section tells how to evaluate a child’s skills, how to plan a teaching program, and how to teach the skill. Basically, here’s what we do.1. Read the evaluation questions for a skill item.  
2. Ask yourself, “Which answers best describe the child’s behavior?” Spend part of a few days watching the child to see how well or how oftenshe does an item. How often does she make eye contact? How well does she handle objects? Does she watch her own hands as they move?   
For some items, we might give a small test. For example, ask the child to do something. How does he respond? Or, move an object in front of the child. Does he follow with his eyes? Does he reach for it?  
3. You could put a mark—for example, in pencil—next to each item telling its importance. For instance:  
 “We have to work on this one real soon. She doesn’t know how to do this.”

4. *Don’t worry about perfect accuracy.* We just want to know:  
a. Do we need to work on this item?   
b. If so, what features do we need to work on: do it more often, more skill, more places, with less prompting, longer, faster, strengthen weak elements?  
5. Try not to be discouraged or stressed out if a child needs work on many items. “Why not?” Because *small changes WILL add up to big ones.* Each new skill that a child learns makes it easier to learn the rest**.** How? Because everything a child learns is an element of skills that the child will learn and use later. When you teach something new, you’re adding a littleto what the child *already knows*. In time, the child will be “a different child.”

Consider Motor Imitation. You---the teacher---raise one arm above your head (model) and you say, “Do this” (request). You want the child to raise her own arm. Do you wonder if the child can learn this? Well, by the time we get to Motor Imitation (Book 3 in the series), a child will have learned ALL but one of the elements needed. She’ll have learned to sit with you, look at you, watch your movements, cooperate with requests, and move arms and legs. The only NEW element is moving the same way that you do. If she’s learned all the other elements, she can surely learn one more! Before we start, let’s review.  
  
**Chapter 2 - Quick Review of Tools for Teaching**

Here is some of what we covered (plus a few new items) in Book 1., on parents’ teaching readiness and tools for teaching.  
1. *Problem behaviors* (whining, not cooperating, running away) make it hard for you to teach, and hard for a child to learn desirable behaviors. So, let’s be alert *not to* *accidentally reinforce problem behaviors* by looking (“What?”), staring (“What the heck?!”), telling the child to stop (“Calm down. Stop screaming.”) repeating requests over and over (“Come here… I said, Come here… Hey, come back!”), giving the child something to distract or to soothe her (“Here, have a candy bar. Settle down.”), leaving the scene or dropping a request or stopping an activity to which the child is objecting (“Okay, we’re leaving! Stop screaming!... Ahhh, peace and quiet.”). As much as possible, ignore what you don’t want; and as much as possible, reinforce what you DO want. Please see Chapter 10 of Book 1. Keep on using it!

2. *The behavior we want to improve must be observable*. We hear and see it as *movements*? What does it mean, “Jimmy will cooperate with requests”? What words and gestures are in the request? What actions of Jimmy’s would be cooperation with that request? We must be specific so that we know what to look for, what to teach, and what to reinforce.

To make this easy, *we define in five words or less*the behavior (the movements) that we want to tag/reinforce.  
*Look my eyes two* (for two seconds) means “I will tag and reinforce when Jimmy’s eyes lock onto mine for at least two seconds.”  
   
*Walk table 10 seconds* means “I will tag and reinforce when Pearl walks to the table when called within 10 seconds.”

*Reach, hold, point, put* means “We will tag and reinforce with praise and a treat when Tommy reaches for, holds with fingers, and puts an object where I point on the table.”

We defined these behaviors—as movements---with five words or less. Easy to remember. Easy to remind ourselves. Easier to tell the child what we’d like him to do!

3. Before we teach, *we observe the child and find out how he usually does the behavior---how often, or for how long, or where, or with how many correct movements*. This is the child’s *point of success*. For example,

Dad is teaching Mark the put-on-shoes routine. Mark doesn’t yet DO the shove-toes-in-shoe step. He’s at the point of looking at his shoe and touching it with his toes. So, the point of success (what he already can/does do), and the first tag and reinforce point, is “look toes touch shoe.” Once this step is firm, Dad can add “Now push toes IN.”

Another example.  
Jimmy holds eye contacts for around two seconds---his point of success. So, when we tag and reinforce two-second eye contacts (the tag point), Jimmy’s eye contacts will get a lot of tag-reinforcing. His behavior will be successful. He’ll do it more and more. However, if the tag point at first were five seconds (more than the two seconds he usually does; more than his point of success), Jimmy would be doing a hundred two-secondeye contacts all day that would NOT be tag-reinforced at all! Soon he would stop doing ALL eye contact! So,

We start “where a child is at”---with the behavior he can do---because that’s what he does do.

Note: We tag and reinforce behavior that meets the current tag point---two-second eye contacts at first; later, three-second eye contacts; later, four-second eye contacts. However, if a child for some reason (illness, stress at school), is now doing the behavior at *less* than her current tag point, we lower the tag point for a *little while*, and then, when her behavior increases again, we *go back* to the first tag point. Otherwise, the child’s behavior would be getting no reinforcement!  
  
In addition to finding out how often, for how long, where, with what correct movements a child usually does a behavior (her current point of success), *we also identify weak elements.* For example, Nancy cooperates with only one in four simple requests, and she only does a small part of what she was asked. Mom and Dad notice that *Nancy does not look at them when they make a request.* Which means that she probably doesn’t hear all of it. Mom and Dad know that Nancy won’t learn to cooperate more often and more skillfully *until* they strengthen the weak elements---watching and listening.   
  
BIG RULE! We strengthen weak elements (such as eye contact) before we teach skills that use these elements (cooperation with requests). Please see number 10, below, on knowledge analysis.  
  
4. *All about reinforcement.* We help a child to improve her behavior (do it more often, faster, for a longer time, with more attention, with less prompts/assistance, or with just the right movements) by either: (1) immediately reinforcing and verifying or (2) immediately first tagging (with an audible sound), and then reinforcing and verifying.   
a. Child pushes her arms through coat sleeves--Reinforce (with treat, praise, hug, activity) and verify (“Yes, you   
 put on your coat!”). Or  
b. Child pushes her arms through coat sleeves--Tag (audible sound)--Reinforce (with treat, praise, hug, activity)   
 and Verify (“Yes, you put on your coat!”).   
  
When do we use each method?  
a. We’ll use “a.” above (TAGTeach methods, described in Chapter 5 of Book 1 on teaching tools and teaching   
 readiness) when we want to *increase a specific and very important NEW behavior.* For example,   
  
 In special sessions, during everyday activities, and when the opportunity comes up, Mom and Pop Maretti   
 tag-verify-and treat every time (at first) Jimmy makes eye contact for two seconds. (By “verify,” we mean   
 SAYING what the child did. “Yes, looking at Daddy!”)  
  
 Dad Brown tags-verifies-praises or treats every time (at first) Nancy cooperates with a simple request.  
  
 Ma Ironton tags-verifies-treats or head pats every time (at first) Pearl grasps an object (block, puzzle piece, spoon) with a pincer (finger tips) or palmer (whole hand) grip.  
  
 Dad St. Vincent tags-verifies-praises each time Jack correctly imitates a word or phrase.

b. However, s*ometimes we will use “b.” above, and not first tag the behavior, but will still reinforce and verify the   
 behavior.* Why?   
 Because we can’t tag-verify-reinforce every desirable behavior a child does. The air would be full of clicking   
 noises, and the child would not know which behavior is being tagged. So, (1) in special sessions, (2) during   
 everyday activities, and (3) when the opportunity comes up, we verify and reinforce (with treat, hug, praise,   
 activity, or even a token) *when the child does a behavior that has* ***already started to increase****, and we want to   
 keep increasing it.* For example,

Nancy (whose cooperations were tagged, verified, and reinforced for several weeks) is now cooperating more often with simple requests. She no longer needs an immediate and clear tag that tells her that she   
 just did the right behavior. She gets it---"Do what Mom and Dad ask.” So, now, when Mom or Dad asks   
 her to do something, (“Nancy, close the fridge door, please.”), and she does it, they say,   
 “Yes, thank you. Door all closed,” and they give her a hug, a pat on the head, or a bite of cookie.  
   
 And, when they ask her to do several little tasks in a row (loading the sink with supper dishes), they verify and praise as she loads each dish.  
  
 And, after four or five dishes, they verify (“You helped with ALL the dishes.”) and give her dessert. Big treat for all those cooperations.  
  
 During special sessions at the kitchen table for a month, Dad tagged-verified-reinforced each time Jack   
 imitated a word or phrase. “Jack, say…. sandwich…. *sandwich…* Tag (click)--Yes, you said sandwich.”--  
 Head rub plus smile.

The tags taught Jack exactly what behavior to do (Click! = “THAT behavior!”); the verification made sure   
that he learned what the behavior is called; and the reinforcement taught him that imitating Dad   
 has a nice outcome. “Hey, it feels good to say what Dad says.” Please read that line again. It’s a good one!

Now Jack imitates almost every word or phrase that Dad asks him to repeat. *Jack no longer needs   
 a tag to tell him that he is doing the right behavior.* He gets it---"Say what Dad says.” So, during the day,   
 when Jack imitates a word or phrase that Dad says, or when they are in the hardware store and Jack   
 imitates the names of tools, Dad verifies (“Yes, wood file!”) and reinforces (“You are so smart!”). When   
 they leave the store, Dad says, “You said what Daddy said SO many times! Let’s get some ice cream!”   
 Big treat for ALL those imitations.

Now we *decide how we’ll tag or mark the behavior.* Taggers (clickers) are a good idea. But use anything that you can easily hold that makes a clear sound. A pen that makes a loudish sound when you click it; a squeak toy (Ma Ironton uses a tiny toy mouse. Pearl loves the sound.). Banging pots together may not be the best idea.

*Tag or reinforce immediately.* We want the child to hear the audible signal, cue, or tag WHILE she is doing the tagged behavior, so that she FEELS what her body is doing at the moment that the tag TELLS her “That’s the ONE!” If the tag is even a second late, we may have tagged the NEXT thing the child did! Same with the treat. It has to come so fast after the tag that the child *connects the treat with the sound*, so that the sound tells the child that the treat is coming. This turns the tag-sound itself into a reinforcer—a learned reinforcer.

*Tags (audible sounds), reinforcers (treats, praise, hugs, tokens, activities), and verification (“Yes, you put on your coat!”) must be given fast*---right after the behavior. The same when you are not using a tag, but only treats, praise, hugs (reinforcers) and verification.

*And don’t give too much of a reinforcer at a time*, or the child will soon be “full,” and stop doing the behavior. Also, *rotate reinforcers to keep them strong*. “If Mom says ‘Good job’ ONE more time…!” or “NOT another banana chip!” So, *make a list of reinforcers and switch among them*. Treats, hugs, head rubs, play, music, whatever your child would do or get for herself if she had the chance.

*If we are using food reinforcers, make sure that the child likes them*—A LOT; receives them ONLY as part of a current teaching program (so they will be valuable); and receives them immediately. Feel free to read that line again!

a. Sometimes, you can hand a treat (raisin) to the child.

During language lessons, Mr. St. Vincent tags Jack’s behavior---such as saying whole sentences to describe pictures---by snapping his fingers (Jack loves this), and then sliding a piece of pickle on a paper plate across the table to Jack. Jack smiles and slides the pickle back to Dad, for re-use. The real reinforcer is Jack   
 *doing* it and then Dad smiling! The pickle slide is a symbol. It means, “Dad and I are a great team.”  
b. Sometimes you’ll have to put the treat in a child’s mouth; for example, a spoon loaded with a small amount   
 of food (pudding, yogurt, applesauce, mashed potatoes). You might do this during sessions when you are   
 sitting close to the child, working on eye contact, or imitation, or saying sounds. Of course, you wouldn’t do   
 this with kids who use a lot of language. Tito would say, “Mom! Get that spoon outa my face! I’m not a   
 baby!”

*Remember, if hugs, head rubs, and some activities are STRONG reinforcers for a child, use these as well as food treats.*For example, Jimmy is having a hard time putting on his coat. He’s whining, fussing, and red in the face. Mom (and everyone else) used to ask him to “Calm down. It’s just a coat.” That never worked! Now, Mom waits calmly. As Jimmy calms down (mostly because his arms are getting tired and his throat is starting to hurt), Mom moves closer. Jimmy is quiet for one second! Mom looks Jimmy in the eyes (she communicates, “Now I’m with you.”). **Click**. “Yes, quiet mouth” (the tag point).” Now that Jimmy is calm, Mom helps him to shove his arms in sleeves; and then Jimmy goes outside (activity reinforcer). We teach Quiet Mouth in Chapter 3.

*How often and when to tag and/or to tag/reinforce behavior* First Continuous (every time); then Intermittent (less often).  
a. *When we first start teaching a behavior, we reinforce or we tag/reinforce every time the child does the behavior at   
 the tag point.* *Continuous (every time) tag/reinforcement.* This consistency…  
 Behavior => Tag-reinforce every time  
 …helps the child to learn a rule. “When I do (and I feel my body doing)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I hear CLICK and I get something that I like.”

If the child does the behavior again, tag-reinforce again!  
  
 For example, Ma Ironton and Pearl are in the kitchen making pancakes. Mom is teaching Pearl to watch   
 what Mom is doing. So, Mom tag-reinforces when Pearl does “See (watch) Mom do for five seconds.”   
 (Pearl’s point of success). Pearl keeps watching! So, Mom keeps tagging and reinforcing. “See Mom do   
 pancakes! Now see butter in pan…. Now see pour batter in pan…. Now see flip pancake.” Mom is building   
 “watching an activity” behavior, not just “a quick look” behavior.

b. *Then we slowly move to intermittent (once in a while, but fairly often) reinforcement or tag/reinforcement.* Let’s   
 say that for several weeks or more  
 (1) You have *tag-verified-reinforced* every time (continuous schedule) a child did Quiet mouth for four seconds, or every time she made eye contact for three seconds, or every time he imitated a new sound.   
 Tag (click)—"Yes, mmmm.”—treat.

(2) Or for several weeks you have *verified-reinforced* every time a child started to play with toys (“Yes, roll truck.” Hug), or every time a child finished putting on her jacket (“Yes, jacket ON. Now go OUT!”).   
 And these behaviors are increasing. So now we *reinforce less and less often and we rotate reinforcers*. Like this.

Dad helps Tito with multiplication homework. Dad helped Tito to firm up a few weak elements--- reading the problem, writing numerals in the right places. So, now, Tito is working a bunch of problems on his own. Dad does not tag correct responses. Why not? Because Tito GETS what he’s supposed to do. He does not need a tag to tell him that he did the right thing---he solved a problem. So, *Dad just verifies (“Yes, 12 times 3 is 36!) and reinforces (with hug, head rub, shoulder squeeze, praise, or treat) correct responses or close tries.* See how, below.  
  
 Tito does 10 more problems correctly or is close. Dad verifies and reinforces every one. Continuous reinforcement. Like this….  
 “Yes, 12 times 2 IS 24. (verification) Smart boy.” (praise)  
 “You got it. 9 times 3 IS 27.” (verification) Shoulder rub. (physical)  
 “Terrific! 4 times 8 is 32! (verification) What a brain!” (praise)  
 “Yes! 23 times 2 is 46. (verification) Have a chunk of cookie! Great work!” (praise and treat)

Let’s say that after the 10 problems and reinforcements, above, Tito no longer NEEDS reinforcement after every problem to TELL him he was correct, that he did a good job, and that he should keep it up. Tito gets it. So, now *Dad moves to intermittent reinforcement.*   
 (a) He still verifies all correct answers (“Yes…! 3 times 8 is 24!”), so that Tito learns if he did a problem correctly, and should solve more problems THAT way.

(b) But Dad reinforces (with praise, physical contact, treats, and activities) fewer and fewer times, slowly. Like this.  
 Tito does two more problems. “Yes, 26. You got it (verification) ….. Yes, 42 is right!” (verification) Hand shake (the reinforcer).  
 Tito does one more problem. “Nice. 40 is the answer!!” (verification) Head rub (the reinforcer).  
 Tito does three more problems. “Yes, 50! (verification)…. Correct 30! (verification).... Yes, 54 (verification) …. Great work, Tito. (praise) Have a chunk of banana.” (treat)  
 Tito does two more problems. “30! Yes. (verification) That’s my smart man!” (praise) Shoulder squeeze (physical)…. “22, Correct again. (verification) All done. Time for ice cream!”

Get it? Keep verifying correct responses so that the child knows what to continue doing! But give the reinforcer (especially FOOD) less and less often.

“How do I know if the behavior has increased enough that I can slowly verify-reinforce or tag-verify- reinforce a little less often?” *There’s only ONE way to know.*

**See what happens!**

If the child seems confused or hurt, or if behavior starts to decrease, just go *back to MORE often tagging and reinforcing.* Then try to *thin out* the schedule again--but more gradually.

*Gradually tag-verify-reinforce or verify-reinforce slightly improved behavior.*   
Instead of reinforcing two-second eye contacts, wait for and reinforce three-second eye contacts.  
Instead of reinforcing putting plates anywhere on a placemat, prompt (by pointing) and reinforce putting plates closer to the outline.  
Instead of reinforcing five minutes of playing, keep a child engaged and reinforce six minutes of play.  
Instead of reinforcing four minutes of “calm hands,” reinforce four and a half minutes of calm hands.  
Instead of reinforcing putting a knit cap on top of her head, prompt and reinforce putting the cap on her head and pulling it down to her ears.   
Instead of reinforcing any cooperation with a request, reinforce slightly faster cooperations.

*You can tell children like Tito, Mark, and Jack what the improved desirable behavior is (to be tagged or reinforced)*, because (1) they “have” the language and are pretty cooperative; and (2) you are planning teaching programs with them. For example,   
  
Dad sets a kitchen timer for 60 seconds as Jack watches. Dad says, “Remember, OUR new goal is: All stuff ready 60 seconds.” (Five words.) Jack gets his school books, book bag, lunch sack, and coat, and is standing at the front door (all stuff ready), before the timer rings…  
   
Big hug. + “All stuff ready 60 seconds! That’s my boy!”

After a week or so, Jack is reliably ready in under 60 seconds almost every day, so Dad and Jackraise the bar a little together.  
   
“Jack, how about we go a little faster? Let’s make the new goal be All stuff ready **50** seconds. Okay?”  
“Yeah. Let’s do it, Pop.”

“Okay. Get ready!... Go.” [Dad is building speed because Jack often dawdles.]

Next topic!

5. *Here’s our main format for teaching---communicating information and helping a child to use what she’s learning.* You will become fluent with the format---it will seem natural---after we teach a few skills with it. In fact, you will easily to teach skills that we don’t cover. For example, planting seeds, handwriting, the sounds and names that go with letters, counting, using a computer, or riding a bicycle. It might be a good idea to SAY the script with me. We….

a. **Gain attention**. “Mark….. Look at me.” “Nancy….Listen to this song.” “Jimmy…Let’s sit big.”   
 Immediately reinforce attention.  
 “Yes, NOW we are ready to learn!!!”  
b. **Frame** the instruction. “Now we’ll (pick up, stack, play with) blocks.” Again, reinforce attention. “I love   
 how you are (looking at Dad, watching Dad point to the pile of blocks)! Here we go!”  
c. **Model** (I do), or present, a small amount of information. “My turn. Watch Dad pick up the block.”   
 Maybe repeat the model to make sure that the child sees the whole thing. Again, reinforce attention. “Yes (pat on shoulder), Dad picks up the block!”  
d. **Lead** (We do). Next, have the child do the modeled behavior with you, so that your behavior guides the   
 child’s behavior. “Pick up the block **with** (Dad, me). Get ready.”….(Short pause for think time,)...Then give   
 a “do it” signal, such as “Go” or a hand gesture. Immediately reinforce desirable responses. “Yes (quick hug   
 or treat), you pick up block WITH Dad!” You might do the Lead (We do) twice, and add a prompt to   
 improve the child’s response—for example, helping the child to grasp the block, and to do that right along   
 with you.  
e. **Test/check** (You do).Then we check to see that the child gets it/can do it/does do it. “Your turn to pick up   
 the block. Get ready.”… (Short pause for think time…) Then give a “do it” signal, such as pointing to the   
 block, or saying “Go.” Then tag (click) desirable responses, reinforce (treat, hug, praise), and verify (“You   
 picked up the block!”).  
f. **Retest.** Immediately repeat the test/check with a prompt if needed, to FIRM the child’s response.   
 “Let’s pick up the block **again**. I will help you to HOLD the block.” Or  
 “Listen, say…. rrrrr…. *rrrr.* Yes, rrr. Again, say…. rrrr…. *rrrr.* YES rrrr. Have a raisin.”  
 Then one more time to firm it up, with LESS of a prompt if you can.   
 g. **Delayed Test/check**. Later still, we practice again with less of a prompt if we can, and we tag-reinforce more   
 independent responses.  
 “Let’s say our sounds again…. Listen….rrrr…. Now YOU say….rrr…. *rrr…* Yes, rrrr…. Say…mmm… *mmm* …Yes, mmm…. One more… Say ahhhh…. *ahhh*… Yes, ahhh. You are a GOOD talker!!”

Again….We reinforce and verify the child’s participation when we **model** (“Yes, you are watching Momma   
 OPEN the box.”), during the **lead** (“Yes, you opened the box WITH Momma.”), and (if the child’s   
 behavior meets the tag point during the **test/check**), we tag + reinforce + verify: “Yes, YOU opened the   
 box!”).

*But ONLY three times in a row if the child has a hard time and makes errors*!!! Otherwise, the child will be   
 trying but getting no reinforcement. Number 6, below, tells what to do---error correction, part-firming,   
 and reteaching.  
6. *Error correction*. A child will make errors—especially when she is learning *something new* (the phase of   
acquisition of skill) or if she is not*getting enough practice* (review) on earlier skills (the phase of retention).   
So, keep earlier behaviors going strong by giving the child opportunities to do them and by reinforcing when the child does them! We talk all about this in the chapters, below, on Learning Readiness skills.  
  
So, why does a child struggle, or not know what to do, or make errors? Maybe the child   
 a. Doesn’t pay attention to the model or to the lead part of instruction, and so she doesn’t know what to do   
 when it is her turn (test/check).  
 b. Moves/responds too fast---she says the wrong color name, or she multiplies 4 times 4 and says eight.   
 (Didn’t notice the difference between the signs x vs. +.)  
 c. Doesn’t focus on what she is doing---puts the plates in the wrong spot on the table, or adds numerals in the   
 wrong column.   
 d. Isn’t sure what she is supposed to do because (1) we use words that she does not know (“Hold it tight.” vs.   
 Hold two hands.”); or (2) because the request does not clearly tell what to do. “Can you say more?” vs.   
 “**Say**…more.” Or, “It’s over there.” vs. “Pearl’s coat is on the CHAIR (point).”  
e. Maybe she has a hard time making the right movements---for example, saying ssslll when trying to imitate   
 “slide,” or wrapping her fingers around a spoon handle.  
 f. Or maybe we do not use enough prompts that would prevent errors, such as pointing to the right object or   
 spot, or showing/telling part of what she’s supposed to do (“two hands.”), or manually helping her to   
 make the right movements (nudging her finger in the direction of the blue toy, gently closing her lips so that   
 she imitates mmm).   
  
“So, what do we do? Try over and over?” Nnnoooo.

*When the child makes an error, we immediately* ***correct it****,* usually with model-lead-test/check-reinforce-repeat until firm. For instance,

Dad asks Jimmy to “Pick up the block.” Jimmy just pats the table. Here’s how Dad next helps Jimmy to make the correct response.  
a. Dad quickly models (I do) the information again. He makes sure that Jimmy is watching. “Yes, you are   
 LOOKING at the block…. My turn to pick up the block…. Look….”  
 Dad adds a prompt to make the information clearer---what it means to pick up the block. How? Dad   
 names the object (“block”), points to the block, taps the block, and uses “big” gestures when he models how   
 to pick up the block. “I pick up the block. Watch. Like this… Pick…up.”   
b. Dad has Jimmy do the modeled behavior with him (lead. We do). Dad says, “Pick up the block WITH   
 me.”   
 Dad prompts (helps Jimmy) by gently moving his hand.   
 Dad and Jimmy do the lead one more time to firm it up---so that Jimmy does it exactly right with Dad.  
c. Now Dad has Jimmy do it by himself (test/check. You do). Again, Dad prompts if he thinks Jimmy needs it,   
 BEFORE Jimmy starts to make an error. See the prompts in a. and b., above.  
d. Dad reinforces improved behavior.  
e. Dad immediately backs up and repeats a. to d. to firm it up (*retest*).  
f. In a little while (!) Dad test/checks again (*delayed test*) to see if Jimmy still does (remembers) the   
 steps and uses the needed elements---the names of the objects and of what he’s supposed to do; uses the   
 right movements (looking at the block, reaching for the block, straightening his fingers, aiming his fingers at   
 the block).  
 If the delayed test shows that Jimmy is still weak on the steps and elements (parts of the task), Dad will   
 then either use *part-firming* or he will *reteach the whole task*.

In summary,

Model: one or two times. With prompts to make the information clear.  
Lead: one or two times. With prompts to help the child to do the behavior.

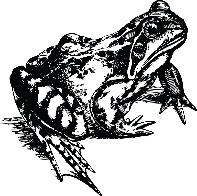
Test/check.  
Reinforce when child’s response meets the current tag point.   
Immediately retest. With prompts to help the child to do the behavior. Try again, with less prompting.  
Delayed retest—a little while later.  
If the child makes errors during the above test/checks and retests, repeat model-lead-test/check to correct the errors.

Reinforce attention, sitting big, visually following hands and objects, good sounds and words, and imitation (all taught in this book) during the model, lead, and test/check steps.

All of the chapters in this book and the rest of the books in the series tell you how to correct errors!

Let’s see an example of error correction.

Tito and Dad are identifying (naming) animals. Dad has examples of snakes, toads, lizards, and turtles on   
 the table. Dad taught each concept by itself over a few days. Now he’s showing examples of several at once to make sure that Tito knows what features to look for to tell the difference.   
 Dad points to each example and asks, “What is this?” Tito gets all the examples of turtles, snakes, and lizards   
 right, but he calls one of the toads a lizard. Dad immediately corrects this; he tells the answer.



[Point] “This one is a **toad**.”[model]  
“What is this one?” [immediate test/check. Tito does not need to do the lead part. He learns fast.]  
*Toad.*“Yes, it’s a toad.” [Verification.This is the only reinforcement that Tito needs. Dad’s smiles and words do   
 the trick. Of course, Dad and Tito will have a snack or some wrestling after the lesson.]  
 [Now Dad makes sure that Tito knows the elements needed to identify toads, so that he will correctly   
 identify them and feel smart.]  
 “Look. [Points.] This toad is…. (pause) grey. It has….rough skin. It has….no teeth. It has….webbed toes.   
 It’s…. 4 inches long. SO, it’s a toad!” [Dad quickly **reviewed** the defining features that **make** the example a   
 toad.]  
 “So, what is it?” [immediate test/check]*Toad.*“Yup, toad.”  
 [Now Dad checks to see that Tito remembers the features that define toads.]  
 “So, toads have what?”  
 *No teeth…* (“Correct. No teeth.”)… *Rough skin…* (“Yup, rough skin.”)... *They can be grey…* (“Yup, grey is   
 right.”)… *Toes with webs…* (“Yes, webbed!”)… *About 4 inches…* (“Yes, 4 inches!”).  
[One more test/check to firm it up.] “Okay, let’s do these again….” [Dad points to each example, and asks,   
 “What is this one?” When they get to the toad, he says, “Think! Don’t let it fool you.” (That is called a *pre-correction*.)  
*Toad.*“Yes! I knew you’d get it! [Verification] Let’s wrestle!”  
  
Dad and Tito review these later. [delayed test/check]

*But what if a child still makes errors?* You model the response, lead the child through it, and then have the child try it several times in a row (test/check and retest), and again later (delayed test), as Jimmy and Tito and their Dads did, above, but the child still struggles, hesitates, and gets it wrong. It makes NO sense to keep using error correction. *We have to find and firm the weak elements that are causing the errors!* Here’s how.

7. *Part-firming.*

We use part-firming when the child’s errors show that a step or an element is weak, and therefore simple error correction (above) is not enough (Gleason, M., 1999. Advanced DI delivery techniques. 25th Annual National Direct Instruction Conference and Institutes. Eugene, OR. July). It makes no sense to have a child do a task over and over and over (as in error correction, above), if the child has a hard time doing PART of the task. So, in part-firming, we (1) find the weak parts---maybe a step (picking up objects) in a task routine (putting objects in a box), or maybe just a tiny movement in a step (grasping objects with fingers in the step of picking up objects); and then we (2) teach or firm up the weak part; and then (3) we go back to teaching the whole task with the firm part back in it. Easy! Here’s how.  
a. We watch as the child tries to do the task during model-lead-test/check-retest. *We identify spots where the   
 child hesitates, stops, or makes an error.* Was the child looking or not? Was the child calm? Is the child fussy,   
 tired, under reinforced, and maybe uncooperative? Is the child having trouble with a particular movement,   
 such as saying a sound in a word, or using her fingers, or placing, stacking, and fitting objects?

We make a list of the weak spots we’ve found.

b. Now, as usual, we use model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce-verify-retest (as above) to FIRST firm the weak   
 parts---NOT the whole task. For example, we firm the sounds ssslll in the task of saying whole words like slip,   
 slam, slide; we firm holding the spoon, which is part in the larger task of spooning food into your mouth; we   
 firm holding open a knit hat, which is part in the task of putting a hat on your head. Do you see how these   
 are parts of a larger task?

c. We repeat model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce-verify- retest with the weak part until it is pretty firm. The   
 child says ssll, grasps a spoon, or holds open a cap.   
d. Now we use model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce-verify-retest with the WHOLE task, including the part that   
 we just firmed up.  
 “Say… sssllll…. *ssslll.* Yes, ssslll. Again. Say … ssslll… *ssslll.* (Quick firming.) Yes, you got it. ssslll!....Now say the   
 whole word….”   
 “Listen….sssllliiimmm….. *sslliimm.* Yes! (treat). You said ssslliimm…. Now say ssslllip… *sslllip.* Yes, slip. You   
 are SO smart!”

Keep reviewing often.  
  
Here are examples of part-firming.   
*Steven has trouble with the main step of riding a bicycle*---pedaling. It makes no sense to have him climb on again, hold onto the handle bars, and then try to pedal---the whole task---because he’s going to struggle with the weak step. So, Mom **first** works on the weak part--pedaling. She holds the bike and walks along (prompt) as Steven pedals. She removes the prompt when Steven is riding well. When he’s GOT that step, Mom has him do the whole routine starting with climbing on, and she adds some prompts to the pedaling step (holds the bike steady until Steven is riding) until Steven can ride on his own. So,  
Identify the weak parts in a routine of steps.   
Firm up the weak parts with model-lead-test/check/reinforce-retest (repeat until firm).  
 Go back to model-lead-test/check-reinforce/retest the whole task, with the firm part back in.

*Dad is teaching Tommy Tucker to talk*, using the books on Verbal Imitation and Functional Speech later in

the series.

“Tommy. Look at me.”   
Tommy looks. Dad reinforces with a head pat.  
Dad says, “Listen….milk. Say….milk.”  
Tommy says “mik.”  
Dad tries once more. Tommy says mik again.  
Dad tries error correction with the WHOLE word. “Listen…. millllk. Say it with me.” Tommy says mik.  
Dad sees that Tommy is weak on the llll element/part. So, Dad just works on lll for now. (part-firming)

“Tommy, look at my mouth.” (Dad points to his mouth.) Tommy looks.  
Dad says, “lllll…. Listen again…llll.” [model]  
“Say lllll with me.” Dad might prompt Tommy by positioning Tommy’s tongue with a popsicle stick. We’ll do this in the later book on Verbal Imitation.  
Now Tommy says something **closer** to llll. => Tag-treat + “Yes, llll.”  
Dad repeats this (retests) three more times to firm it up.   
Now Tommy is really close to saying llll.   
So, Dad puts llll back into the word “milk,” and repeats model-lead-test/check-reinforce-repeat with the   
 whole word.   
“Listen. milllk…. millk…. milllk.” (model)  
“Say milllk with me.” (lead) *milk*“Yes, you said milllk with me!” hug.  
“Your turn. Say milllk.” *milk*

Tag/click + treat + “Yes, MILK!”  
 “Again… millk...... *millk* Hug + “Yes, millk.” [This is called *repeat until firm.*]  
 “One more time!... Say millk.”… *millk.* Tag-treat-hug-“Yes, you said millk!”

8. *Reteaching.*   
*We reteach a task when the child is weak on so many parts that it makes no sense to firm each part one at a time.* Instead, we just reteach the whole thing. Before we do that, we read Chapter 8 to see how we might make our teaching more effective so that the child is firm on all of the parts AND uses them together to do the whole task. For instance,  
  
Indra made lots of errors learning to imitate words--Verbal Imitation. Mom and Dad tried correcting every error by re-doing (model-lead-test/check) the whole words. Indra still made lots of errors. So, they next tried part-firming to improve how Indra imitated/said the weak sound-parts in words---the sounds made by sh, p, ing, n, f, and more. Indra still made errors when they went back to asking her to say the whole words.

Now what?

*Mom and Dad reteach Verbal Imitation!* Basically, they start over. But this time they make sure that Indra is firm---solid---fluent--on saying and imitating a FEW easy sounds (mmm, ahhh, sss, t, eee) in easy words that are made with those sounds (ma, am, me, eat, see) before they teach her to say/imitate the whole words. In other words, it is easy to think that a child is learning nicely, but whose skills really are much weaker. Here is how Mom and Pop reteach Verbal Imitation---with attention to ALL of the skill elements. We will do that in the book on Verbal Imitation (Book 4), so don’t worry about it!

This is why it is good to be in a group with other families and/or teachers, so we can help each other!  
  
Notice how the following steps are a logical sequence---elements first.  
The most basic Learning Readiness skills needed to learn anything.  
Mouth movements and positions for saying sounds.  
Saying/imitating sounds that will be used in words.  
Saying/imitating words using the sounds just taught.

a. Mom, Dad, Sis, Grandma, and Teacher Jackie Blue help to teach Indra speech. They   
 FIRST firm up (model or request, and reinforce) the most *basic Learning Readiness* behaviors, such as   
 sitting calmly, responding to changes, eye contact on request, cooperation, and imitation---taught   
 in Chapters 3 and 4. Indra needs to be firm on these behaviors in order to learn anything else.  
b. Then they reteach (as if these were brand new) or they firm up (if the child just needs practice) *mouth   
 movements and positions*---open wide (for ahhh), close lips (for mmm), pursed lips (as in ooo), tongue   
 touching behind upper front teeth (for t and sss)---using methods in Book 4, on Verbal Imitation. Indra  
 needs to DO these mouth movements and positions in order to say sounds that are made with these   
 movements and positions.  
c. Then they reteach (as if these were new) or they firm up the sounds made with the above mouth   
 movements and positions---ah, mmm, eee, t, sss. Indra needs to say these sounds in order to say words that   
 are made with these sounds.  
d. They also practice different kinds of prompts that will help to prevent errors---in Book 4, on Verbal   
 Imitation. For example, how to help a child to say mmm, ahh, ooo, sss.  
e. They lower the tag points for saying/imitating sounds and words so that Indra’s imitation behavior   
 gets more reinforcement. For instance, instead of tag-reinforcing when she imitates eee, they will tag-  
 reinforce when she simply parts her lips and says a vowel sound. When she is “good at that,” they will raise   
 the tag point a little and only reinforce sounds that are closer to eee.

In summary, when a child makes errors, we first use error correction. If the child keeps making the same errors, we use part-firming. If the child still struggles, we use reteaching. And we continually modify our teaching so that it meets the child’s current learning needs by going back to guidelines in Chapter 8!

Okay, let’s move on.  
  
9. *We use different kinds of assistance, or prompts, to help a child to focus, to “get” what we are trying to communicate, and to make improved responses.*  
a. Point to the red circle.  
b. Put the child’s name or her picture on her sock drawer.  
c. Say certain parts of a request louder. “Put the block IN the box.”   
d. Pause and then punch the information. “Open the…..door.” “Say….mmm.”  
e. Use gestures and models that show what to do; for example, make a circle in the air with your finger to prompt the child to draw a circle.  
f. Give extra instructions. “Close fingers on handle.” Or a series of pictures showing steps in a routine--- such as making a bed.  
g. Add a request (“Draw circle.”) so that the child learns what the gesture (a circle drawn in the air with your finger) means.  
h. Physically guide a child to do the right movements.  
i. Guide the range of movements with some kind of template or jig. For example, use a placemat that shows   
 plate, cup, fork and spoon, to guide the child as she places these objects. Tape a screwdriver to a child’s gloved

hand, so he can more easily grasp the tool. Use eating utensils with handles that wrap around the hand.

j. We add or remove prompts in a sequence, so that we know just what we are going to try next. For example,  
 (1) We might start with the *least physical guidance, and use more if less guidance does not work.* Starting with the least…  
 Touch child’s shoulder to get her arm moving to pick up a cup. If that isn’t enough,   
 Touch lower arm to get her hand moving. If that isn’t enough,  
 Touch hand. If that isn’t enough,   
 Hold hand. If that isn’t enough,  
 Move hand part way. If that isn’t enough,  
 Move hand the whole way. If that isn’t enough,  
 Open her fingers. If that isn’t enough,  
 Wrap her fingers around the cup.

(2) Or, we might start with the *most physical guidance* (to prevent errors) and then use less guidance as we find out that more is no longer needed. Just read the above sequence backwards.

(3) We might give only part of a reminder (“cir…”) and then give more if the child needs it. “circle.” “Draw a cir…” “Draw a circle.”   
 (4) Or we might give prompts with a series of delays. This is called “time delay.” For example, Dad is reviewing with Jack the names of different tools. He says,

“Touch the (or Which one is the) crescent wrench?” and Dad points to it at the same time (zero delay). Jack points to the crescent wrench. Dad verifies---“Yes! That’s the crescent wrench.”  
 Next time, Dad says, “Touch the (or Which one is the) crescent wrench?” and Dad waits one second before he points to it (one second delay). Jack points and Dad verifies.  
 Next time, Dad says, “Touch the (or Which one is the) crescent wrench?” and Dad waits two seconds before he points to it (two second delay). Jack points and Dad verifies.   
 Next time, Dad says, “Touch the (or Which one is the) crescent wrench?” Jack points BEFORE Dad gives the prompt. “Yes, you pointed to the crescent wrench all by yourself!”   
 In other words, the child makes the right choice before he gets the prompt.

10. *Knowledge analysis.* We are teaching Indra to play kick ball. We need answers.  
a. What are the steps in kick ball? The pitcher rolls a large ball to the child; the child kicks it; the child runs   
 to first base. Okay, so we need to teach these steps. But…  
b. What must a child know to DO each step? What knowledge elements are USED in each step? Well, in   
 the kick-the-ball step, you have to know: (1) what a ball is (“That’s a ball.”); (2) that the ball is what you   
 kick (“I’ll kick the ball.”); (3) how to move your body so that you face the ball (“I’ll turn this way.”); (4)   
 when the ball is close enough to kick (“Now!); and (5) how to “cock” your leg backwards and then kick   
 forward while you focus on the ball so that your shoe hits the ball on middle of the front side. A lot   
 going on, isn’t there?

When would be a good time to teach Indra these elements? Before she actually plays---so that she is ready? Or while she is playing---so that she makes a million errors and we have to correct or part-firm them all   
 during the game? Obviously, we ae going to *pre-teach* most of the elements and the steps, and then teach Indra to do the steps in sequence. Now she is ready to USE/DO the routine in a game.  
c. What are the likely hard steps and elements where Indra may get confused, forget what to do, or not do   
 well? In other words, where are the likely errors? When we know the hard spots, we can (1) review and   
 firm up the hard steps and elements right before the game; (2) prepare to give prompts during the game   
 before Indra struggles and makes errors; and (3) be ready to use error correction or part-firming methods,   
 above, before we play again.

Knowledge analysis answers all these questions (Engelmann, S., and Carnine, D.W. , 1991. *Theory of instruction: Principles and* applications, Eugene, OR: ADI Press.). That’s why we do knowledge analysis before we plan how teach something new. You’ll be happy to know that I already did a knowledge analysis of every skill we’ll teach.

“Gee, thanks!”

You’re welcome. However, it’s a good idea for you to know how to do it, too. The best teachers---including family members---can do knowledge analysis as easily as making a sandwich. They think about a task, and they very quickly imagine the steps and the knowledge elements needed to do the steps. This skill makes them fantastic. You will be fantastic!

***More on Knowledge Analysis***

You may have heard of “task analysis.” Task analysis means breaking a routine (getting dressed) into its steps. For example,  
1. Get socks.  
2. Get shoes.  
3. Put on socks.  
4. Put on shoes.  
Knowledge analysis does one more thing. It *figures out the knowledge elements needed* to learn and do each step in a routine. Let’s do a few examples.

**Putting on a Knit Cap**  
Ma Ironton will teach Pearl to put on a knit cap. First, Momdoes the routine and writes the steps on her expensive 3 x 5 card knowledge analysis table. Then she does the routine again. At each step, she asks herself, “What did I know and do to complete that step?” She writes her answers in the column for “Knowledge Elements Needed.” How about if YOU make a copy of the knowledge analysis table; do the routine yourself; write the steps that YOU used and the knowledge elements (what you had to know and do) in each step?   
Note! See all those Learning Readiness Skills for step 1 below? And all the little movements in steps 2-5? We teach all of them in this book!

**Table 1. Ma Ironton’s Knowledge Analysis of Putting on a Knit Cap**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Steps in Putting on a Knit Cap | Knowledge Elements Needed |
| 1. Pearl is ready to learn.  2. Grasp cap at the bottom with both hands, thumbs on the inside and fingers on the outside.  3. Pull bottom of cap open to make a hole for her head to go in.  4. Put cap on head.  5. Adjust cap on head. | 1. Learning Readiness Skills:  1a. Pearl sits or stands up, looks at me, is quiet, waits her turn.  1b. Pearl cooperates with simple requests.  1c. Pearl imitates simple movements.  1d. Pearl looks at the parts of the cap that I show---sides, hole at the bottom made by opening the hat.  1e. Pearl takes her turn when I give instructions to take her turn.  2a. Reach for cap that I hold out for her to take: raise arms at the shoulders, extend arms (straighten) at the elbows. 2b. Open fingers, place thumbs inside the bottom edge of cap, and fingers on the outside of the bottom edge. Flex thumbs and fingers to grip bottom edge. 2c. Watch what she is doing.  3a. Extend arms at the elbows, outward, while gripping cap, to open cap at the bottom.  3b. Watch cap open.  4a. Raise arms at the shoulder and raise forearms at the elbows, to lift cap; lower head towards hole at the bottom of the cap.  4b. Lower opening of the cap onto the top of her head, while moving her head forward to push her head into the opening.  5a. While still holding each side of the bottom of the cap (3a), pull arms down so that the sides of the cap go down to her ears. |

Why does Ma Ironton focus on such tiny movements, like extending arms at the elbows (stretching arms) or grasping the bottom of the cap with thumbs inside the edge and fingers on the outside?   
 Because some children have trouble with these tiny movements.

Pearl does. So, Mom Ironton makes sure that Pearl can *already DO* these movements (by teaching her). And Mom watches and helps Pearl *with*these movements *while* she is teaching Pearl to put on her cap. That way, Pearl is successful with each step; both she and Mom feel good about this and will want to work on more tasks! That is why we teach these small movements early in a child’s education program---LR 3, Chapter 5.

You get it, right?

So,  
1. We’ll teach the Learning Readiness Skills, and all needed basic physical movements, before we teach the put-on cap routine.   
2. And we’ll review and firm up these elements at the start of a lesson. That way, the only thing NEW we have to teach the child is to do the movements in a sequence.   
  
A child won’t be firm on a whole routine in one session---probably. No problem. We do a little more tomorrow---a few more steps. In a week, we have it. And the movements and steps in one routine can be used in (generalized to) other routines, such as putting on a shirt, because you do/use many of the same steps.

How does knowledge analysis help us? Well, Ma Ironton now knows:  
1. The Learning Readiness Skills that she has to teach, keep strong, and review/firm before she teaches Pearl the steps in the routine. Earlier (teach) 🡪 Continually (keep strong) 🡪 Now (Review/firm).  
2. The large and small motor movements that she has to teach, keep strong, and review/firm before she teaches Pearl the steps in the routine.  
3. The steps and knowledge elements where Pearl may have trouble while Mom is teaching her the routine. Mom will pay attention to these as she teaches the routine---ready to repeat steps (“Let’s hold the cap again.”), to add prompts (for example, moving Pearl’s fingers, giving a suggestion—“Two hands.”), and to correct errors (“Pull down like this…..”).  
11. *Routines are skills or behaviors that have steps.* Obvious routines are (a) *everyday activities* (doing a meal, getting ready for bed or for school, and games, like checkers or kickball) and (b) *tasks in activities* (brushing teeth in the activity of going to bed, putting on a cap in the activity of getting dressed; putting food in the fridge in the activity of shopping; getting on a bicycle in the activity of going for a bike ride). Even very small behaviors have steps. We just don’t notice them. For example, imitating or reading a word--you have to say the sounds in order from left to right. Picking up a fork--you have to scan the table to locate the fork, identify it, reach for it, grasp it, and raise it. How we teach a routine, depends on (a) how many steps there are and (b) how much difficulty a child may have.

a. If there are only a few steps, or if the child is firm on all the parts, we might teach the steps all at once (*whole   
 task presentation*) with model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce or correct error-retest. Let’s say there are four   
 steps in a quick face wash: hold washcloth under the faucet, squeeze out some of the water, swab your face,   
 put the cloth down.

Mom uses model-lead-test/check to teach Jimmy all the steps at once.  
 Model (I do). “Watch. Momma wash face… Wash cloth in, in, in the water…. Now squeeze, squeeze,   
 squeeze, water comes out, out, out… Now rub face… rub, rub, rub… Now put wash cloth down, down,   
 down…. All done wash face.”  
 Lead (We do.). “Now Jimmy wash face with Momma… Wash cloth in the water (Mom helps Jimmy to hold   
 it.)…. Yes, hold wash cloth in, in, in the water … Now squeeze, squeeze, squeeze, squeeze, water comes out,   
 out, out water comes out…   
 …Now rub face… Yes, rub face… rub, rub, rub… …. Now put wash cloth down, down, down,   
 down…. All done wash face.” Big hug and banana chip.  
 Test/check (You do). “Now Jimmy wash Jimmy’s face. … Wash cloth in, in, in the water (Mom helps Jimmy   
 to hold it.)…. Yes, hold wash cloth in the water… Now squeeze, squeeze, squeeze, water comes out, out, out…   
 Now rub face… Yes, rub, rub, rub face…. Now put wash cloth down, down, down…. All done!” Big hug and   
 put on jammies before story.

*Notice repetition of “do” words during the actions! Squeeze, out, rub, down.* This is to help the child to connect   
 what she’s doing (in, rub, squeeze, down) and what is happening (water comes out)

b. If there are many steps, of if a child has trouble with method “a,” above, we could teach the steps one at a time, starting with the first, and then linking them together---*forward chaining*. Like this.

Step 1. Put placemat on table. Teach with model-lead-test a few times until firm.   
 Step 2. Put plate on placemat. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.   
 Start over: Steps 1 and 2 together. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.   
 Step 3. Put fork next to plate. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.   
 Start over: Steps 1, 2, 3 together. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.   
 Step 4. Put cup on the other side of the plate. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.  
 Start over: Steps 1, 2, 3, 4 together. Teach with model-lead test a few times until firm.

You would spread the teaching over a few days!

c. Or, we could teach the steps one at a time, starting with the last, and then link them together---*backward chaining*. For example, you could model how to do the four steps in setting a place at the table.   
 Then you model all the steps again and the child does the last step---the cup.  
 Then you model all the steps again, and the child places the fork and then the cup.  
 Then you model all the steps again and the child places the plate, the fork, and the cup.  
 Finally, you model all the steps again, and the child places the mat, the plate, the fork, and the cup.  
 In this method---backward chaining—the child always knows where each step is going (because she’s seen each one again and again) and what the finished task looks like.  
d. We could teach the *main step first* (pedaling a bike) and when the child is firm doing that step, we teach earlier steps (get on the bike, grasp handle bars) and later steps (steer, stop, get off the bike) until the child does them all.  
12. *When and where do we teach?* There are three main places.  
a. We hold **special teaching sessions** of 15 or so minutes several times a day, where, for example, we teach new skills and/or practice earlier ones, such as eye contact, small motor and large motor actions (reaching and placing objects, throwing a ball), play routines, motor and Verbal Imitation, and Functional Speech. *Daily special sessions give a child lots of practice and reinforcement.*   
b. We also teach during **everyday activities,** such as while your child is watching TV, during meals, while helping your child to get dressed, when you are playing; or when you are at the store or park.   
 (1) We can teach and practice *new skills* during everyday activities.  
 (2) And we can *generalize* skills taught during special sessions TO everyday activities where these skills are useful. For example, we might have special sessions to teach a child to watch, reach for, grasp, and pick up objects. Then we teach her to USE these skills to set her place at a table, to get dressed, or to play.

c. We also teach when the **opportunity shows up.** For example, we are on the look-out for behaviors to tag and reinforce---the child makes eye contact, watches what is going on, puts a piece of paper in the trash on request, comes when called, is walking calm with Mom, says a new word, uses words to ask for something instead of whining, puts her cap on by herself, kicks a ball, starts playing with toys, is calm and quiet for one minute, is standing still, and many more. If you want to, you can then *build* these behaviors in special sessions and/or during everyday activities. For example, play sessions, dressing, cooperating with several requests in a row (to build cooperation), imitating words, and using words to ask for things during meals.

Be on the look-out for desirable behaviors to reinforce and to build!

13. *Generalization****.*** As your child does a behavior more often, for longer times, and with more skill, we begin to tag and/ or reinforce the behavior in *other places*---while walking, in the park, at a neighbor’s house, when shopping. We also get *other persons* involved, doing some tagging and reinforcing.

When you work on generalization, make sure to start in places where, and with persons whom, your child is *likely to do the behavior.* Your child is comfortable. If we are afraid of swimming in the ocean, we don’t overcome it by starting lessons in a rip current.  
14. *How will we keep track of a behavior to see if it’s improving?* This is simple. But important. Here’s the general idea: count the behavior in some way; and/or write down your impressions.

a. *Count the behavior in some way when you’re interested in how much.* Here are examples.  
 (1) How many times your child makes spontaneous eye contact during the first 15 minutes of meals, and during 15-minute periods during the day. It might look like this.

Tommy makes spontaneous eye contact.

During supper [15 minutes]. During a session at table [15 minutes].

Monday **////////// ///////**

Tuesday **//// //////** Wednesday **////////////** **///////////**

(2) How many times your child starts to play with toys during the day.

(3) How many times your child asks for something with calm words (the whole day, if she hardly ever talks).

(4) How many times your child comes over to you to watch, or to sit near you, or to get you to play.

(5) How long your child usually watches another person doing something.  
 (6) How long your child usually plays with toys with you.

b. *Take notes when you are interested in how your child does a behavior.* For example:

Grocery Shopping Routine with Steven

Steps Comments

1. Walks from store door to cart. Does this, but I need to reinforce walking faster and walking straight to the cart.  
 2. Grasps cart handle. Does this. Now teach him to put hands at each end of the handle.  
 3. [I aim cart at aisle.] I say, Does this well. I’ve been reinforcing after five steps.  
 “Push!” Steven will push the Now I’ll increase to seven steps.   
 cart straight ahead.

4….

New Words and Sentences We Heard Tommy Say During the Day.  
 November 1. up, me  
 November 2. pick up, eat, more eat  
 November 3. mik (milk), seep (sleep), Momma, Da (Dad)  
 November 4. Pep (Pepper, the cat), pet, san (sandwich)

How intense are Tommy’s tantrums? Pop Tucker writes:  
 Before we started tag-reinforcing shorter and quieter tantrums. Wild.   
 After we started tag-reinforcing shorter and quieter tantrums. Mostly he makes a little noise.

Okay, let’s start teaching! Each next section tells exactly how to assess and to teach a Learning Readiness skill. Sometimes children learn quickly. Sometimes it takes more time. Chapter 8 at the end of this book tells what to look for to make it easier for a child to learn. It might be a good idea to *skim that chapter now, and also before you start teaching each skill, to remind you of what is really important.*

**Chapter 3 – Learning Readiness 1**

In this book, as said earlier, we work on the following Learning Readiness skills.

In *Learning Readiness 1*, a child learns the most basic elements of living and learning with other persons---responding to changes, eye contact, coming when called, walking with other persons, using good sounds/words instead of yelling and constant noises, cooperating with requests, and imitation.   
In *Learning Readiness 2*, we teach a child to sit and learn with other persons---another basic skill for living and learning.  
In *Learning Readiness 3*, we evaluate and teach large motor skills (jumping) and small motor skills (fitting objects together) that are the elements of play and daily-living skills. So,   
In *Learning Readiness 4*, we teach a child to play.  
And in *Learning Readiness 5*, we begin to teach more complex life skills.

*We start with Learning Readiness 1.* Here are the skills we’ll work on. The numbers (.1, .2, .3) mean the specific behavior. The behaviors are in a logical order starting with the most basic. For instance, cooperation with simple requests is last because cooperation **uses** the earlier skill elements. Your child can’t cooperate with requests (LR1.7) if she doesn’t pay any attention to what’s going on (LR1.1).

LR1.1. The Child Responds to Changes Around Him Or Her. The child turns to locate the source of sounds. The child watches what other persons are doing, such as when parents and other persons (siblings, visitors) enter, walk around, change what they are doing, or leave a room where the child is. This behavior is the foundation of everything else.

LR1.2 The Child Makes Spontaneous Eye Contact (Looks At People’s EyesOn His Own)*.*

LR1.3 The Child Makes Eye Contact on Request; For Example, When Someone Says, “Look At Me” Or Says the Child’s Name.

LR1.4 The Child Makes Eye Contact in Order to Get Natural Rewards.

LR1.5 The Child’s Behavior is Reinforced/Rewarded By Social Contact: Praise, Hugs, Play.   
LR1.6 The Child Uses “Quiet Mouth” and Good Sounds/Words.

LR1.7 The Child Cooperates With (Follows) Simple Requests.

**Big Idea!** Our goal is helping a child to be a more competent member of social groups and activities. We work towards this two ways.  
1. Early skills (for example, Learning Readiness 1) are elements of later skills (Learning Readiness 2-5). So, as we teach through this sequence, your child’s skills will be more complex and her ability to participate in everyday life will be increased. Think of the difference between early skills (like making eye contact, cooperating, and sitting with family members) and later skills that **use** these early elements (like talking, helping with meal preparation, and playing with others).   
2. In addition, after a child is doing well with a new target skill, and we start working on the next behavior, we keep the earlier behaviors going strong. How? Like this.  
a. Keep giving your child opportunities to DO the earlier behaviors, such as eye contact, cooperating, and putting things in their place.  
b. Keep reinforcing earlier behaviors, on an intermittent (once in a while) schedule.  
c. Teach your child to combine different behaviors into routines. Here’s an example, with skills we’ll soon teach.

Jimmy watches Dad walk across the room to the toy area. Dad says, “Hey, Jimmy!” Jimmy makes eye contact. Dad waves. Jimmy walks to Dad. Dad gives Jimmy a hug. Jimmy sits down next to Dad. Jimmy watches as Dad picks up a block. Jimmy uses small motor movements to pick up and stack a block with Dad. Dad says, “Your turn. Put on top.” Jimmy uses the same movements as Dad to pick up and stack a block by himself.

Do you see that doing these behaviors in a sequence keeps them all strong?

**Bonus Big Idea!** We go slowly and gently. We don’t make family life a nonstop teaching session. We have short special sessions to get weak behaviors moving. We also teach in routine activities and when opportunities come up. Small changes build. And *you must take breaks before you need them. Help each other.*

Note. The “formats” or teaching methods in this and in the rest of the books in the series are pretty detailed. They have been worked out over many years. They tell you exactly what to do. I could have given you just an outline of how to teach each skill, but I think (I know) that most readers would have a lot of questions. “What now?” “It’s not working? What do I do?” Consider the detailed instructions in automobile repair manuals---500 pages of them. Or the complex set of steps followed by surgeons. The work of families and teachers with children’s lives is surely as important as changing a water pump or removing a bunion.

Okay, Let’s Evaluate, plan, and teach the first skill in Learning Readiness 1.

**LR1.1. THE CHILD RESPONDS TO CHANGES AROUND HIM OR HER**.

This behavior is the foundation of everything else. It’s important that a child be “with it,” “tuned in,” awake and aware, interested in what’s going on. We’re looking for two things:

1. The child turns to locate the source of **sounds**.   
2. The child **watches** what other persons are doing, such as when parents and other persons (siblings, visitors) enter, walk around, change their activity, or leave a room where the child is.

We can teach your child to do these behaviors more often, more quickly, in more places, with more persons, in response to more things that are happening, and for a longer time.   
  
***Let’s Evaluate.***  
  
Spend a couple of days observing your child. Items 1 and 2, above, tell you what to look for. Summarize what you learned with the questions below.

(1) How often would you say your child turns to locate the sources of sounds or watches what other persons are doing? (Please circle the best description.)  
a. My child usually does these behaviors.  
b. My child usually avoids doing these behaviors, by turning his head away; or covering his eyes; or only looking out of the corner of his eye.

c. My child often seems not to hear or care about what’s going on.

(2) To what things---places, persons, activities, sounds---is your child usually responsive (turns to locate, watches) vs. unresponsive? Please list these?

Usually responsive Unresponsive

(3) Is there anything that **you** do that works pretty well to get (signal) your child to notice or examine something? For example, speaking to him; giving some kind of cue, like waving your hand or showing something he’s interested in.   
“Here’s a jelly sandwich!”   
“Look, a book of TIGER pictures!”   
“Listen to the fire truck!”   
“I think I’ll have some ice cream.”   
   
Please list these.

Note! If your evaluation shows that a child is weak on most or all of the skills in this skill area, then work on all of them in the sequence below. But if a child is fairly strong on most of the items, make sure to review and firm these items, but do most of your work on the weak ones,

***How to Teach This Behavior***

The basic method is simple. You might copy the table below, put it on the fridge where everyone can read it and discuss how to use it. Practice **BEFORE** you use the method with your child.

**Table 2. Teaching a Child to Respond to Changes Around Him or Her**

1. Our goal is teaching a child who is usually unresponsive to respond more often, and to learn that responding is followed by a treat and a pleasant activity.

2. *Lots of things that change during the day*. A siren outside, another tune comes on the radio, a pot is put on the stove, brother Bob comes in the front door, you walk into another room, someone moves a chair, Dad turns on the light in the kitchen, the refrigerator door closes. Even if your child usually does not respond to what’s going on—seems unaware, focuses on her fingers or some object, covers her eyes or ears—there must be times when she responds to some changes around her. *Be on the lookout for your child’s responses to these changes, and tag-reinforce + name the event.* “Train horn.” “Daddy’s home.” “DING! Pie is ready!”  
3. *You can engineer some changes.* Select a range of changes that you can make happen and to which your child may respond. Sounds in the kitchen (oven door, can opener); toy horn; bell timer; alarm clock; music comes on, music changes from soft to loud or loud to soft; music changes from slow tune to heavy metal; drums and other instruments; recorded sounds of dogs barking, cats yowling, coyotes howling, elephants trumpeting; persons talking; trains; airplanes; intense smells; some kind of background (cloth, art paper) with bright colors and colored objects; laser pointers, flashlights shining on the wall; lights turned on and off. Again,

Be on the lookout for your child’s responses to these engineered changes, and tag-reinforce + name the event. “Yes, LOUD music.”

4. *When your child responds to these and other changes, tag-reinforce it.* Then build on it. Name it. “Train horn.” Then show a picture of a train and make the horn sound.

Brother Bobby comes in the front door. He’s been coached to make obvious sounds. Nancy looks up and turns her head to these sounds.  
Mom says, “Yes, it’s Bobby…. Let’s go SEE Bobby.” => Take Nancy to brother. => Nancy looks, smiles, touches---does something in response to seeing her brother. => Tag-treat. => Bobby then interacts with Nancy. “Nancy! Big hug!” In other words…  
   
 A change in the => Child lifts or turns => Tag-treat + => Interact with Bobby.  
 situation. her head or body, “Yes, it’s   
 looks, makes a sound, Bobby.”  
 moves towards the  
 action.

5. Don’t push it and try to get your child to do much more than she usually does. If her point of success is simply turning her head and looking, we don’t push her to do more and more and more right now. She’ll resist.   
6. Gradually, we use your child’s **increased responsiveness** to build more behaviors---eye contact, sitting with us, cooperating, playing. Here are examples.

Ma Ironton and Pearl are in the living room play area. Pearl is banging and rubbing blocks together. Mom sits next to Pearl, building a tower of blocks that Pearl can easily see. Mom tells what she’s doing. “Pick UP block. PUT block ON top… Pick UP block. PUT block ON top, etc.” Then Mom says, “Get READY!”, raises her arm in a big gesture, pushes the tower down, says, “Blocks fall down.” Big noise and action. *Pearl turns to look*. Tag-treat + “Blocks fall down.” Pearl laughs. Mom takes Pearl’s response as a cue to do it again.

*Mom sees that Pearl WILL respond to her voice and big gestures, so Mom adds to the playing*. She stacks more blocks and tells what she is doing *in an enthusiastic way*. Each time Pearl looks, Mom tag-treats + “Pick UP block. Put block ON top.” After stacking a few more blocks, Mom says, “Get ready!!” Pearl looks => tag-treat. (“Get ready” is becoming a signal to Pearl that something big is coming. So, when she hears, “Get ready,” she looks.) Mom makes a big arm gesture and pushes the tower over. Pearl watches => tag-treat + “Blocks fall down.”

Now Pearl and Mom are in the bathroom in front of the sink and mirror. Pearl stands on a stool. Mom picks up a brush and brushes her own hair. “Brush…brush…. Brush.” Pearl is staring at her own fingers. Now she looks in the mirror at Mom. Mom says, “Momma brush!” Pearl’s eyes open wider. RESPONSE! Tag-treat + “Momma brush hair.” Pearl keeps looking at Mom bushing her hair. Mom starts to brush Pearl’s hair. Pearl smiles. She looks at herself in the mirror. RESPONSE! Tag-treat + “Pearl brush hair.”

Can you see where this will go when Pearl learns small and large motor skills, cooperation and imitation?.... Correct? Mom will *teach Pearl to brush her own hair* as Pearl watches in the mirror. This is a life skill. We teach these later in this book and in Book 6 of the series.

Dad and Nancy are at Massive Mart buying paint for the swing set. Nancy rides in the shopping cart, playing with her Darbie doll. Wouldn’t it be nice if Nancy noticed and then handled some of the items in the store? Dad could then teach her to use object-handling movements to spray paint a little! Dad rolls the cart up to the spray paints. He picks up a can of neon red, holds it near Nancy and shakes it. The ball inside rattles. Nancy looks up from Darbie. Tag-treat + “Red,” as Dad touches the red cap. Dad hands the can to Nancy. “You shake the can.” Nancy holds the can and shakes it. The ball inside rattles. Nancy smiles. RESPONSE! Tag-treat + “Shake shake.”

**Dad and Nancy turn this into a store activity**. The rule (the method) is something like,   
“I’ll roll us over to something interesting---electric drills, chrome pipes, boards stacked on shelves, nails in bins, copper plumbing parts, paint brushes. You look at these, touch these, hold these, maybe smile at these, and you get a tag-treat or a hug or a head pat.”

Nancy catches on pretty fast. This is more fun than Darbie, who is bald and missing a leg, anyway. Dad and Nancy do their “Let’s find something interesting” activity every time they come to Massive Mart and other stores.

Jimmy’s Dad gets a red-dot laser pen. He and Jimmy are in the living room. Dad turns off the lights and turns on the laser. He moves it around the wall. Jimmy’s eyes track it. Dad tag-reinforces (with treat) this. “Look at red dot.” Each time that Jimmy tracks the moving dot for three seconds (Jimmy’s point of success), Dad tag-reinforces (treat, hug) and verifies---“Look at red dot.” Then Dad turns off the laser, waits 10 seconds, and shines it on a different wall. Jimmy turns to the red dot. His eyes track it. Tag-reinforce. “Look at red dot.” After a few more, *Dad shows Jimmy how to use the laser.*

Dad and Jimmy do regular sessions teaching Jimmy to respond. Dad engineers a dozen or so changes over 15 minutes. When classical music switches to drums, Jimmy looks at the speakers. Tag-treat + “Drums.” Dad takes a small drum out of the toy box. He models how to drum. Then Jimmy drums…. In a few minutes, Dad blows bubbles. Jimmy laughs. Tag-hug + “See bubbles.” After a few repetitions in different parts of the room, Dad shows Jimmy how to blow bubbles.

Tito has a lot of language, reads, solves math problems, is a wiz with computer games, and does most self-care routines pretty well. But he’s a little “off” on certain social behaviors—such as being *socially responsive*. And he knows it. In my opinion, it’s up to Tito to decide if he wants to work on these.   
“Yeah, I like myself the way I am, but I guess it’s better to use a handkerchief than to pick your nose. Why be gross and then everybody goes ‘Eeeeuuu’, Tito’?”

Pop: “Tito, my son.”  
Tito: “Yo, Pop.”  
Dad: “You know when I came in the front door earlier?”  
Tito: “Yeah.”  
Dad: “Well, I **looked** at you working on your lap top, and I said Hi, but you didn’t look at me. How come?”  
Tito: “Huh?”  
Dad: “Listen. I could have snuck up and flapped a pie in your face.”  
Tito: “You’re weird, Dad.”  
Dad: “My point is, it’s a good idea to look up when someone comes in or is moving around the room, or is leaving. It’s polite. Besides, you have to be on guard against flying pie.”  
Tito: “Here we go with tag points!”  
Dad: “Yes. Remember when we used to tag it when your shirt was tucked in and your pants were pulled up and your hair was nice and neat? Now you are a sharp guy! Kids at school no longer say, ‘Did you just climb out of a dumpster?’ By tagging sharp-dressed behavior, you became a sharp-dressed guy.”  
Tito: “Okay, let’s do it. How about this? The tag point is, Dad in say Hi.”  
Dad: “Someone comes in a room, we look at them and say something to them?”  
Tito: “You got it.”  
Dad: “Okay, let’s practice. Later, YOU keep track of how many tags and ‘atta boys’ you get on this bracelet with beads---this tagulator. You move a bead from the top of your wrist to the bottom each time you get a tag. Ten tags and you get a pie in the face. Or, we play chess.”  
Tito: “You’re on.”

*Dad and Tito practice the whole routine.* Dad comes into the room. Tito looks up and says “Hey.” Dad tags the response with a finger pop and “Atta boy” (which Tito likes to hear), and Tito moves a bead along the wrist band. They do this for a few days and then work on generalizing this behavior to other persons and in other places.

**Your turn.**1. Please list some examples of things that happen (changes) to which your child can easily respond—because the things are nearby, obvious, and maybe interesting. Also list changes in persons, lights, sounds, and smells that you can engineer.

Natural changes Engineered changes

2. How will you tag, reinforce, and verify?

3. How might you follow up your child’s response? Could you show an object that made the sound? Pick up the child who looked at you when you came in the room? Teach the child to interact with the object? Make it a play activity?

4. How will you measure this? (You could make a note each time on a piece of paper.)   
 a. What was the change? Sound? Light? Movement? Person’s actions?  
 b. How did the child respond?  
 c. How did you build on this?  
 d. How did your child respond when you tried to build on her response?

Days What Change? Child’s Response How We Did or Will

Built on the Child’s Response

Now you can tell if (1) your child responds a little more each day; and (2) responds to more things. Just make a list and you’ll see.

Okay, please use the methods above and start teaching in short sessions, in everyday activities, and when opportunities come up.

*You want the child to make some kind of “attention” response to at least half the eye-catching or ear-catching changes around her---*someone enters or leaves the room, a door opens, the doorbell rings, an airplane flies overhead, someone says the child’s name to her. *It might take a few weeks for this behavior to increase a good deal*.

When your child is responding to many different things much more often, start working on spontaneous eye contact---which is next.

***How to Keep This Behavior (Responding to Changes) Going***

When we start working on the next skill---eye contact---we don’t just forget about this new behavior. We keep this behavior going strong. How? We  
1. Continue to show the child interesting things.

2. Continue to draw the child’s attention to something that’s happening---by pointing, gently turning her head, telling what’s happening.  
3. Are on the lookout for when a child responds to things that are happening.   
4. Keep on tag-reinforcing this behavior.

5. Try to get the child to interact with you and/or with the thing that changed. For example, imitate the sound of an airplane.

**What Do We Teach Next?**

We just taught a child LR1.1; we increased how often a child turns, looks, listens, and maybe moves towards “something that happened.” In other words, “responsiveness.” Now we will build on responsiveness and teach a child to *respond to other persons in particular ways.* What ways? These…

LR1.2. Spontaneous Eye Contact.   
The child looks other persons in the eye. Human beings use this behavior to “ask” other persons to interact, and to “tell” other persons that we are paying attention.

LR1.3. Eye Contact on Request.

The child makes eye contact when another person says something like “Look at me” or says the child’s name. This behavior is used to “tell” other persons that we heard them and are ready to interact with them.

LR1.4. Using Eye Contact to Get Natural Rewards.

For example, the child makes eye contact to “ask” another person to do something for her, such as open the back door or help with a task.   
4. Being Reinforced/Rewarded By Social Contact: Praise, Hugs, Play.

Social contact is rewarding to a child when the child goes to other persons for comfort or play, or smiles when he sees or interacts with a person. The child is developing sentiments or affections that help the child bond with other persons.

These next four skills will help a child learn to cooperate with requests, to sit and learn with other persons, to play, and to participate in daily life. The first of these skills to work on is LR1.2 Spontaneous Eye Contact. The Child Makes Eye Contact (Looks At People’s Eyes)On His Own*.*

**LR1.2 SPONTANEOUS EYE CONTACT. THE CHILD MAKES EYE CONTACT (LOOKS AT PEOPLE'S EYES)ON HIS OWN*.***

Please practice each method below—while you are reading about it, and then again when you have finished—until you are fluent; that is, you have the moves down and feel comfortable. You don’t want to be practicing ON your child.

You’ve just increased how often your child responds to a variety of changes around her. Now we focus on a special response to other persons---namely, eye contact.

A definition of this target behavior is: *the child looks you in the eye on his own*. This is an important behavior. It is part of *paying attention* to others. Also, in everyday life, we use eye contact as a *signal.* For instance, we signal people to talk to us or come over to us by making eye contact with them. So, our goal is to teach your child (if she needs it) (1) to make eye contact on her own more often and (2) to hold her gaze for a longer time. You want her to *use* eye contact to signal others, and to learn that when others make eye contact with her, it is *her* signal to do something; for example, to follow a direction.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

You can watch for this behavior during everyday activities and teaching sessions. (Circle as many as apply, and underline.)

(1) How often would you say your child does this? (Please underline one.)  
My child (needs to do this a lot more often; needs to do this a little more often; does this as much as most persons).

(2) My child holds his gaze for 5 seconds or so (often; once in a while; only makes eye contact for a second; does not make eye contact).

(3) My child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) "avoids" looking at a person's eyes by looking out of the corner of his eyes, looking away, or covering his eyes.

(4) My child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) seems to be “lost in thought" or not to notice or care that people are there.

(5) My child makes eye contact (anywhere and with anyone; in most places and with most people; only in certain places or with certain people; does not make eye contact yet).

Okay, so let’s mark what we need to work on below.   
1. Look directly at another person’s eyes more often?  
2. Make eye contact more often with family, with certain other persons, in certain places, in more places?  
 (With whom? Where? When?)

3. Hold gaze for a longer time?  
  
We’ll work on these in the next sections.

***How to Increase Spontaneous Eye Contact***

You might copy the table, below, and post it where everyone can read it, discuss how to use it, and practice until fluent and confident.

**Table 3. Basic Method to Increase Spontaneous Eye Contact**

1. We’re going to tag and reinforce this behavior when it happens during everyday activities (the child makes eye contact when you say, “Do you want more milk?” or while you are helping her into her pajamas), and as opportunities come up (for example, you walk into a room and your child makes eye contact).

2. You’re *not* asking the child to look at you, but just *waiting* for him to look at you on his own.

3. At the start, we’ll use a tag (click) and treat (one your child **really** likes and that you can give instantly!)on a *continuous (every time) schedule,* to show him that people will *react* very quickly and always to this behavior. Then, each time he makes eye contact, no matter where you are with him, (1) quickly tag it (with the click), and (2) instantly give him the bite of food, and at the same time (3) verify with “Look at (Mom, Dad, etc.).”

Child makes eye contact => Click + treat + “Yes, look at me.”

This *verification gives your child the name for what he’s doing.* Once he learns the name of the behavior, you can USE the same words to signal/request eye contact. [Please read that line again.] That’s how we’ll teach your child to cooperate with requests---in the next section.

4. For some children, tag-treat means putting the bite in their mouth (for example, with a spoon) to make sure the behavior is reinforced fast, BEFORE he does something else (like looks away), and THAT is reinforced! In fact, if the child is across the room when he makes eye contact, tag the behavior and *run* across the room to reinforce the behavior. It is a good idea to wear an *apron* (for instance, a carpenter's apron) loaded with the small pieces of food rewards.

5. Work on eye contact in *natural* ways.   
a. Make it fun. For example, tag-treat eye contact when you are roughhousing with the child, when he is taking   
 a bath, or during free time.   
b. Besides food, use *Activity Rewards.* For example, when your child is doing a behavior sequence with you (for   
 example, making a sandwich, getting a coat on to go outside) *pause the sequence* and require your child to   
 make eye contact before you let him finish the sequence and get what it is he wants. For example,  
 Pearl is trying to get out the door. Mom comes over and looks at Pearl’s eyes, but does not open the door   
 until Pearl makes eye contact back.   
 (Note: Mom already increased how often Pearl responds to changes around her (LR1.1, above). So, now   
 Mom can point to her own eyes in an obvious way, to prompt Pearl to look at Mom’s eyes.   
  
 Likewise, Pop St. Vincent waits until Jack makes eye contact before Dad tosses him a ball or gives him a   
 piggy-back ride.

Steven’s Dad waits for eye contact before he gets down a toy for Steven or turns on the TV.

6. In other words,

a. Tag and treat any and all eye contact to teach your child to DO it more often.   
 b. Thenuse everyday activities to get eye contact to be a normal part of social interaction. After she looks at   
 your eyes, she gets to do a little of something she wants. We often USE eye contact to tell other persons that we want something. **As your child learns to use eye contact to get YOUR attention, that   
 will be an alternative to making noises and pulling on you.**

*Count* and *write down* the number of eye contacts your child makes during observation periods each day. For example, you might count eye contacts for four 30-minute chunks.

Eye contacts during Eye contacts during Eye contacts during family   
 special teaching free times. 30 minutes activities first 30 minutes  
 sessions

Monday  
 Tuesday  
 Wednesday  
 Thursday  
 Friday  
 Saturday  
 Sunday  
 *Do this every day and you can see if eye contact is increasing.*   
If eye contact is not increasing very much, please see Chapter…. at the end of this book to see how to make your teaching program fit your child’s learning needs even more.

***Extra Help to Teach a Child to Make Eye Contact: Add Prompts and Sit-down sessions.***

**Prompts**

If your child *avoids* looking your way, or if the number of eye contacts does not start increasing in a few days, *prompt* eye contact in one or more of the following ways:

1. *Hold* the bite of food in front of your face near your eyes to get his attention. You might move the food back and forth a little.  
2. Point to your own eyes with a “big” gesture.

3. Make a *noise,* such as tapping on the table.

4. *Peek* at him through a short cardboard tube of from behind your hands---“peek-a-boo.”

5. *Gently* turn his head or chuck him under the chin, but try this only a few times and only if the other prompts do not work. You can’t *force* eye contact.

Of course, *slowly fade out* your prompts as soon as the child begins to make eye contact more often. Let the tag-treat do the talking.

**Sit-Down Sessions**

Most work on eye contact should be done *away* from the session table, but if the child will sit with you, run short teaching sessions during the day, for 10 or 20 minutes, either during snack times or mealtime. *This is one time to count eye contacts!* [This is on the little table above.] If your child joins you at other tasks (puzzles, reading to the child) during these sit-down sessions, fine. Work on these activities and tag-treat your child *both* for doing actions in the activities (like working on a puzzle piece or turning pages) and for making eye contact. [Please read that line again.]  
  
 Jimmy makes eye contact with Mom. => Tag-treat + “Look at Mom.” => Mom holds up a block to stack. Jimmy looks at the block => Tag-treat + “Block. Take block.” => Mom helps Jimmy to hold the block. => Tag-treat + “HOLD block.” => Jimmy chews the treat. Makes eye contact. => Tag-treat + “Look at Mom.” [Please practice that!]

With a child like Jimmy, many desirable behaviors are being reinforced during the day (cooperation, making good sounds, play, getting out of the car, holding his spoon properly). But spontaneous eye contact is a new and a weak behavior, so we will use tag-treat-verification to make doing this behavior stand out to Jimmy.

If a child *will not* sit with you yet, don’t force it. Try this.

1. Tag-treat eye contact outside of sessions for a few days and give *big* treats/rewards *whenever she comes near you when you are sitting down.*

2. When she comes near you, try to *prompt* her to sit down with you.

3. If she does, tag-reinforce with a bite of food and verification (“Pearl, you are sitting with Momma”) every 20 seconds (more or less depending on how long your child usually sits with you---her point of success) for good sitting and also tag-treat eye contact.

4. If possible, have simple tasks for her to do with you once you have her sitting. Otherwise, there’s not much point in sitting! See the section on Learning Readiness 2 for how to teach sitting.

**Sessions For Meals**

For most children, tag/treating spontaneous eye contact in natural places and activities whenever and wherever it happens, is enough to increase this behavior. For a very uncooperative child who does many problem behaviors, however, it may not be enough. When he learns that you want him to look at you, he stops doing it or turns away. For such a child, do not nag---“Look at me. Look at me. Tommy, look at me. Hey, Tommy.” Your voice will lose its power as a signal. Instead, have sit-down sessions *during one* *meal a day.* Remember,   
1. You may have her food on a plate or in a bowl.  
2. It’s food she really likes.  
3. The spoon is loaded with a small amount—sometimes just the tip. You’re holding it up in front of your eyes—a few inches in front. Maybe you’re wiggling the spoon.  
4. When she makes eye contact, => tag, and deliver the food instantly, while she’s still making eye contact.   
5. If she has looked away already, you can’t give her the food! That would reinforce looking at something else. So,  
6. Repeat steps 3-4.

**Every Meal If Necessary**

If she still “refuses” to look at you, or if the number of eye contacts does not increase very much in a few days, run sessions for *every meal.* Mealtime sessions should last only a certain amount of time--say 20 minutes--and when the time is up, the session and the meal are over. Of course, *no food between meals.* Outside of meals you should still *require* eye contact *before* the child can have natural activity rewards.

**Handling Disruptive Behavior During Sessions**

If your child becomes very disruptive, either during sessions or during the day when you are requiring eye contact before he gets a natural reward, you can do five things. Try using the methods in the order below.

1. *Ignore* the behavior completely, and *wait* for the next eye contact to tag-reinforce.

2. Set a kitchen timer for a few minutes. Put it near the child, pick up the food and all other task objects (for instance puzzles), and *Walk Out* of the room. Come back and start again when the timer rings. If the child leaves the room or the table, ignore it; try again in an hour or so. Again, no nagging! You have what they child wants. All she has to do is come near or sit, and look at you, to get it. Disruptive behavior and leaving the table or room will be more and more **costly** as the child learns that these behaviors result in nothing. I know how this sounds! I and my colleagues way back when sometimes worked with a child all day like this for a week before the child finally sat down and started making eye contact. The children learned that the only way they would feel comfortable was to join another person.   
 **After that, they learned more skills pretty quickly!**

3. *Time out* the child in a time out room every time the disruptive behavior starts.

4. *Turn off the lights* in the teaching room when disruptive behavior starts. Either use a lamp, or get a silent switch to work with your hand under the table, a switch that turns off all the lights so that it is dark. Do not use this method, however, if the child is afraid of the dark. The idea is toteach her that she gets nothing for disruptive behavior, not toscare her to death. Turn the lights back on when the child is quiet.

5. *End the session* as soon as a disruptive behavior starts, and have the child wait until the next meal before he gets a chance to earn food rewards. Yes, he’ll get hungry and cranky. *But all he has to do is look at your eyes to get all the food and social contact he wants!*

Remember: you want sessions to be enjoyable. *Prompt* the child (at first) to make eye contact so that it will be reinforced. And if he does not earn many treats/rewards during a session, have the next one a little *earlier.* The idea is to increase spontaneous eye contact and cooperation, and replace some problem behaviors, not to starve the child! It should only take from a few days to a week of sessions for every meal (with *no food between sessions!)* to get spontaneous eye contact on the increase.

*Count* and *record* the number of eye contacts each session [See the little table above.] so that you can see if the behavior is increasing. Try to keep sessions the same number of minutes each time.

It is hard for some families to do this. Remember: The point of using meals (and no snacks in between) is not to “teach this child a lesson!” **It’s to increase the value of the food reinforcer!** And to decrease the “fun” of “teasing” you by fussing, looking away, or running away. I’m not saying that every child must earn all his food. But there are some children who have been so uncooperative for so long, and whose desirable behaviors are so few and far between, that unless a strong method is used from the beginning, their education gets nowhere. I have seen and worked with many children for whom no past method did any good, but those children settled down and started to learn desirable behaviors after a week of finding out that *no behaviors would be tagged and reinforced except the ones picked by their parents and teachers.*

***Increasing How Long a Child Holds His Gaze***  
Up to now, we’ll tag and treat eye contacts that are for even one second or less. This will increase the number of times your child makes eye contact. But when we work on other skill areas (Motor Skills; Motor Imitation; and Verbal Imitation), the child must make eye contact or look at you for a *longer* time. In other words, he must learn to *hold his gaze---to* ***watch*** your actions. So, when the number of eye contacts each day has increased, begin to *shape longer* eye contacts. How?

First, as your child looks at you more often, *some* eye contacts are going to be longer than one or two seconds. This means that there *will be* longer eye contacts for you to tag-treat. So, *just raise the tag point a little---tag-reinforce when the child holds his gaze for* ***a little longer than usual.*** In other words, *hold out* on the tag-reinforcement until you get an eye contact that is a few seconds longer. For instance, if she looks away while the food is moving to her mouth, pull the food back and prompt her to make eye contact again by holding the food near your eye. When she makes eye contact again, *slowly* move the food toward her mouth and put it into her mouth only if she holds her gaze all the way down. [Please practice this.]

This does not mean that you should *always* hold out for longer eye contacts. There is not much point in the child holding his gaze and staring at you unless you are having him look at things or watch what you are doing. So *keep on rewarding* short eye contacts, but hold out for *some* longer ones, until *you are able* to keep the child looking at your eyes for about 5 seconds.

***What About Kids Like Tito, Jack, Mark, and Indra?***

Kids like Tito, Jack, Mark, and Indra have a lot of language, and are aware that they have some learning difficulties. They should be part of the planning process. It’s not only ethical to communicate with them in a way that matches their self-awareness and competence, but, in addition, making and carrying out a teaching plan is a useful skill. So, if your child is like Tito, Jack, Indra, or Mark, work with them to decide which target behaviors to improve, what starting tag points might be, what reinforcers might be best (“Yeah, I’ll work for that!”), and when to up-grade the tag point in light of progress.

***Spreading (Generalizing) Spontaneous Eye Contact to Other Persons and Places***

After eye contact has been increasing for about a week,  
1. Start having other persons tag-reinforce the behavior when the child looks at them.   
2. Add new places and times to run sessions.   
3. And tag-reinforce eye contact in new places (in the park, at the store) with praise, activities, and food (if still needed). For example, push the child on the swings or buy her a gum ball at the grocery store only after she makes eye contact.

Please make a list of persons (a child’s siblings, cousins, grandparents, a friendly neighbor) whom you will teach to tag-reinforce your child’s spontaneous eye contact. Also, list new places and activities. Teach other persons the methods using model (“Watch me tag and reinforce Pearl’s eye contact during this meal.”), lead (“Tag and reinforce Pearl’s eye contact with me while we help her to dress.”), test/check (“Your turn to tag and reinforce Pearl’s eye contact while you play.”). Coach them until they are good at it. You want your child’s learning mechanism to get the rule: “Looking at other persons is generally useful.”

**Table 5. Generalizing Spontaneous Eye Contact.**

Other Persons Other Places Other Activities   
 1. 1. 1.

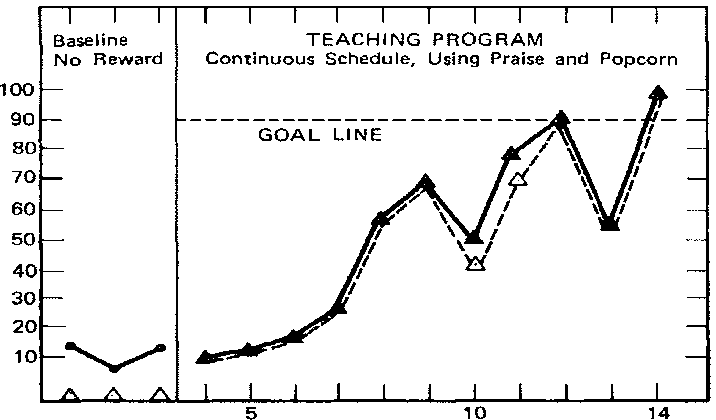
2. 2. 2.  
 3. 3. 3.  
 4. 4. 4.   
 5. 5. 5.

In summary, your goals are to (1) increase spontaneous eye contacts to about forty in 20-minute sit-down sessions, and two per minute in other settings; (2) teach your child to hold his gaze on *some* eye contacts for at least 5 seconds; and (3) teach your child to make eye contact with other persons, in other places and times, during routine activities, and for natural Activity Rewards. When your child reaches these three goals, begin to do two things:

1. *Slowly* put spontaneous eye contact on an *Intermittent Schedule,* using food less and less, praise and activities more and more.   
2. Work on the *next* target behavior, which for many children will be eye contact on request.

Figures 1 and 2 show how spontaneous eye contact was increased in a home program run by Jimmy’s mother. Figure 1 is for *any* spontaneous eye contact, no matter how short. After Day 14, these had increased enough, so Mom began having Jimmy hold his gaze on some eye contacts for at least 5 seconds. Figure 2 is for the longer eye contacts. This was all done *outside* of sessions.

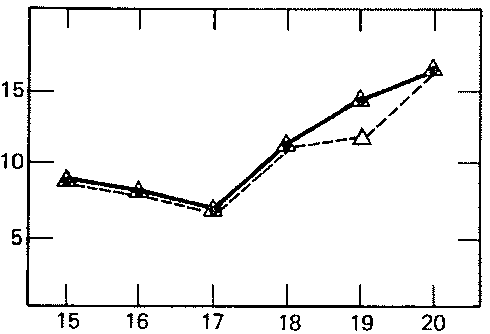
**Figure 1. Spontaneous Eye Contacts**

   
 Spontaneous eye

contacts   
   
 Tag-reinforcements

Days

Figure 1 shows the Number of Spontaneous Eye Contacts for Jimmy Maretti.   
Parents counted eye contacts for a few days before they started tag-reinforcing it (called “baseline”). During the teaching program, eye contact was tag-reinforced on a Continuous Schedule with praise and small bites of popcorn. Eye contacts were tag-reinforced all day but were counted only in the afternoon for one hour.

**Figure 2****. Longer Eye Contacts**

Longer   
 Spontaneous   
 Eye Contacts  
 Tag-  
 Reinforcements  
   
   
 Days

During the teaching program, Jimmy’s Mom held out on some tag-reinforcement until Jimmy made eye contact for 2, 3, 4, and finally 5 seconds. These longer eye contacts were tag-reinforced on a Continuous Schedule with praise and popcorn. This was done all day, but eye contacts were counted only in the afternoon. Figure 2 shows the number of longer (5-second) eye contacts per hour.

***How To Keep This Behavior Going***  
Easy. When you’re working on the next behavior---eye contact on request---you  
1. Stay on the lookout for spontaneous eye contact.  
2. Tag-reinforce it on a variable (once-in-while) schedule.  
3. Sometimes use food reinforcers.

4. Continue requiring your child to make eye contact before she gets natural rewards, such as going outside, playing with her, a bath, a bath toy.   
5. When your child makes eye contact, act as if your child is inviting you to interact, and join her. This teaches her to use eye contact to gain natural rewards.

The next behavior is eye contact on request.

**LR1.3 THE CHILD MAKES EYE CONTACT ON REQUEST. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CHILD TURNS AND LOOKS WHEN SOMEONE SAYS, "LOOK AT ME," “LOOK,” SAYS THE CHILD’S NAME, SAYS “WATCH ME,” OR “LISTEN.”**

Increasing your child’s spontaneous eye contact (as we just did) makes your child more *available* for interaction. Now we teach a child to USE eye contact when other persons *call* for the child’s attention with certain signals or *social cues---*such as requests or saying the child’s name.

Making eye contact in response to these cues is the first step in many social activities. So, when a child is coming close to the goal of (1) about forty spontaneous eye contacts in 20-minute sessions, or about two per minute; (2) is making spontaneous eye contact a lot more often (as you see it) in natural settings; and (3) when some of these eye contacts are at least 5 seconds long, begin working on Eye Contact on Request.

A definition of this target behavior is: *the child makes eye contact within a few seconds after you say something like, “Steven, look at me,”* or “Look at me,” or “Listen,” or “Steven,” or “Watch.” For most children, increasing Eye Contact on Request will be easy, because you’ve already increased Spontaneous Eye Contact.

***Let’s Evaluate.***  
Watch for this behavior during everyday activities and teaching sessions. For example,  
(1) When asked tomake eye contact (“Pearl, look at me,” “Tito, listen to this…,” “Jimmy…!” “Mark, watch…”) the child usually (makes eye contact; turns his head away; covers his eyes; only looks out of the corner of his eye; seems not to hear or care). (Underline as many as apply.)  
(2) The child makes eye contact on request (anywhere and with anyone; in most places or with most people; only in certain places or with certain people; does not make eye contact yet). (Underline one.)

Okay, so now you see where your child starts with this behavior. Our goal is to increase *how often* a child makes eye contact on request; to increase the amount of time the child *holds eye contact*; to increase the *variety of requests* or cues to which the child makes eye contact; and to *increase the situations* in which the child makes eye contact on request---persons, places, activities.

***How to Teach This Behavior***  
  
Here are a couple of ways to teach eye contact on request, as shown on Table 4. You might post this on the fridge so everyone can read it, discuss how to use it, and practice before you teach!!

**Table 4. How to Teach Eye Contact on Request**

1. Let’s say the **first** signal or social cue is “Look at me,” because that asks for a specific behavior.   
2. You could work on this behavior in (a) *special sessions* as you might do with spontaneous eye contact); (b) during everyday activities (“Nancy, look at me…. Want more potatoes?”); and (c) as the opportunity comes up during the day (dozens of times! “Tito, look at me comb my hair.”).   
3. Begin by waiting until the child is *just about* to make eye contact on his own. Then beat him to the punch by saying, “Mark, LOOK AT ME,” a split second *before* you think his eyes will meet yours. If he looks at you within 5 seconds after you ask him, tag-treat + “Yes, you are looking at Dad” (or something like that).

4. During a session or everyday activity, **don’t** ask your child to look at you 20 times in a row. That would be weird. Spread out your requests (“LOOK at me”) during the day, a few at a time, when he your child seems about tolook at you anyway. Then *slip in* the request. If he makes eye contact within 5 seconds, tag-reinforce.  
5. Also, begin to request eye contact when your child *wants something.* This is another example of *pausing a sequence* and teaching your child to insert a “normal” social behavior to keep the sequence going. For instance, stand in front of the refrigerator when you see him coming. Wait for him to start to look at you or for him to reach for the door. Then request eye contact: “LOOK at me” or “As soon as you LOOK at me, I will open the door.” Hold out on giving the natural reward (the next step) until he makes eye contact. Also, if he is working on simple tasks with you, request and get eye contact before you give him the next puzzle piece, block to stack, or question toanswer.  
6. As the number of eye contacts on request increases, begin to hold out for some that are 2, 3, 4, and 5 seconds long.   
7. Also, work on eye contact on request at other places and times and with other people.

***Adding More Social Cues***

When your child is reliably making eye contact when you ask her to “Look at (me, Mom, Dad, Sister Sue),” begin to add more kinds of request-signals---“Nancy”; “Watch”; “Listen”; “Look.” You could do this once in a while during the day (say, around 15 minutes); during special 15 minute sessions; and especially during routine activities.  
1. Start with a kind of warm up, using your *usual request*---“Look at me.”   
2. Then slip in ONE of the new cues. Add prompts in the form of the old cue to which the child already responds, and maybe a gesture. Do this a bunch of times and then *increase the delay between the new cue and the prompts*, until the child responds to the new cue BEFORE you give the prompts. Like this.

“Nancy.” => Wait O, 1, 2, 3, 4 => Child looks => Tag-reinforce- => Repeat.  
Maybe seconds, or use a verify. “Yes, you  
point toconstant delay of, for looked at my EYES   
your eyes. instance, 4 seconds, when I said Nancy.”   
 before you use the old  
 signal as a prompt,   
 “Look at me.”  
Do the above several times during a session, and a bunch of times spread out during the day, and especially during routine activities where eye contact on request is common.

3. When your child is responding to one new cue (“Nancy”) add another new one. “Watch this…” Sometimes use, “Look at me.” Other times use “Nancy” or “Watch this.”   
4. Tag-reinforce when the child looks within a few seconds after the new cue. If your child does not look, wait five seconds or so, and try again. If the child still does not look, say nothing, and go about your business. But *continue to tag-reinforce spontaneous eye contact---*which you already increased*.* Later, ask for eye contact. “Jimmy, look at Momma.” When your child is back to responding reliably to “Look at…,” try introducing the new cues again more slowly, *one at a time.*

Note: Please practice this! It’s simple, but it still takes practice to be fluent.

***Make It Natural***

Note: The usual purpose of asking for eye contact is to start some simple task (“Take out the trash, please.”) or an activity (“Time for supper”). So, in addition to tag-reinforcement, *do something with your child* when she looks on request.

“Jack, look.”

Jack makes eye contact with Mom.  
“I got you a new book on spiders. Let’s check it out.”

Don’t be surprised if your child begins to say the same cues to you. “Look” “Look me.” If so, continue the interaction. “Yes, I am looking at you. You want to play?”

***What If Eye Contact on Request Does Not Increase Very Much?***

Some children may *refuse* to make eye contact on request. When you say, “LOOK at me,” they turn their heads the other way, wiggle their eyes around, leave their seats, or whine and throw a tantrum. If your child does this, *run sessions during mealtime, as you may have done with spontaneous eye contact.*1. Wait until she is sitting quietly. [We work on sitting in Learning Readiness 2.] Wait and then tag-reinforce spontaneous eye contact, as you’ve done many times. This is a warm up.  
2. After she’s made a bunch of spontaneous eye contacts and seems to be “with you,” use the request--"LOOK at me," maybe with a prompt, such as holding a spoonful of food near your eyes, or a toy or book----*objects that you may have used before, to increase responding to changes* (LR1). If she looks within 5 seconds, tag-treat and praise her loudly and clearly. “Yes, **looking** at me.” If she does not look, *ignore* it and wait 5 seconds before you ask her again. Run sessions in the same way we talked about running them for spontaneous eye contact. That means:

Every bite.   
Every meal.

Nothing between meals.

Ignoring disruptive behavior, setting a timer and leaving the room, using time out, or ending the session till the next meal.  
Prompting the child (if needed) after you give the request.   
Requesting eye contact for natural rewards (child makes eye contact before you fill her milk glass) during the day.

Also, please see Chapter 8 to see how you might modify the teaching program to make it match your child’s needs even more.  
  
**What About Kids Like Tito, Jack, Mark, and Indra?**

Kids with a lot of language are part of the planning process. They help decide which target behaviors to work on, what the starting tag points might be (what they think they can do), which reinforcers might be best for them, and when to up-grade the tag point in light of progress.

***A Simple Way to Keep Track***

During sessions and outside of sessions, *count* the number of times you *request* eye contact and the number of times the child *makes eye contact on request.* Record these each day. For example,

Day Number of Number of   
 Requests Eye Contacts  
 1 30 4

2 27 6

3 29 5

4 26 10

5 27 16

6 26 16

7 27 22

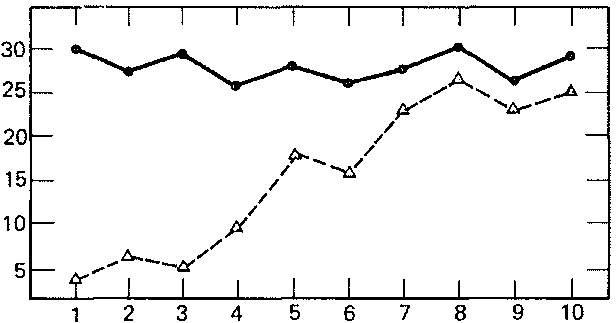
8 30 25

9 26 23

10 29 25

You could also make a chart or graph. Either way, you want the number of eye contacts on request to rise to about forty in 20-minute sessions, or about two per minute during family activities, and for the line to get close to the line for the number of requests. In other words, you want the lines to look something like those on the chart below. As you see, the number of eye contacts on request is increasing and is getting closer to the number of requests each day.

**Figure 3. Eye Contacts on Request**

Requests

Eye Contacts   
on Request

Days

***Spreading (Generalizing) Eye Contact On Request To Other Persons And Places***

Just as you did with spontaneous eye contact, when eye contact on request has been increasing for about a week, start having other persons tag-reinforce this behavior when your child looks at them. Add new places and times to run sessions. And tag-reinforce eye contact in new places (on the playground, at a neighbor’s house) with ++praise, activities, and food (if still needed). For example, turn the page of a story book only after your child responds to “Look at Dad.”

Please make a list of persons whom you will teach to tag-reinforce your child’s eye contact on request, along with places and activities. Teach other persons the methods using model (“Watch me tag-reinforce Pearl’s eye contact on request.”), lead (“Tag-reinforce Pearl’s eye contact on request with me.”), test/check (“Your turn to tag-reinforce Pearl’s eye contact on request.”). Coach until they are good at it. You want your child’s learning mechanism to get the rule: “Looking at other persons when they ask is generally useful.”

**Table 5. Generalizing Eye Contact on Request**  
  
 Other Persons Other places Other activities   
 1. 1. 1.

2. 2. 2.  
 3. 3. 3.  
 4. 4. 4.   
 5. 5. 5.

In summary, our goals are to (1) increase the number of eye contacts on request to about thirty or forty during 20-minute sessions, or about two per minute during everyday activities; (2) teach your child to make eye contact at least three out of four times that you request it (75 percent of the time); (3) teach her to hold some eye contacts on request for at least 5 seconds; and (4) teach the child to make eye contact on request with other people, at other times and places, during other activities, and for natural rewards. When your child reaches these goals, move to the next target behavior.

***How to Keep This Behavior Going Strong***

Keep Spontaneous Eye Contact and Eye Contact on Request going strong by having your child make eye contact before he gets *natural rewards* and by using tag-treats on an *Intermittent (Variable) Schedule.*

**LR1.4 THE CHILD MAKES EYE CONTACT IN ORDER TO GET NATURAL REWARDS.**

Work on this behavior when your child often makes Spontaneous Eye Contact and Eye Contact on Request. What is his eye contact getting him? It should be getting tags followed by treats, praise, verification (“Yes, you are LOOKING at Dad.”), and the chance to do something he wants to do (a natural activity reward—even as simple as having someone pass him a book)---to help your child to keep on making eye contact. Now it’s time to teach him *to use* his eye contact to get many *natural reinforcers* around the home and school—because we use eye contact as a signal that tells other persons that we see them, recognize them, understand them, hear them, or request something from them.

Remember! We teach a new skill AND we keep earlier skills going by   
1. Giving the child opportunities. “Look at me.” “Hey, what sound was that?” “Who just came in the house?!”  
2. Tag-reinforcing on a variable schedule.   
3. Using natural rewards. Child makes eye contact or looks at something => Build on it. “Let’s play.”

Make a plan to keep earlier behaviors going strong..

**Table 6. Keeping Earlier Behaviors Going Strong**

Please list how will you give your child opportunities to DO the behaviors you just taught---Responding to Changes, Spontaneous Eye Contact, and Eye Contact on Request? How will you tag-reinforce these behaviors? How can your child use these behaviors in daily life?

1. Child Responds to Changes.

2. Spontaneous Eye Contact.

3. Eye Contact on Request.

You might tape your list to the fridge door to remind everyone what to do. Add to it as you get new ideas.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

Observe your child for a few days, and think about what you already know of her behavior. Here’s the evaluation item.

The child makes eye contact as a **signal for** **other persons** to come to him, speak to him, open the door, hand him a piece of a puzzle he is working, help her put on her rain boots, get him a cookie, and many more. *All of these are natural rewards or reinforcers for making eye contact*. (Circle as many as apply, and underline.)

(1) Child does this (often; sometimes; rarely; never) to get (many, a small number of, very few) natural rewards.  
(2) Child needs (no prompting; a little prompting; a great deal of prompting) to get him to make eye contact before he is given natural rewards he wants.  
(3) Instead of making eye contact as a signal to get people to do things, the child (gets things he wants himself; pulls and pushes; whines or throws tantrums; covers his head; looks out of the corner of his eye; looks away). (Underline as many as apply.)  
(4) Child makes eye contact to get things from (just about anyone; most people; only certain people; no one yet).

We talked about this before. *From now on, be sure that your child makes eye contact before you give him what he wants.* This will often happen in a sequence, where your child takes you by the hand, points, or tells you to do something. Instead of just going with the child or giving her what she wants, *pause the sequence* and either wait for your child to make eye contact, or request eye contact. “Look at me.” You might prompt this by pointing to your eyes. In summary, no going with her just because she pulls on your sleeve or takes you by the hand; no giving him a snack because he gets into the cupboard and takes out the pudding; no turning on music for her because she is whining for it. Instead, *have your child back up in the sequence and try again, but he has to at least make eye contact and, if he can talk, he must ask in the right way---with a sound or word.* [“Good sounds and words” is LR.6.] Here are examples.

Steven Rogers pulls on Ma Rogers’s sleeve. Ma stands there and waits for him to make eye contact without pulling on her. Then she says, “Yes, look at Momma. Now we go.”   
   
Nancy is whining for music. Pop Brown walks away into the kitchen and gets a beer. Nancy comes to him. Pop says, “As soon as you **look at me**, I will turn on music.” Nancy looks at Pop’s eyes. Pop pats her head and says, “Yes, you LOOK at me.” Then he turns on the music.

Note. This will only work if you’ve already taught your child to make spontaneous eye contact and eye contact on request--above!  
   
Do this as much as you can during the day. If your child learns to make eye contact to get natural rewards, it will be easier for her to learn to use speech to get natural rewards. You could measure this behavior by counting the number of times during an observation period that your child makes eye contact for a natural reward. *Your goal is for the child to make eye contact (if she cannot talk) for just about everything she wants.*  
It would be good to make a list of natural rewards that your child will earn only when she makes eye contact and/or asks in some desirable way---such as with part of a word.

**Table 7. Natural Rewards My Child Will Get Only After He or She Makes Eye Contact (and Perhaps Asks for in Some Desirable Way)**

Help him get dressed.  
Open a door for her.  
 Get her something from the fridge.  
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.  
9.  
10.

After you are pretty good at pausing sequences and having your child make eye contact to get what she wants, make sure to teach other persons to do the same thing. Eye contact is a big part of how we interact with other persons. Teach these persons the basic method, using model-lead-test. Do NOT let other persons give your child natural rewards (opening a door for your child, playing with your child, helping your child do something) because your child seems to want it (“But she looks like she’d love a cookie.”) or needs it (“But she needs help with that coat.”). This will undo your hard work.

**Table 8.** **Other Persons Whom We Will Teach to Help Our Child to Make Eye Contact to Get Natural Rewards** Neighbor kids.  
 Friendly store clerk.  
 Cousins.  
 Grandparents.  
 1.  
 2.  
 3.  
 4.  
 5.   
 6.  
 7.  
 8.  
 9.  
 10.

1. Making eye contact is a signal to get other persons to respond---to help, come, hug, get something, play. Keep it going by continuing to require your child to make eye contact before you respond. Either wait until your child makes eye contact; or say “Look at me.”

2. Help your child to do this behavior in more place, with more persons, and to get more natural rewards---going with him, playing, helping.

Remember to see Chapter….. to help you to see how to improve your teaching program for any skill.

Now let’s work on the next skill.

**LR1.5, THE CHILD’S BEHAVIOR IS REINFORCED/REWARDED BY *SOCIAL CONTACT*: PRAISE, HUGS, PLAY.**

Yes, you might use food treats at first to strengthen desirable behaviors. But it’s important for your child also to like/do things to get/be reinforced by more common reinforcers. Otherwise, she only does things to get food!

***Let’s Evaluate*.**

What does your child do when he is praised, hugged, cuddled, picked up, or engaged in physical play(possible Social Rewards) for some desirable behavior? (Circle as many as apply, and underline.)

(1) The child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) shows that he likes social contact by smiling, laughing, hugging you back.   
(2) The child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) repeats the behavior that you praised or hugged him for doing. [Please underline one.]  
(3) The child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) comes to you or to other persons to get hugs, head rubs, play, cuddling, go somewhere with him, and other kinds of social contact.

Please list which of these kinds of social contact, if any, are the most rewarding, judging by how often your child tries to get these contacts and how he responds to them.  
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

***How to Teach This Behavior***

If praise, hugs, and other social contacts *are not* Social Rewards/reinforcers for your child, you can make them learned rewards by praising, hugging, cuddling, playing with (etc.) your child *just before* you give her something that is *already* a reward for her (see Chapter 6 of Book 1 on *Teaching Readiness and Tools for Teaching*). The sequence is:

Desirable Behavior (at the Tag Point) => Click => Hug, praise. => Treat  
 [The click and social contact become reinforcers because they **tell** the child that a treat (already a reinforcer)   
 is on the way.

Keep track of your child coming to you for smiles, hugs, head rubs, playing, being read to, going with you, and other possible social rewards. You could make a list, as shown below. When you notice a NEW one, add it to the list.

“Nancy wants me to pick her up and dance with her! Okay, here comes John Travolta.”   
“Mark wants us to bump heads, like our cat, Master Chief, does.”   
“Jimmy is into back rubs lately.”  
“Tito likes the sound of ‘Tito the Bandito.’”  
  
*Now you know what else---besides food treats---to use!*   
“As soon as we put your shoes on, Nancy, we’ll dance to Stayin’ Alive.”

**New Social Rewards We’ve Noticed**

Examples: Tickle her ear. Brush her hair. Lift her way up.

Monday.   
 Tuesday.   
 Wednesday.  
 Thursday.  
 Friday.  
 Saturday.  
 Sunday.  
 Etc.  
Now you know more ways to reinforce!

***How to Keep This Behavior Going Strong***

Easy. Continue to connect social contacts that are NOT yet rewards (reading a story, rinsing dishes) with other events that already are rewards or reinforcers---head rub, big hug, “THAT’s the way!”, “I love it when you…,” food, picking child up, rough-housing, playing.

***Adding More to Your Sessions Now That Your Child Is Sitting And Making Eye Contact***

Okay, you’ve been teaching your child to make spontaneous eye contact and eye contact on request in everyday situations and in sit-down teaching sessions, where your child can get a lot of practice and reinforcement. It should take a couple of weeks or so for your child to do these behaviors a lot more---as the charts above showed. *Now it’s time to begin teaching your child how to interact with you by adding simple motor-play tasks to your sessions*. Yes, you haven’t yet worked on the other Learning Readiness skills, such as Quiet Mouth and good sounds/words, or cooperation with simple requests, but if you CAN add teaching/playing with toys and other objects (spoons, cups, egg beaters, puzzles, napkins to fold, pictures) to your sessions on eye contact, do so. The section entitled, “Teaching Your Child How to Interact (Learn) With You Using Toys And Other ‘Manipulatives,” in Learning Readiness 2, shows you how. **Feel free to go there now and try** doing what Pop Rogers and son Steven are doing. However, you may find that your child is not yet ready to focus and to work on tasks. Too little cooperation; doesn’t sit and pay attention for very long. No problem! Just keep following our sequence of skills. We will soon be working on large and small motor skills and play.

**LR 1.6. TEACHING “QUIET MOUTH” AND GOOD SOUNDS/WORDS**

Some children seem to make noise constantly. Other children yell and make noises in “bursts” (minutes at a time) many times a day **or only at certain times, such as when they are bored or stressed**. The opposite, desirable behaviors are “Quiet Mouth” and Good sounds/words. Let’s Evaluate. and teach these in two parts: (1) decrease noises and increase Quiet Mouth; then (2) increase good sounds and words.

**Part One: Noises Vs. “Quiet Mouth”**

# “Quiet mouth” is just that. A child is not making the movements of lips and vocal cords that produce noise, but is making the movements that produce quiet---movements such as relaxing his throat and maybe closing his lips.

# Note: You can use the methods in this section for helping a child to replace tapping, clapping, and banging (“Noisy hands”) with “Quiet hands.” ***Let’s Evaluate.***

(1) What kinds of noises does your child make? (Circle as many as apply.) Please try to write out what the   
 sounds are. I know it sounds silly, but this will help you to remember that “her constant noises” are just   
 movements, and we can teach your child to change her movements.  
 a. Screams.  
 b. Yells.  
 c. Complains, moans, whimpers, cries.  
 d. Makes “weird” noises.  
 e. Other. Please write what.  
(2) How often would you say that your child makes noises? My child makes noises by screaming, yelling,   
 complaining, “weird” sounds (Please underline one.) almost constantly; many, many times each day; a few   
 times each day; almost never.   
(3) When does your child make these noises? (Underline as many as apply.) anywhere and anytime; when he   
 wants us to get something or do something for him; when he wants to get away from something or some   
 place, or wants us to leave him alone; when he is hurt; when he seems bored; when he is making faces,   
 spinning things, or “playing.” Anything else?  
(4) Your child may have a hard time not making noises, or stopping noises, in certain places (that are noisy? lots   
 of people?), or at certain times (bored? tired?), or during certain activities (when she wants something?).   
 Please make a list starting with places, times, or activities that are the toughest for you to get your child to   
 stop making noises. *It’s smart to start working on Quiet Mouth in places that will be the easiest.*  a.  
 b.  
 c.  
 d.  
 e.  
 f.  
 g.  
 h.

(5) Are you able to get your child to stop making noises for very long? How? (Circle as many as apply.)   
 a. Distracting or soothing him with a toy or activity or food.  
 b. Telling him to stop making noises.  
 c. Taking away what seems to be upsetting him, such as a task.  
 d. Leaving a place that seems to be upsetting him.  
 e. Rewarding a few seconds of Quiet Mouth.  
 f. Hugs or comforting.  
 g. Giving him what his noises seem to be demanding.  
 h. Other?

Is it possible that some of your reactions, above, accidentally reinforce noise making, as we discussed in   
 Chapter 10 of Book 1? If so, what will we do? Answer. We’ll use this section to replace noises with “Quiet   
 Mouth” and good sounds words!

# (6) What would you say is the usual amount of time that your child is quiet? (Please underline one.) a. Only one or two seconds, and then she starts up again. b. Maybe around 5 to 10 seconds. c. A minute or so. d. Five minutes or so. e. He’s often quiet for 15 minutes or more. *The usual amount of time your child is quiet is your child’s point of success. This—or a shorter time---is where we start to tag-reinforce, so that your child’s Quiet has the most chance of being tagged and reinforced.*

# ***How to Increase Quiet Mouth***

# Believe it or not, the teaching methods that help your child to replace “gaze avoidance” (not looking at other persons) with eye contact, will also help your child to replace irritating and constant noises with Quiet Mouth. Why? Because: 1. These are all behavior. 2. If a behavior is not reinforced, a person will do it less often. 3. If a behavior **is** reinforced a lot, a person will do it more often. Martha Gabler tells us how to teach a child to do Quiet Mouth instead of irritating and constant noises. I’m quoting from *CHAOS TO CALM: Discovering Solutions to the Everyday Problems of Living with Autism* (2013). [I added lines in **boldface**.]

1. **Noises, “Quiet Mouth” and “good sounds and words” are just behavior.**  
 “If my child is engaging in a ‘behavior,’ he is ‘moving’ something. If a child is wailing and crying, he is moving vocal chords and facial muscles…. The child is simply moving certain body parts, with a result that we don’t like. Once I had this concept clear in my mind, I was able to figure out how to reduce the unwanted movements (vocal chords and facial muscles) and increase desirable movements…” (page 18)

2. **Don’t react to undesirable behavior; instead, immediately tag-reinforce alternative desirable behavior.**  
“My approach for reducing crying, screaming and wailing was to **ignore** the wailing, **wait** for Quiet Mouth, **mark and reinforce** immediately, and **repeat** until Quiet Mouth was an established behavior.” (18) [Sound familiar? You know all about this.]

“Specifically, I waited for the vocal chords to stop moving, immediately marked that microsecond of silence,   
 gave a treat (“reinforcer”) to my child, then waited for the vocal chords to stop moving again.” (18)  
3. **Using TagTeach criteria.**

“Since I was marking and reinforcing Quiet Mouth, one would refer to Quiet Mouth as the ‘tag point’. The   
 tag point is a description of the precise aspect of the behavior we wish to increase.” (18)

“Let’s look at these criteria for the Quiet Mouth tag point:  
 1. What I Want: Quiet Mouth.  
 2. One Criterion: Yes. Quiet Mouth.  
 3. Observable. Yes. I can hear (and see) when the child stops screaming and has a Quiet Mouth. I could also   
 count how many instances of Quiet Mouth occurred in a period of five or ten minutes.  
 4. Five Words or Less: Yes. Quiet Mouth is two words.

“Depending on your child’s usual amount of quiet (point of success), the tag point could be one second,   
 two seconds, or longer.”  
4. **To tell or not to tell your child what the tag point is.**

“Once the tag point of Quiet Mouth was carefully defined, I got to work. In our situation, **I did not use   
 words** to describe this desired behavior to Doug.” (19)

“**The careful verbal phrasing of the tag point is a wonderful feature for learners who have   
language** and can use and understand words. It allows the learner to concentrate on just that single task and achieve success. Verbalizing the tag point is also a good focusing exercise for the parent, as long as the child does not react negatively to words. My son did not have the words and language skills to do this when we first started out with TAGteach. Even more, with his aversion to spoken language, using words was counterproductive.” (20)

With children like Jack, Tito, and Mark, who have a lot of language and are aware of “odd” things that they do, we would plan *together* how to replace noises with “Quiet Mouth.”

Dad: “Jack, you know how sometimes you make a noise when you are tense?”  
 Jack: “Yeah, I go OOoeee OOOeee OOOeee.”  
 Dad: “Do kids at school or in the neighborhood ever tell you to shut up?”  
 Jack: “Yup. A lot. I try not to do it, but I forget.”  
 Dad: “You want to do it less often?”  
 Jack: “Not sure I can. I keep trying.”  
 Dad: “Of course it’s hard. It’s a habit. Remember when I tried to quit smoking?”  
 Jack: “Yeah, but you finally beat it.”  
 Dad: “Only because I figured out HOW. Then it was easy.”  
 Jack: “How?”  
 Dad: “All day, I counted every time I wanted to smoke. I made a mark on a note card. Like this.   
 And I said to myself, ‘You don’t have to smoke. You just want to.’   
 “And every time I got that urge but did NOT smoke, I made another mark, like this.   
 At the end of the day, I knew how many times I had the urge and how many times I beat it. At the end   
 of the day, if I had beaten more urges than the day before, I gave myself a reward.   
 We can do the same thing with noises.”  
 Jack: “How?”  
 Dad: “Every time you catch yourself making a noise and you stop in two seconds, we mark it and you get a   
 treat. Repeat that…   
Jack: When I catch myself making a noise and stop in two seconds, treat!  
 Dad: “Also, every time a couple of minutes go by and you don’t make any noises, we mark it and you get a   
 treat. Repeat that…  
 Jack: If I don’t make noises for a couple of minutes, treat!  
 Dad: “And if you **do** make a noise and you **don’t** stop fast, we just let it go. Repeat that…   
Jack: If I make a noise and don’t stop, we forget about it. I get no treat.  
 Dad: “In other words, you get a little reward each time you make yourself quiet. Sound good?”  
 Jack: “Yeah.”  
 Dad: “Okay, **let’s write down what we’ll do, and then practice**. Remember, the tag point is when you   
 stop a noise in two seconds OR you don’t make any noise for two minutes. Can you do that?”  
 Jack: “Heck, yes. But I’ll still be tense, like when I’m in a new place or having trouble with homework.”  
 Dad: “I get you. **We’ll think of something else you can do that isn’t so noisy**. For example, when I’m   
 tense, I play with my Zippo lighter. It feels nice in my hand. You could play with something in your   
 hand. What?”  
 Jack: “How about that medal you got in Iraq?”  
 Dad: “You’d like to hold and feel that?”  
 Jack: “Yup.”  
 Dad: “Great. **Let’s get it and practice not making noise and instead rubbing the medal. And   
 practice stopping a noise real fast and rewarding yourself.”**  
5. **Point of success for the tag point.**  
 “I always **start a teaching session with a point of success**… I want my child to be able to perform the tag   
 point so he experiences a lot of success right away.” (19)  
 “…when I was in a room with my child and suddenly, for a split second, he stopped wailing, I **instantly   
 marked the behavior** (pressed box clicker to make sound), then reinforced it (offered my child a small   
 treat).” (20)  
6. **How often do you tag-reinforce Quiet Mouth? Every time at first; gradually more variable.**“…When I was teaching Doug a behavior like Quiet Mouth and I marked and reinforced it ***every* time** it   
 occurred, I was using a ‘continuous reinforcement schedule.’ A continuous reinforcement schedule is how   
 to build, or *increase*, a desired behavior .” (21)

“Once Doug was performing the desired behavior reliably, I changed to a less frequent schedule of   
 reinforcement. The next schedule is called a ‘variable’ schedule. This means that I will now reinforce Quiet   
 Mouth every once in a while, maybe **every other time** the child does it, then **every third time**, then every fourth time, and finally I will reinforce at **random intervals**. Also, I can change from reinforcing the   
 behavior with a candy, to **reinforcing with praise and attention.**” (20-21)

“Once the behavior is built, I monitor and reinforce it occasionally to keep it in good shape. When teaching   
 Doug a behavior, I think about the stage we are in: if we are building a behavior, I reinforce it every time. If   
 we are maintaining a behavior that he has mastered, I reinforce it occasionally and check to make sure he is still performing it.” (22)  
7. **What to do after the first tag-reinforcement of Quiet Mouth?**“Then what? I waited for the desired behavior to **occur again**…. How often did I mark the behavior? *Every   
 time the behavior occurs*. I wanted my child to learn that every time he demonstrated Quiet Mouth, a treat   
 was forthcoming! Doug quickly figured out that Quiet Mouth was a great thing to do to get treats, praise   
 and attention from Mom, so he started offering more of this behavior.” (20)  
8. **If you tag-reinforce even two seconds of Quiet Mouth, and your child stays quiet, keep on tag-  
 reinforcing it,** to teach your child to do Quiet Mouth for longer chunks of time.  
9. As your child does Quiet Mouth more often at her current point of success, or tag point (for example, two   
 seconds), ***gradually raise the tag point*.** Hold out for *slightly longer chunks* of Quiet Mouth. Tag and   
 reinforce after three seconds. When your child is often doing Quiet Mouth at three seconds, wait for four seconds of Quiet Mouth. Eventually, it will be minutes.

The same with Jack. When Jack is often and easily quiet for two minutes in a tense situation, Jack and Dad   
 decide to raise the tag point to two and a half minutes of no noises (and instead, holding Dad’s medal, if Jack   
 needs it).  
10. **When and where do you work on Quiet Mouth?**“While it might have been possible to do other things (tidy up, etc.) while waiting for a behavior to reoccur, I   
 found it was best to set other things aside, spend the time with Doug, and **concentrate on reinforcing   
 Quiet Mouth.**”(20)

In other words, be ready to tag-reinforce Quiet Mouth in two places.  
 a. Think of **“sessions”** where we’ll watch for, wait for, and tag/reinforce Quiet Mouth for 15 or so   
 minutes. For example, while your child is watching TV, during meals, when helping your child to get   
 dressed, when you are playing. *I would first do these sessions in the home, where YOU will feel more   
 confident.* Also  
 b. Think of **ANY times and places *that come up* in the house (at first)** when you will be on the look-  
 out for Quiet Mouth to tag and reinforce. For example, when your child is playing by herself, when your   
 child walks down the hall, when you ask your child to do something, and many more.

Caution! It’s probably **not** a good idea to start working on Quiet Mouth where or when your child has   
 often screamed and hollered---where he seems out of control, emotionally overwhelmed, as Martha Gabler,   
 in Chapter 10 in Book 1, described a mother and child at a sporting event. We want to **tag and reinforce   
 where your child will be successful right from the start**. This means.  
 a. Tag and reinforce the amount of Quiet Mouth that your CHILD usually *already does* (point of   
 success)---so that Quiet Mouth gets LOTS of tag-reinforcement. Tag-reinforce even ONE second if   
 that’s about as long as your child is quiet.  
 b. Tag and reinforce at *times and places where your child is* ***more likely*** *to DO the point of success behaviors.*   
 The idea is, if your child is really upset somewhere, and is making noises, tagging and reinforcing two seconds of quiet may not have much effect at first. Later, we’ll work on Quiet Mouth in tougher places.   
 See # 13 below.  
11. **Next,** **teach your child to do Quiet Mouth in response to a cue.** “My son could finally do Quiet Mouth and keep it up for several minutes at a stretch…. Now I wanted him   
 to produce that behavior ‘on cue.’ That means that if I was talking on the phone and Doug started to wail, I   
 would be able to say or indicate that I wanted Quiet Mouth Behavior, and he would do it.” (23)  
 Here are Martha Gabler’s steps for teaching a cue or signal for quiet.

**Table 9. Steps For Teaching a Cue Or Signal For Quiet**  
 Step 1. Here’s what we’ve **been** doing.

Child is quiet at first for even one second if that is his point of success. Gradually increase the tag point to 2,   
 3, 4 seconds, and longer. => Tag + Treat + Verify. “Yes, Quiet Mouth!”

Step 2. Now that your child is doing Quiet Mouth more often and for longer times, **add a “quiet” cue** *that   
 basically tells your child WHAT he’s doing.* Like this.   
  
 Child is quiet => Tag +“Shshshsh” (softly). Or “Quiet” (softly)  
 more often and and/or finger on your lips + Treat   
 for longer.

If your child STAYS calm and quiet after the first tag + cue + treat + verification, **keep doing** tag + cue + treat + verification after gradually longer chunks of quiet. For instance, you are taking a walk with your child….  
   
 Walking…..............…Walking…….……...Walking…………….. etc.  
 Child is quiet => Tag + “Shshsh” or => Still quiet => Tag +”Shshsh” or  
 for 5 or so “Quiet” (softly), “Quiet” (softly), and/or finger   
 seconds. and/or finger on your on your lips + Treat + Verification.  
 lips + Treat and  
 Verification.

*We have to follow the tag with the cue (“Shshshsh,” “Quiet,” finger on lips) and treat quickly.* If we wait too long, the child will not connect his quiet behavior with the cue because he’s not paying much attention to it. You want him to **feel** quiet movements and mouth positions, and to **hear** silence, **while** you say “Shshsh” or “Quiet,” or put your finger over your lips. Please practice this now.

Step 3. Now we *check to see that the cue works.* Wait for when:  
 (1) You need your child to do Quiet Mouth because you are on the phone, or you need to concentrate.  
 (2) Your child looks like he’s about to make noises. Or he  
 (3) Is making **little** noises. Or  
 (4) You are in a place or time when she often makes noises----but is not “out of control.”   
 Then **softly** SAY, “Shshshsh,”or “Quiet,” or put your finger to your lips. When your child responds to the   
 cue with even a **SECOND** of Quiet Mouth (because you want your child to do Quiet Mouth again and   
 again and again in this place) immediately tag and BIG reinforcement! And   
 Keep tagging => Giving the cue => Treating as long as your child is quiet for a few more seconds.

However, if you give the quiet cue and your child starts a noise or keeps making a noise, **ignore as usual**. Go back to Step 2, above, and tag- reinforce Quiet Mouth along with giving the cue. ***Now tag-cue-treat-verification for just a few seconds of Quiet Mouth.*** Then try step 3 again.   
  
  
12. **Generalization.** As your child does Quiet Mouth more often and for longer times, and begins to respond (becomes quiet) to the cue or signal, you (and other persons whom you teach how, with model-lead-test), can begin to tag and reinforce Quiet Mouth in other places---while walking, in the park, at a neighbor’s house, when shopping. *Leave for later the places or times where your child has been the most noisy because he wants to get away or is afraid.* If you are afraid of snakes, you don’t overcome it by handling rattlers.  
13. ***Quiet Mouth in tougher places.***Note: I would NOT work on Quiet mouth in tough places (where your child gets upset, or where she has done a LOT of yelling) UNTIL Quiet Mouth has increased a lot, and your child is responding to the “quiet” signal.   
 a. **Work on only one tough place at first.**   
 b. Make sure to tag and reinforce lots of desirable behavior---walking with you, eye contact, talking---to   
 get your child calm and expecting treats for quiet.   
 c. If you are trying to teach your child to handle stressful places, tag and reinforce lots of desirable, calm   
 behavior, and **leave in a short time** as long as he’s calm.  
 d. Give the quiet signal BEFORE he gets really noisy or upset.   
 e. Treat yourself!   
14. **How to keep track of the behavior.** Here’s a simple way.  
 a. Pick some times of day and places, and make a list.   
 b. Make a column for marking each episode of noise making. //// For some children, episodes might be   
 only a few seconds, but LOTS of them. For other children, usual noise episodes might be minutes long.  
 c. Make a mark in a column for each episode of Quiet Mouth. At the start of your Quiet Mouth program,   
 these episodes might be 1 second, or 2 seconds, or 3 seconds. Add a space to mark longer episodes as you   
 teach your child to do Quiet Mouth for longer times. Here’s an example.  
  
 Noise episodes Quiet 1 Quiet 2 Quiet 3 Longer Quiet  
 second seconds seconds \_\_\_\_\_\_ seconds

Monday.   
Breakfast

20 Minutes when child  
 is on her own.

In the stores.

There’s no need to be exact. Why not? Because you only want enough information to tell you whether   
 a. You need to tag-reinforce shorter Quiet Mouths because you are holding out for too much. Or,  
 b. You need to go back and teach the cue (Step 2) because your child is not responding to it. Or,  
 c. You can go ahead and reinforce less often, or raise the tag point to a longer amount of quiet, because   
 your child is doing Quiet Mouth a lot and for longer times. Or,  
 d. You can go ahead and work on Quiet Mouth in more places.

**Okay, let’s plan your teaching program.** Please skim Chapter….. for reminders.

Martha Gabler’s program, above, looks pretty simple to do. But that is because she didn’t tell us all the thinking that went into it, and all the changes she made until her program was working very well. Before WE start working to decrease noises and to increase Quiet Mouth, let’s think about the following parts of a teaching program.

**Table 10. Planning a Program for Quiet Mouth**Please read what you wrote in **Let’s evaluate**, above.

1. What noises do you want to replace with Quiet Mouth? [See your evaluation, above.]

2. Where will you start working to increase Quiet Mouth? [See # 10 in the section above. Remember, not a tough place at first.]

3. When will you have sessions where you focus on Quiet Mouth? During certain activities or times of day? [See #10, above.]

4. Think of other less-structured times to look for and tag-reinforce Quiet Mouth. [See #10, above. When your child is walking with you? Is playing by himself? Doing homework?]

5. What is your child’s point of success? For how long is he usually quiet? If your child doesn’t make noises all day long, but makes noises in bursts (for example, 10 minutes of yelling about homework), he still must stop for a few seconds DURING these bursts. So, a few seconds would be his point of success. [See your evaluation and # 5, above.]

6. So, given your child’s point of success, what’s the first tag point? How many seconds, minutes, etc., of quiet will you tag-reinforce? [See your evaluation, above.]

7. Does your child have enough language to plan the teaching **with her**? If so, write a script, as Dad and Jack   
 St. Vincent did. [See #4, above.]  
  
8. What device will you use to tag Quiet Mouth? What will you use for reinforcers? Treats? Hugs? Praise?   
 Activities?  
  
9. Write out how you will tag-reinforce? For instance,

Jimmy is quiet for two seconds => tag with clicker + banana chip + “Yes, quiet.”  
 [See #11, above.]

Remember to keep tag-reinforcing if your child keeps doing Quiet Mouth. [See #8, above.]

10. As your child does Quiet Mouth more often, what will be the next tag points? How much more quiet   
 before you tag-reinforce? [See #9, above.]

11. Remember to gradually tag-reinforce less often as Quiet Mouth increases. [See #6, above.]

12. Write out a script for what you’ll say to your child when you add a cue for quiet. [See #11, above.] You can   
 do it!

“When I (say ‘Shshsh,’ or say ‘Quiet,’ or do this [finger on lips]), we’ll do Quiet Mouth, like this (model closed mouth and no sounds).”

13. Where will you try out using the cue for quiet? [It is probably best to add the cue in the **same places** where you have been tag-reinforcing Quiet Mouth!]

14. What other places will you work on Quiet Mouth? Easier at first!! See #’s 12 and 13.]

15. How will you measure Quiet Mouth to see if your plan is working and to change it so that it more closely   
 fits your child’s learning needs? [See #14, earlier.] Please skim Chapter…..

Once your child seems to GET it (two weeks? Maybe more?) that making Quiet Mouth movements produces tag and reinforcement (that is, she’s does Quiet Mouth more often; she does Quiet Mouth and seems to anticipate the tag and treat; she does Quiet Mouth and looks at you, as if to say, “Notice that I’m quiet.”), it’s time for the second part---increasing good sounds and words. However, we have to keep Quiet Mouth going strong. How?

# 1. Tag-reinforce Quiet Mouth on a variable (once in a while) schedule. 2. If possible, teach your child to tag-treat her own Quiet Mouth. You could use a simple bead counter---tagulator. “Nancy. You are quiet and listening to the music. Tag yourself!”

**Part Two: Good Sounds/Words**

There’s nothing new here. We’ve been ignoring noises but tag-reinforcing Quiet Mouth. We want to increase Quiet Mouth because constant (or even unexpected bursts of) noise is stressful, and because your child can’t learn much when he’s focused on noise-making.*. We want to increase some form of speech as a desirable alternative to noises.* Depending on your child’s point of success, we might increase how often a child communicates with (1) **mouth movements**, such as wide-open mouth, as if to say, “I’m trying to talk”; (2) **parts of words** (“muk” for milk; “uh” for up); (3) **whole words** (“play,” “more”); (4) **phrases** (“Go out”); and (5) **sentences** (“What’s for supper?”).

If your child already talks a good deal, we’ll further strengthen speaking as an alternative to noises, angry voice, and whining. However, if your child has little speech and language, we’ll increase how often your child communicates with **some** form of speech, even if it’s mouth movements or word parts. This is just a small start to increase speech. Later books in the series---Verbal Imitation and Functional Speech---build on what we do now.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

(1) Think of good sounds/words your child already does (the point of success), as a place to start tagging and reinforcing.

Observe your child for a few days, and search your memory. Make a list using the items below, to describe your child’s current speech. We’ll use the list to find the point of success---the starting tag point---for your child.

My child’s most common **verbal behavior (speech)** is…

1. **Mouth movements. Opens his mouth** (as if trying to say aahh, or ee for eat), or **closes his mouth** (as if trying to say mmm for Momma). Please describe this. For instance,   
     
   “Pearl comes over to me, takes my hand, looks at my eyes, and opens her mouth wide. I’m pretty sure she’s trying to communicate that she wants me to go with her.”

b. **Parts of words.** Sometimes uses parts of words to communicate. “ma” for “Mama,” “eee,” for “eat,”   
 “pay” for “Play with me.” “uh” for “up.” Please list some of these, so that we know what to listen for   
 when we start to tag-reinforce.  
  
c. **Whole words to ask for things, answer, describe.**   
 Please list a sample of words your child says that you could teach him to use instead of noises, pulling   
 and pushing, and loud demands.

d. **Phases and sentences that your child says, that you could teach her to use to ask, to answer, to   
 describe**. “Can I go out?” “More spaghetti, please.” “How do you like my shirt?” Please list a sample of   
 these phrases and sentences that you’d like your child to use more often.

(2) Okay, from the above list (a-d), what is your child’s point of success? Mouth movements? Parts of words?   
 Words? Phrases and sentences? For example,

“About the most skilled and usual desirable speech my child does is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

Now let’s teach. Please skim Chapter …. for reminders of effective methods.

***How to Increase Good Sounds/words***

Nothing to it! We’ve already used all the methods we now need when we worked on eye contact and Quiet Mouth. *All we’re doing here is increasing the verbal behavior your child already uses. We are NOT trying to teach your child to talk*. For that, your child needs to be firm on sitting with you, watching your mouth and listening to your speech, fluency with mouth movements and positions (g, f, ing, l, oo, eee), quick cooperation with requests (such as, “Say, mmoorrre.”), trying several times in a row, and imitation*. If your child isn’t firm on these elements, he’s not going to learn much speech.* He’ll make errors, get frustrated (so will you), and won’t want to learn any more. So, first we’ll teach many of the elements (which we’re doing now), and then we’ll work on Verbal Imitation and Functional Speech in later books in the series.

***The Basic Method for Increasing Good Sounds and Words***

Our goal is to increase how often and where your child says (uses) whatever kind of speech is at her point of success---mouth movements, word sounds, whole words, phrases and sentences.

Here’s an outline of our method.

1. We don’t reinforce a child’s noises, pulling, pointing (by itself), and pushing as ways to communicate.  
2. When the child says a good sound/word **on her own** (that is, without you requesting it or modeling it), tag-reinforce and verify.  
3. Improve speech (e.g., ‘tatoes) by modeling sounds (po). But careful! Don’t push it. We work on saying sounds in the book on Verbal Imitation.  
4. Increase opportunities for speech by showing interesting things (pet the cat) and then modeling relevant speech (sssooofft).  
5. When a child whines, nags, points, pulls or pushes you (instead of talking) do not go along with it. Instead,   
 a. Wait.  
 b. Gain the child’s attention. “Look at me.” This builds on the eye contact that you already taught!  
 c. Model the proper speech at the child’s point of success.   
6. When the child is doing a sequence that leads to a natural reward, pause the sequence; request Quiet Mouth (if needed), eye contact, and speech (at her point of success); and then let the child finish the sequence to get the natural reward.  
7. Replace angry or inappropriate words.  
8.

Keep track of changes in good sounds/words.

***Examples of Increasing Good Sounds/Words***

1. *When your child says a good sound/word* ***on her own*** *(that is, without you requesting it or modeling it), we will tag-reinforce and verify*. Here are examples.

Nancy can say words, but she rarely does. Now, at supper, she looks at Ma Brown (eye contact!) and says,   
 “Tatoes,” meaning “I’d like you to give me more potatoes.”   
 Mom instantly clicks the clicker and smiles. Nancy LIKES the tags, because they are followed by reinforcers.  
 Mom instantly reinforces the speech with more potatoes.  
 Mom verifies by repeating what Nancy said, as Mom shovels more spuds onto Nancy’s plate. “Yes, Tatoes.”

Child’s Verbal => Tag and Reinforce => Verify By Repeating  
 Behavior [Praise? Hug?] What the Child Said

Notice that Mom reinforced “‘Tatoes” because that is Nancy’s point of success. If Mom held out for   
 “**po**tatoes” (“Say, potatoes.”), Mom would still be waiting because Nancy is not yet able to say that   
 sound in the whole word. However, once Nancy is asking for things more often, THEN Mom can use   
 the later book on Verbal Imitation to teach the sounds that Nancy needs to say whole words

Mom and Pearl are hanging out on the couch. Pearl looks at Mom. Pearl closes her mouth, pressing her   
 lips together. (The beginning of the word, Momma?) Mom smiles and hugs Pearl, and says, “Yes,   
 Mmmmomma.” **If** Pearl imitates Mmaamma, or anything with mmmm in it, this is great. Tag-treat   
 and verify. If not, no sweat. Mom is on the lookout for the next time that Pearl makes a mouth   
 movement for a word, so that Mom can tag-treat it. It’s a start!

Jimmy is playing with blocks. He looks at them, turns them this way and that, and clacks them together.   
 He says “Cack!” (the sound of the blocks). Dad instantly tags this (click), reinforces with a tiny spoonful   
 of honey yogurt, and verifies with “Yes, cack!. Blocks go cack!” He encourages Jimmy to do this again.   
 “Blocks go clllack!... Clack the blocks with Daddy.” Basically,

Child’s Verbal => Tag-Reinforce => Verify By Repeating => Keep It Going  
 Behavior Child’s Verbal Behavior

1. *Increase opportunities for speech.* Show things that may interest your child---pictures (tigers), things happening (cat licking itself, egg frying), objects to feel (soft, cold), sounds (loud, drum). At this point, the child already says the words or is close. You are just teaching your child to USE the words more often at the right time and place.

Thing of interest.  
 Mom and Pearl are sitting on the floor with Aggie the Cat, who is laying on her side.  
 Mom strokes Aggie’s side. She takes Pearl’s hand and helps her to stroke Aggie.  
  
 Teach to say relevant word(s). [Note: Child CAN say these sounds or is close!]  
 Mom says, “Ssssooofft. Aggie is sssoofft,” (model. I do) as Pearl’s hand strokes the fur.  
 Mom says, “Look at me.”  
 Pearl looks.  
 Mom says, “Aggie is (as Pearl’s hand strokes the fur) sssoooft. (model. I do.) Say, sssoooft.” (test/check.   
 You do.)  
 Pearl says, “Sofff.”  
 Mom hugs Pearl, strokes Pearl’s head, and says, “Yes, sssoft.” (verification)  
 Mom repeats this to firm it up.

Thing of interest.

Dad shows Tito a rock he got from a museum shop.  
 “Check this, Tito.”  
 “Wow. Neat. What is it?”

Teach to say relevant word(s).  
 “It’s a geode. (model) These are crystals inside. (model) Quartz. (model) How smart are you?”  
 “Pretty smart!”  
 “I know. You impress me every day. Let’s review. What is this?” (test/check)  
 “Geode.”  
 “Correct. Geode.”  
 “What are these?” (test/check)  
 “Crystals.”  
 “Correct again. Crystals. What kind of crystals?” (test/check)  
 “Quartz.”  
 “You nailed them all. (reinforcement) A geode make of quartz crystals. (verification). Use our new words to   
 tell me about this rock.” (test/check)

Thing of interest.

Dad and Mark are on the way home. Dad pulls over and stops near the duck pond. Ned the duck is   
 paddling around.

Teach to say relevant word(s). [Note: Child CAN say the words or is close!]  
 “Look. [Dad points. Mark looks.] That’s a duck. That’s a duck. (model) Say it with me, Mark. (lead) *Thas a   
 duck.* Your turn. Look! What is that? (test/check) *Thas a duck.”* Click-treat + “Yes, that’s a duck.”   
 [Dad continues by talking about the duck. He will work on the /t/ sound at another time. The book   
 on Verbal Imitation show how.]

3. *When your child whines, nags, points, pulls or pushes you, instead of talking, do not go along with it.* Instead,   
 a. Wait.  
 b. Gain your child’s attention. “Look at me.”   
 c. Model the proper speech at your child’s point of success. [Your child already says the words or is close!]

Pearl holds her arms out to be picked up.  
 Mom waits for eye contact. [She could point to her eyes, or say “Look at me,” if needed.]  
 Pearl looks up at Mom’s eyes.   
 Mom says, “Hi, Sweetie.” [Did you notice that Mom is teaching Pearl to make eye contact as a signal for   
 Mom to interact with her some more?]  
 Pearl keeps her arms up.  
 Mom says. “Uhhhhp… Uhhhhp.” (model). Say, uhhhhp…. uhhhp.” (test/check. You do.)  
 Pearl very softly says, ‘Uhhhh.” Close enough for now.  
 Big smile from Mom. Mom picks Pearl up. “What a big girl. You said uhhhp. Mom picks Pearl uhhhp!”

Tommy Tucker tries to pull Mom to the bathroom for his bath.  
 Mom does not move. Mom says, “Look at me.” Tommy looks. [Mom requires this from Tommy   
 before she goes on.]  
 Mom models the correct words. “Bath… bath….Your turn. Say, baathth.” (test/check)  
 Tommy says, “baff.” Close enough. Tag-and Mom goes with him to the bath tub (reinforcement) +   
 “Yes, bath.”

Nancy is wiggling on the swing and making whining noises. She wants Dad to push her. Dad makes the   
 “shshshsh” finger gesture as he taught Nancy earlier in the section on Quiet Mouth. [Feel free to   
 review!] Nancy becomes quiet. Dad pats her head.   
 “Nancy, look at me… “ Nancy makes eye contact. So, Dad grasps the swing chains and pushes. [So   
 that Nancy knows what “push” means.] He says, “Pushshsh…. Pushshsh. (model). Your turn. Say,   
 push... push…” (test/check)  
 *Push.* Click—Dad pushes the swing—“Yes, push.”

Ma Rogers and Steven are at the grocery store. Steven is pushing the cart. Every 10 or so steps, Mom tag-   
 treats Steven’s “walk calm with Mom” behavior (the tag point). As they pass the deli section, Steven lets   
 go of the handle bar and walks to the cooler. He points to the packs of Ned’s Franks (“Now with extra   
 by-products.”) and makes noises. Mom does not react. Instead, she cues him to do a desirable   
 alternative behavior.  
 Mom says, “Show me Quiet Mouth,” and puts her finger over her lips. Steven becomes quiet. Click-  
 raisin –“I love how you did Quiet Mouth.”  
 Mom looks at Steven. [A social cue to interact.]   
 Steven looks back at Mom.   
 “You want Ned’s Franks?” [Reinforces Steven for looking at Mom.]  
 Steven nods. [Mom knows that Steven can do better.]   
 *Mom repeats the question so that Steven’s answer follows the question.* “You want Ned’s Franks?....YES.”   
 (model)  
 Steven says, “Yes.”   
 Mom says, “What do you want? Ned’s Franks? (model)” (test/check) [Did you see how Mom modeled   
 what Steven should say?]  
 Steven says, “Ned Frank.”

Mom pats Steven on the head (he loves this) and she says and points, “Pick up a pack.” (reinforcer). “Yes,   
 Ned’s Franks.”

[Remember. Steven already says these words. Mom is teaching him to USE them instead of pointing   
 and whining.]  
  
 In summary,  
  
 Child pulls, => Wait => Request and/ => Request => Model-Lead-Test/check-  
 pushes, or gesture for Eye Tag-Reinforce + Verify  
 makes noises. Quiet Mouth Contact Good sounds/words

A few more examples…  
  
 Tommy finishes a small bowl of ice cream, and bangs the table with his spoon---meaning “more.”  
 Pa Tucker does not react. When Tommy stops banging and is calm for a few seconds, Pa says, “Look at me.”   
 Tommy looks.  
 Pa continues the sequence. “You want mmmmooorrr. Listen. mmmmore. Listen again, mmmooorrr.”   
 [model]   
 *Notice that Dad first said, “You want mmooorrr,” to tell Tommy what the proper word is. Then Dad teaches   
 that word.* Pa says, “Say it with me.” *mmmooo* [lead]  
 Pay says, “Your turn. Say, mmmooorrr.” [test/check]  
 Tommy makes a close try—“Mmmmmmooo.”  
 Pa tag-reinforces (with more ice cream) + “Yes, more.”

4. *When your child is doing a sequence that leads to a natural reward, pause the sequence; request Quiet Mouth (if*

*needed), eye contact, and speech; and then let your child finish the sequence to get the natural reward.*

Child is doing a => You pause the sequence, => Instead, you Model-Lead-  
 sequence, assuming and do not do your usual Test-check proper behavior:  
 she’ll get a certain behavior part. For Quiet, eye contact, and   
 outcome. For instance, example, you do not speech at the child’s point  
 walks to the door and open the door---which of success. “oh,” “op,” “open.”  
 stands there, expecting you would reinforce your child “open, please.”  
 to open the door *as usual*. for standing there waiting  
 for you to open the door  
for her.

For instance…

Pop St. Vincent always leaves a few dollars on the table next to the front door for Jack to take for school lunch. He doesn’t want Jack to take this for granted. And he wants Jack to be polite.  
Jack walks past the table and takes the cash.  
“Hold it, cowboy. Say what?”  
“Oh, thanks for the cash, Dad.”  
“No, thank YOU, Jack. Have a great day.”  
  
Jimmy is having trouble working the handle of the car door to get inside.  
Dad stands there.  
Jimmy makes eye contact.  
Dad says, “Say, **help** me.”  
Jimmy doesn’t say anything, and goes back to jerking the handle.  
Dad stands there, thinking about how patient and calm he has become.  
Jimmy looks at Dad again.  
Dad says, “Say, **help** me.”  
Jimmy says, “**Hep** mmm.”  
Dad clicks the clicker, gives Jimmy a cashew, says, “Yes, help me,” and opens the door.

5. *Replace angry words and other inappropriate speech.* For instance, when Jack gets upset, he says, “Shut up!” Tito says, “This sucks.” We can teach these guys—*who have a lot of alternative speech*---to express their feelings using more appropriate words in the home. Perhaps these words are common and expected with their peers. It’s up to you.

Mark: “This homework blows. Math sucks. School bites. %$#@!   
Mom: “I get that you are really frustrated and angry. I’m sure you’ll solve these problems. Dad and I will   
 help.”   
Mark: “Yeah, right.”  
Mom: “We’ll talk about **working together** in a minute. I know it feels good to say cuss words! It makes us   
 feel powerful. Like the words are magic. But *I’d like it if we used our* ***own*** *family cuss words*.”  
Mark: “Huh?”  
Mom: “Why be like everyone else? Our own Stein brand of cuss.”  
Mark: “Like what?”

Mom: “Well, instead of %$#@, the Stein cuss could be fogar. Like, fogar this! Or, What the fogar are you   
 talking about?”  
Mark: “MOM!!! Hey, I like that. This homework is fogar hard!”  
Mom: “Now you got it. How about another word for &^%$?”  
Mark: “How about cluff?”  
Mom: “Cluff?”  
Mark: “Yeah, like What kind bullcluff is this? Or, That’s a load of cluff.”  
Mom: “Great!” Okay, let’s practice. Think of sentences where we could use fogar and cluff.”  
Mark: “This is full of cluff. I don’t give a fogaring cluff.”

Mom: “You are the master. Okay, here’s the deal. *Every time we hear you say one of the cuss words that   
 everyone else uses, we don’t hear it*.   
 *But every time we hear fogar or cluff, it’s a tag for you.* Here, wear this bracelet--*tagulator.* *Every time   
 you say cluff or fogar, move a bead to the other side*. 50 of them gets you a bacon cheeseburger and a side order of cluff. [This is to get Mark saying the new words more often.] And *when you say   
 cluff or fogar when you are angry, it’s TWO tags*.” [This is what Mom and Pop are really after.]  
Mark: “Cluff. That’s easy, Ma.”

[This worked great with my kid, Tony. He taught kids at school to use these and other new words. I was so proud.]  
  
Okay, let’s get it all together and start teaching.

**Table 11. Planning, Teaching, and Keeping Track of Changes in Verbal Behavior**

Please reread the above examples, and make a list of your own to work on.  
See Chapter…. to see how to make teaching highly effective.

1. When your child says a good sound/word **on her own** (that is, without you requesting it or modeling it),   
 tag-reinforce and verify to teach her to say them more often.  
  
 Make a list of sounds or words to tag- How is it working? Is your child saying these

reinforce-verify so that your child says them sounds or words more often? Which ones?  
more often. Then do it. [Add more to the list.]

2. Increase opportunities for speech. Make a list of….  
  
 Things of interest. Now, teach the child to say relevant sounds or words (that the child   
 CAN say, or is close) in response to things of interest.

How is it working? Is your child saying these sounds or words more often? Which ones? [Add more to the   
 list.]

3. When the child whines, nags, points, pulls or pushes you, instead of talking, do not go along with it.   
 Instead,   
 a. Wait.  
 b. Gain your child’s attention. “Look at me.” And give a cue for Quiet Mouth (“Shshsh,” finger over lips,   
 which we taught above.)  
 c. Model the proper speech at your child’s point of success. [Your child already says the words or is close!]

Please list examples and then work on teaching.

How is it working? What good sounds or words does the child use now? [Add more to the list.]

4. *When your child is doing a sequence that leads to a natural reward, pause the sequence; request Quiet Mouth (if needed), eye contact, and speech at her point of success; and then let your child finish the sequence to get the natural reward.*

Please list examples of how you can teach a child to insert good sounds or words into ordinary sequences.  
 Then work on teaching.

How is it working? Can you give examples of the sequences and what sounds or words the child uses?  
 [Add more to the list.]

5. Replace angry words and other inappropriate speech.

Please list examples of angry words and How will you replace these?  
 other inappropriate speech.

How is it working? Can you give examples? [Add more to the list.]

[Always check Chapter…. to help you to identify and use the most effective methods!]

And now, let’s work on the last skill in Learning Readiness 1---cooperation.

**LR1.7 THE CHILD COOPERATES WITH (FOLLOWS) SIMPLE REQUESTS**

In the earlier sections Learning Readiness (LR1.1 -1.6), we taught a child to notice and respond to changes around her; to make spontaneous eye contact, eye contact on request, and eye contact to gain natural rewards; to value social contacts (social rewards); to respond to cues for Quiet Mouth and to use good sounds and words more often. These behaviors make it easier for a child to learn cooperation---item **LR1.7**. Why? Because a common element in these earlier behaviors is responding to a cue or signal from someone else. “Look at me.” “Say, uuup.” “Shshshsh.”   
  
A definition of our new target behavior is: The child follows simple requests (verbal/spoken and gestures) to do easy tasks around the home and other places; for instance, open the door, pick up his coat, put his plate on the table, put a cup in the sink, walk alongside a parent, or push a chair under the table. The idea is to teach a child to cooperate more often, and eventually to cooperate to gain natural rewards, such as enjoyable activities.

Here’s what we’ll be working on. Notice the logical sequence. Each next kind of cooperation **uses** behavior elements taught in the **earlier** ones. The child:

1. Responds to verbal instructions generally.  
2. Holds parent’s hand and comes along.  
3. Follows a parent or other person while walking.  
4. Stops.  
5. Comes when asked.  
6. Responds to gestures.  
7. Imitates gestures.

*These seven kinds of cooperation are elements of everything else your child will learn later in our sequence of skills*; for example, cooperation when learning to imitate sounds, words, and phrases; when being taught to use (functional) speech; or when being taught chores, self-help, and family living skills.

First, we’ll evaluate and teach cooperation in general. Then we’ll focus on cooperation with specific requests---2-7, above.

***1. Responds to Verbal Instructions Generally***

The point is to give your child lots of opportunities to (1) listen to verbal/spoken requests, and to cooperate with them; and (2) learn that cooperation is rewarded while noncooperation (ignoring your requests, running away) gets nothing. The more opportunities/requests you give your child to do different behaviors, the faster your child learns these rules:   
   
 Cooperate => Goodies   
 Do something OTHER than cooperate => Nothing.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

The child cooperates with **verbal/spoken** requests to do a variety of simple actions (that he CAN do); for example, put a piece of trash in the wastebasket, push a chair under the table, turn off a light switch, open a door, pick up a spoon, close the fridge, hand Dad a cold beverage in a can. As your child becomes more likely to try to cooperate, and does the many different movements involved in cooperating (looking, listening, picking things up, moving things) it will be easier to teach new behaviors.

(1) The child cooperates with simple spoken requests (usually; about half the time; once in a while; basically   
 never). (Underline one.)  
(2) When given a simple request, the child (cooperates; acts like he didn’t hear; whines; does the opposite; runs   
 away; acts helpless). (Underline as many as apply.)   
(3) When the child does not cooperate, we (repeat the request several times; drop the request; do it ourselves).   
 (Underline as many as apply.) We are going to try not to respond like this anymore, right?  
(4) When your child does NOT cooperate with spoken requests, how often would you say it’s because your   
 child doesn’t know what the *words* mean? (usually doesn’t know; sometimes doesn’t know and sometimes   
 does know; usually does know what the words mean). (Underline one.)   
  
*We start teaching cooperation with requests that your child understands---that is, knows what actions the words tell.*  
(5) When your child does NOT cooperate with verbal requests, how often would you say it’s because your child   
 doesn’t know how to do the required *movements*? (usually doesn’t know; sometimes doesn’t know and sometimes does know; usually does know how to do the required movements). (Underline one.)   
 *We start teaching cooperation with requests that involve movements your child can (because she does) do.* (6)   
  
 Please list a sample of simple spoken requests that your child cooperates with now. Include even tiny things,   
 such as this. Your child is five feet away. You say, “Come here, Honey.” She looks at you and walks over. Or,   
 he’s next to you at the kitchen counter. He’s holding a spoon. You say, “Put it ON the COUNter,” and   
 point. He moves it to where you pointed.

What We Say. Movements the Child Does.  
 1. 1.  
 2. 2.  
 3. 3.  
 4. 4.  
 5. 5.  
 6. 6.  
 7. 7.  
 8. 8.  
 9. 9.  
 10. 10.

**We’ll start teaching the examples, above---your child’s point of success.**

***How to Teach Cooperation-- Responding to Verbal Instructions Generally***

We’ll teach your child to cooperate with lots of simple verbal/spoken requests more often, instead of ignoring you, walking away, whining, or doing the opposite.  
  
 “Nancy, come here.” And awaaayyyy she goes!

Our goals are to (1) teach the child to cooperate with spoken requests for at least 20 different simple tasks without physical prompts (that is, you moving your child’s body); (2) increase cooperation to where the child follows at least three out of four requests (she cooperates at least 75 percent of the time); and (3) teach the child to follow requests in other places and with other people.

We’ll use several methods.

**Using Grandma’s Law.**

Here, *we use verbal/spoken requests (starting with the ones you listed in evaluation item 6, above) that your child* ***can*** *follow because (1) he can/does do the required movements; (2) he knows what movements the words are asking for; and (3) he* ***has*** *cooperated with* ***some*** *of the requests to do these things*

1. Begin by waiting until the child wants something or until he is about to do something. Then,   
2. Before you give him what he wants, or before you let him start to do what he was going to do, slip in your request. You can state it as Grandma's Law. For example, give him his dessert dish and show him the ice cream. But before you put ice cream in his dish, say,

"Here's the ice cream. (point) As soon as you put your supper plate in the sink, you can have ice cream."

He has done this plate-in-the-sink action before. Maybe he has cooperated with this very request before.

3. If he cooperates with the request, tag + give him the ice cream + Praise ,and “Yes, put plate in the sink.” Of course, if he tries to cooperate but does it wrong, *prompt* by *pointing,* by *moving* him through the *motions,* or *repeating* part of the request. Use as little prompting as needed!  
  
For example, if he goes to put his plate on the counter instead of in the sink, point to the sink, take him by the hand, or repeat, "IN the SINK." ***Then repeat the request*** *and try again, no more than two more times.* Why repeat the request? Because that is the signal for your child to do the movements!

Like this.

“Put plate => Child => Wait a => Physically => Tag-reinforce +  
 IN the sink.” makes an moment. prompt a “Yes, IN the

error. Repeat the better sink.” “All by  
 request response, if yourself!”  
 when child needed.  
 is looking.

Do this a few more times to firm up cooperation and the correct movements. Try to fade out repeating the request and any physical prompts. Say “Good try” or “Let’s try again.” Use the tag and treat for unprompted or improved movements. Remember to work on this one a little every day to keep it strong!

4. Set up *many* easy cooperation tasks during the day for *different* natural rewards. Start with tasks your child understands; for instance, hanging up his pants before you tuck him in bed, putting his dish in the sink before he can go outside, putting paper in the trash before he can watch TV, pulling his chair out from under the table, or helping to set his place at the table before he can eat.

5. Tag these cooperations; add a treat to sweeten the deal; praise and hugs just before you give him the natural reward. For example,

“As soon as you => Child brings => Tag-treat/praise + Dad reads the story.  
 bring me the book, book. *(Social* story. *(Natural Activity*  
 I will read you a *(Cooperates) reward) Reward)*  
 story.”   
 *(Request,   
 Grandma’s Law)*

**Adding Simple Tasks**

6. As your child follows simple requests more often, *add tasks which may be new to him and that may not always be followed by strong natural rewards.* Examples might be pulling the shade down, turning off the lights, and wiping the table. In other words, ask her to do tasks that a member of the family should learn to do. As usual, tag and reinforce cooperation.

7. Also, reward your child with a *special treat* for cooperating well during the day. For example, take him for a ride, go to the ice cream store, or let him pick something he likes. “You cooperated so well today, Nancy. You wiped the table and took out the trash. Let's go to the park.” Use food less and less, praise and activities more and more. You could use a simple device for marking each cooperation. Smiley face or star, and a picture of the back-up reward.

https://tse1.mm.bing.net/th?&id=OIP.Maec01b8fb439576966123edc116f413co0&w=299&h=297&c=0&pid=1.9&rs=0&p=0&r=0 https://tse1.mm.bing.net/th?&id=OIP.Maec01b8fb439576966123edc116f413co0&w=299&h=297&c=0&pid=1.9&rs=0&p=0&r=0 https://tse1.mm.bing.net/th?&id=OIP.Maec01b8fb439576966123edc116f413co0&w=299&h=297&c=0&pid=1.9&rs=0&p=0&r=0 

8. *Have the child do a few of the same tasks each day and from day to day for practice (to increase and retain his skill),* but switch off every few days and add new ones so that he will not become bored. Always review, review, review. Slowly fade out your prompts until the child does a task by just hearing the spoken request, with no prompts.  
9. Also, begin to have **other people** request the child to do tasks he has learned; and work on tasks in new places. For instance, have the child help you in the grocery store, by pushing the shopping cart, getting items off the shelves, and unloading the cart at the check-out counter. Can you think of a good reward for helping out in the grocery store? Of course! A gum ball or a ride in the shopping cart when you leave.

10. *Keep track of cooperation in two ways*.   
 a. First, *count* the number of *requests* you give the child during the day and the number of times he   
 *cooperates* with those requests. You want the number of cooperations to increase almost as high as the number of requests.   
 Make a *list* of the tasks you ask the child to do.   
 Next to each task, write down what day you started working on it, what kinds of prompts you used and

what prompts seemed to work, where he does the tasks, and with whom he cooperates.

**Table 12. Simple Way to Keep Track of Cooperation**

R = request but did not cooperate. RC = request and cooperated with request.

Example

Days: Tasks Were Spread Out, Not Over and Over

Monday Where Prompts and With Whom

Requests to:

1. “Open door.” Front door Did it only when I pointed to knob--- on the third try. Mom.   
 R R RC   
  
2. “Turn on light” Kitchen Acted like she didn’t know behavior is meant by “Turn on.”  
 R R R We’ll use model (I do), lead (We do), Test/check to teach this.  
 “I turn ON… We turn on…. YOU turn on.”  
   
3. “Put plate on table.” In kitchen Physically helped her to hold plate with both hands.   
 R R RC Breakfast, She carried it to the table when I said, “Put on table.”   
 snack, She placed it in the right spot only when I pointed to proper spot— supper. third try. Dad.  
   
  
4. “Put (bottle) in.” After snack. I put empty bottle in her hand. She held it and looked at it.   
 R RC RC I said “Put in trash can.” I looked at the trash can. She followed my gaze, and walked to the can while holding the   
 bottle.   
 She looked at me. I made a gesture for “in” and said “Put in.” With   
 this gesture prompt, she put the bottle in the can.  
 We’ll use gesture prompts as needed, and then fade them out so that   
 she responds to the request alone. Tag and BIG hug and treat.  
  
Results. We made 12 requests. Nancy cooperated with 4 of them, or 25% of the time.   
We need to focus on teaching her how to flip the light switch on and off (the movements) and THEN to do this on request.   
We need to try different prompts (pointing, looking at where something goes, gesturing what to do, giving physical help) BEFORE she makes errors. We should use error correction: model---test/check---repeat until firm). Later, we try to fade out the prompts.  
   
Blank   
R = request but did not cooperate. RC = request and cooperated with request.

Days

Requests to: Where Prompts and With Whom

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Results

b. If possible, *have your child keep track of his cooperations*. You could  
 (1) Have your child wear a bracelet with beads. Each time he cooperates, he moves a bead to the other   
 side. After a certain number of cooperations, he gets to pick a “back-up” reinforcer!

“That’s 10 cooperations, Tommy. You are Mr. Cooperation. Ice cream or go to the playground?”

(2) Have small pictures of different actions on a piece of paper. Maybe on the fridge. Each time your   
 child does one of these actions on request, she makes a mark on the paper. When she reaches an   
 agreed-on goal (a small number at first), she chooses a back-up reinforcer. “As soon as you get 5  
 smiley faces (fill in the 5 boxes), you can….”  
 (3) Some children like collecting “tokens” (poker chips, small Teddy Bears, coins, bottle caps) for each   
 cooperation. After many short (at first) periods of time (each hour at first?), you count the tokens with the child, and he gets to pick a back-up reward.

**Now We’ll Focus On Cooperation With Requests For Specific Behaviors.**

These are: holding parent’s hand and walking along; following while walking; stopping; coming when asked; responding to gestures; and imitating.

***2. The Child Holds Parent’s Hand and Comes Along***

Mom Tucker writes,   
“Once---when I must have been out of my mind---I took Tommy to Massive Mart. We’re in the pants section. I’m checking price tags. Off he goes! Panic. Never again.”  
  
Mr. Maretti joins in.   
“I know what you mean. Walking with Jimmy is torture. Is a leash going too far?”  
  
Ma Ironton adds,   
“I never take walks with Pearl. She just rubber legs. Pretty soon, I’m holding her off the ground and walking. Is dangling your kid by one arm the same as walking with your kid?”  
  
Let’s teach your child to walk along with you. But first,

***Let’s Evaluate.***

The child holds parent’s (or another person’s hand) and comes along. (underline one):   
(1) For only a little way and then she fusses or pulls.   
(2) For a pretty long way.   
(3) For as long as we are walking.

***How to Teach This Behavior***

Let’s assume that your child  
1. Does not know what the words “Walk with (me, Mom, Dad)” mean; that is, he doesn’t know what behaviors to do.   
2. Has some difficulty doing the correct movements; that is, has a hard time walking fast, slow, or straight enough.  
3. Is more likely to pull, stop, run away, or whine, rather than walk calm with another person.

Let’s do a knowledge analysis of the routine of walking with someone so that we know what elements of walking calmly we have to *firm up before we start*, and what elements we have to teach or keep firm *while we are walking*.

Steps in the routine Knowledge elements needed to do the steps

1. Hold person’s hand. 1a. Respond to request, “Hold my hand.”   
 1b. Movements used to grasp person’s hand.   
2. Starting to walk. 2a. Respond to request, “Walk with (Me, Mom, Dad).”

2b. Move legs forward—take steps.  
 2c. Continue holding person’s hand.  
3. Walking alongside 3a. Child watches his body in relation to the other person’s body.  
 3b. Moves legs slower or faster to stay alongside.  
4. Stops. 4a. Responds to the request, “Stop.”  
 4b. Stops moving legs.

It seems to me that the walking-with-you routine can be taught with the *Model-Lead-Test/check all at once* (whole task presentation) because there are only a few steps and knowledge elements. Agree? So, let’s try this.

**Table 13. Teaching a Child to Walk Alongside**  
  
1. Teach or firm up weak elements before we teach the whole routine. Does your child walk? Does your child   
 walk faster and slower on his own? Does your child grasp your hand?   
  
 Pearl does not—and never has---held Mom’s hand, and she has never heard the request, “Hold my hand.”   
 So, before Mom teaches Pearl to walk with her, Mom Ironton teaches, “Hold my hand.” She doesn’t want   
 to try teaching Pearl to hold her hand at the same time she is teaching Pearl to walk with her! That would be

too much at once. Here’s how Mom teaches the hand-holding element a few days *before* she puts it all   
 together and teaches walk-with-Mom.  
 a. Mom stands next to Pearl on Pearl’s left. Pearl is calm. Maybe Mom reinforces calm standing with a treat   
 and head pat.  
 b. Mom puts her right hand **near** Pearl’s left hand.  
 c. Mom says, “Hold my hand,” and moves Pearl’s hand so that it touches her own hand.   
 d. Mom again says, “Hold my hand,” so that the words are connected to the actions.  
 e. Mom puts her hand and Pearl’s hand together. Tag-treat + “Yes, hold my hand.”  
 f. Mom keeps holding Pearl’s hand gently, and repeats tag-treat + “Yes, hold my hand.”

g. Mom let’s go, and then in a few seconds, Mom and Pearl repeat c-f a few more times right then.   
 h. They practice more later. Mom always uses the same words---“Hold my hand”---and gradually gives   
 Pearl’s arm a little less of a physical prompt. Big tag-treat-hugs +”Yes, hold my hand,” whenever Pearl   
 **moves her own** arm and hand to touch or hold Mom’s hand.

*Pearl does not have to hold hands perfectly before she and Mom start walking.* If she and Mom have a good   
 time, Pearl will want to hold hands so that they can walk. Mom will firm up hand-holding behavior **while**   
 they walk.

2. Mom and Pearl go outside. Mom says, “Hold my hand.” Maybe Mom gives a little physical prompt---  
 touches Pearl’s hand, or moves Pearl’s wrist so that it’s easy for Pearl to grasp Mom’s hand. Tag-treat (raisin)   
 + “Yes, hold my hand.”  
3. Mom says, “Get ready.” (This means, stand next to me). Mom stands next to Pearl. Pearl is calm. Tag-treat +   
 “Yes, ready!”  
4. Mom says, “Walk with me.” Pearl moves her legs forward. Tag-treat +”Yes, walk with me.” [Mom is taking   
 no chances that Pearl will pull away. That’s why she tagged and treated such a tiny first movement.]

5. Mom keeps moving forward. Mom adjusts her stride so that she and Pearl are alongside. After a few steps,   
 tag-treat + “Yes, walk **with** me.”  
6. Mom tag-treats after four steps, then eight. If Pearl pulls or lags behind, Mom tag-treats when Pearl is again   
 alongside. “Yes, walk WITH (meaning next to) Mom.”  
7. Mom and Pearl turn around and go back to the house. Mom repeats steps 3-6.

8. If the tag point is only a few steps, but Pearl whines or pulls, Mom says, “Stop,” and stops. When Pearl stops   
 alongside Mom, tag-treat + “Yes, stop.” When Pearl is calm, they start again. In other words, no tug-of-war!  
9. Since Pearl is getting antsy, Mom ends the session while Pearl is walking calmly alongside. Tag-treat.  
9. Big reinforcer for a good walk when they get home.

10. Mom and Pearl practice this several times a day. Mom increases the distance and slowly raises the tag point to   
 more steps. Mom tag-treats any elements that are weak, such as walking alongside, stopping, or holding hands.  
12. When this behavior is firm, Mom and Pearl *generalize* the routine to other places and other persons. Mom   
 teaches other persons how to walk with Pearl. Mom also teaches Pearl to use her **other** hand to hold Mom’s   
 hand, and to walk on Mom’s other side. If Pearl is upset by the change, Mom could reverse sides for just a   
 few steps and tag-treat; go back to the familiar side but NO tag-treat; and keep going back and forth.   
 Eventually, Mom tag- treats Pearl’s walking on either side of her after a random number of steps.

Please act this out!

Note: If the child fusses and tries to pull away at first, walk for a very short distance and make the tag point a few steps of calm walking while holding hands. Then increase the distance. Also, as with a child who “refuses” to make eye contact, these *walking sessions could be your child’s meals*; small bites of food would be strong reinforcers.  
  
The next behavior follows logically from walking with. Make sure that your child is firm on taking your hand, holding your hand, and walking calmly with you, before we work on the next behavior.

***3. The Child Follows Alongside Or Walks Right Behind A Parent Or Sibling Or Other Family Members***

This is the same as walking with another person (above), except you aren’t holding hands.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

The child follows alongside or walks right behind a parent or sibling or other family member (underline one):   
(1) Most of the time on his own.  
(2) Pretty much only if you keep telling her to.  
(3) You have to take his hand or he’ll stop or wander off.

***How to Teach This Behavior***

Basically, *we’re fading out holding hands so that the child is walking alongside or right behind.* The request was “Walk **with** (me, Mom, Dad, Brother Bob).” Now it could be “YOU walk.” Let’s pretend that the child is difficult to walk with. So, we have to do this slowly and pay attention to details of behavior.

*Jimmy is firm walking calm* ***with*** *Dad, holding hands*---which we just worked on. For example, every 20 or so steps, Dad gives a tag-pat on head-small piece of cookie + “Walk WITH Dad.” They walk about a block this way, several times a day---always ending with a big reward. Slowly, Dad increases the distance they walk and the number of steps to earn tag-reinforcement, and they walk in other places.

*Time to work on walking without holding hands.* The method (most-to-least prompting) is shown below.   
*Notice how Dad fades the (hand-holding) prompt.*   
a. Holding hands. (Most prompting)  
b. Lightly holding hands.  
c. Touching hands.  
d. Hands not touching, but close.  
 e. Hands not touching, but farther apart.  
  
The goal is **not** that the child walks all by herself from now on. It’s that *when the hands of the child and parent are no longer touching, the child keeps walking alongside (and later, right behind) the parent.* So, sometimes we’ll walk holding hands and other times we won’t. Maybe the child can hold a ball or a doll or push a shopping cart. Maybe Mrs. Rogers can use that idea when she teachers Steven to shop, in a later section.

**Table 14. The Child Walks Alongside or Behind a Parent, Without Holding Hands**

1. Dad and Jimmy take several walks each day---followed by ice cream, a ride, play, and other activity rewards--- when Jimmy has walked calm with Dad, and not yelled or tried to run.  
2. Dad and Jimmy walk about 30 steps holding hands, as usual. This time, Dad **relaxes his fingers** around Jimmy’s hand. They keep walking. Tag-treat.   
3. Another 20 steps. Dad **relaxes his fingers some more**. They keep walking. Tag-treat.   
4. Dad **let’s go of Jimmy’s hand but still touches it**. Tag-treat. Then back to holding it.  
5. 10 more steps and Dad **moves his hand a few inches away from Jimmy’s**. Then he quickly touches Jimmy’s hand again. A few more steps and he is **not touching** Jimmy’s hand (but their hands are close!). Tag-Treat +”You Walk.” Dad is teaching Jimmy to get used to walking holding hands or not. Either way, Jimmy gets tag-treat-praise-verification.

6. Dad keeps doing this. Walk while holding, less holding, just touching, not touching, back to touching…. Each time that Jimmy walks a few steps NOT touching Dad’s hand (that is, by himself alongside Dad), tag-treat+ “YOU walk.”  
7. Note. Jimmy’s Dad and Pearl’s Mom could give the kids a toy to hold, to replace the feeling of Mom’s or Dad’s hand. This might make it easier for some kids to keep walking without their parents’ hand.  
8. Also, this is where your judgment comes in. I can’t tell you how many steps to walk without touching or holding your child’s hand before you tag- treat. But our guideline is,   
  
 If a behavior is weak, tag-treat it more often.  
  
9. Dad and Jimmy walk more and more steps with Dad holding and touching less often---but their hands are close. Dad touches or **lightly** holds Jimmy’s hand *intermittently. As long as Jimmy keeps walking with Dad (not touching) Dad keeps tag-treating + “****You*** *walk.”*

10. Whenever Jimmy makes noises, pulls away, lags behind or walks ahead, Dad does not react; he just gets alongside Jimmy (speeds up or slows down), stops, waits till Jimmy is calm, tag-reinforces Quiet Mouth or calm standing, and starts walking again.  
  
 *They always end the session when Jimmy is walking calm.*  
11. Now Dad starts to **move his hand farther from Jimmy’s**, and tag-treats. In time, he might have his hand in his pocket for a while, or scratch his head, and then go back to holding hands and then just touching, and then back to letting go for a longer time.  
   
*Dad doesn’t fade out the hand-holding in one walk.* They might do this over several days. It could take a week or more.  
  
11. Dad gradually tag-reinforces less often---a *variable* schedule. And they *generalize* this behavior to new places and with new persons. Dad makes sure to have new persons walk with them, and then gradually slide in to take Dad’s place---making sure to tag-treat more often! As we did in the earlier item, Dad teaches Jimmy to walk on either side.

12. When walking without holding hands alongside Dad is firm, Dad teaches Jimmy to **walk behind**. This is easy. Dad holds Jimmy’s hand and walks a little faster until he is a step ahead of Jimmy. Then he slows down and tag- treats + “YOU walk” as Jimmy walks ONE step behind Dad.  
 a. Dad increases the number of steps that Jimmy takes walking behind (still holding hands) before tag-   
 reinforce + “You walk.”  
 b. As he did above, Dad lets go of Jimmy’s hand and just touches it as they walk. Tag-reinforce + “You   
 walk.”  
 c. Dad switches from walking ahead while touching Jimmy’s hand and not touching Jimmy’s hand.   
 Jimmy gets tag-reinforce + “You walk,” either way.

13. *Keep track of this behavior* by taking notes each session on how far you walk and on how much you were able to fade the hand-holding prompt with your child still walking beside or behind you.

Practice this!

Next kind of cooperation!

***4. Child Stops On Request***

This behavior follows from what we just worked on.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

What does the child do when a parent or other family member stops walking, or says, “Stop” or “Let’s stop walking.”? (Underline as many as apply).   
(1) The child usually stops.  
(2) The child keeps walking.   
(3) The child pulls or pushes or fusses to keep going.

So, when we teach the concept/vocabulary word “stop,” we will show/model what the request means.

***How to Teach This Behavior***

**Table 15. Teaching a Child to Stop**

Jimmy and Dad have spent several weeks working on (1) “Walk with (alongside) me” (holding hands); and then (2) “You walk” (not holding hands). Today Dad adds “stop” to the routine.

1. They are walking along, **holding hands**,so that Dad can more easily slow Jimmy down. Dad says, “Stop.” Or, “Stop walking.” Or, “Stop walk”---because the word “walk” has been in the request to walk with Dad. Dad stops. (model) As Jimmy **slows** down, Dad tag-treats + “Yes, stop walk(ing !).” The tag point is Jimmy *slowing*—down a step towards a full stop.  
2. They repeat this again after **about** 20 or so steps. More repetitions.  
3. When Jimmy is reliably slowing in response to the request, “Stop walk(ing),” Dad raises the tag point. When Dad says, “Stop walk(ing),” and Jimmy (along with Dad) comes to a *full stop*, Dad tag- treats + “Yes, stop walk(ing).”  
4. They repeat step 3 until Jimmy reliably comes to a full stop. Dad gradually tags and treats a little less often---variable schedule.  
5. Now Dad does steps 2-4 as he did with the earlier behavior of walking without holding hands. When Jimmy is walking next to Dad and they are just touching hands, Dad says, “Stop” or “Stop walk(ing),” and tag-reinforce + “Yes, stop walk(ing).” Then Dad does the same thing when their hands are not touching. *Now Jimmy is learning to stop without a prompt from Dad’s hand.*  
6. When Jimmy reliably slows and stops with Dad in response to the request, **Dad teaches Jimmy to stop on his own.** How? *Well, something has to replace Dad’s model of what “stop” means.* So, Dad adds a **gesture**---a raised palm facing Jimmy.   
 a. Now, Dad gives the usual cue (“Stop walking”); he and Jimmy stop; and Dad tag-treats + “Yes, stop   
 walking.” After several repeats, Jimmy is firm on stopping in response to the verbal cue---“Stop walking.”  
 b. This is the main step! Now, Dad *gives the gesture AND says “Stop.”* If needed, he gently physically   
 prompts Jimmy to stop, and tag-reinforces + “Yes, stop.”   
 c. After a bunch more tries, Dad gives the gesture, waits a second (delayed prompt) and then says “Stop.”   
 Dad tag-treats only when Jimmy stops without a physical prompt. This step could take several days, as   
 Jimmy catches on.  
 d. Dad puts more time (2, 3, 4 seconds) between the gesture and “Stop.” *The idea is that Jimmy will stop in   
 response to the gesture, before Dad says “Stop” (the prompt).*

7. As usual, Dad tag-reinforces less often; they walk farther; they walk in more places; and Dad teaches Jimmy   
 to stop walking with other persons.

Note! In a later section, Steven’s Mom will teach him to grocery shop with her. Part of the shopping with Mom routine is stopping the cart. You’ll see how Mom teaches the stop step.

And remember.   
When we start on a new behavior, we don’t forget about the earlier ones—like eye contact, cooperation in general, Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words. We keep practicing and reinforcing them.

Don’t be afraid that you’ll be spending all your time teaching! Many parents have spent “all their time” coping with problem behaviors! However, as these behaviors decrease and desirable behaviors increase, the parenting load gets lighter.

Okay, next kind of cooperation.

***5. The Child Comes When Asked***

***Let’s Evaluate.***

The child comes over to (approaches) people when asked. (Circle as many as apply, and underline.)  
(1) Child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) does this when he is *asked to* (on request).  
(2) Child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) does this *on his own.*

(3) Child comes over to (just about anyone; most people; only certain people; does not come to people yet).

Which persons does the child Which persons does the child not  
 come to when asked? come to when asked?

1. 1.

2. 2.

3. 3.

4. 4.

5. 5.

***How to Teach This Behavior***

Here are steps. Let’s assume that a child needs a lot of help. Use whichever steps are needed for **your** child. Basically, we are **shaping** “come to me” behavior---reinforcing small steps in the desired direction.

**Table 16. Teaching a Child to Come to You**

1. *Tag-treat-verify whenever your child comes to you on her own---as we did with spontaneous eye contact.* Get this   
 behavior happening more often. “Yes, COME to Dad!”  
2. Now wait till your child is **near you**---she’s either coming to you on her own or you have placed yourself   
 near her.   
 a. Gain her attention. “Look at (me, Mom, Dad).”   
 b. Invite her to come to you by showing a treat, holding up her favorite toy, or saying something like, “Let’s   
 play.”   
 c. As she **begins** to move towards you, say, “Come” or “Come to (Momma, Dad),” if that would be more   
 attractive to her.   
 d. If she takes a step, tag-treat + “Yes, come (to Momma).” Then play with her.   
 e. Repeat this several times in other places in the house. It’s a good idea to plan ahead by making a list of   
 these places.  
3. Repeat step 2, but this time do it when the child *is a little farther away*---2, 3, 4, and more steps. When she   
 comes, tag-treat-“Come to (Momma, Dad)” and interact with her as promised.  
4. Fade out the prompt of giving an invitation. Here’s how.  
 a. Give the invitation as usual. As she begins to move towards you, say, “Come (to….),” but put down the   
 visual cues (books, doll), so that the cue is YOU and the spoken request. Repeat until firm over several   
 days.   
 b. Then try the request without any visual cues. To make it easier, do this when she’s closer. Then do it   
 when she is slightly farther and farther away. Repeat until firm over several days.  
5. What if the child comes only a few steps and stops or leaves?   
 a. Go back to just tag-treating when she comes on her own. Then use step 2 again. Like this….  
 b. Wait a few seconds. Give the request (as in step 2). If she stops again or leaves, YOU leave with the treats   
 and any toys you were showing. Try again later.  
 c. If necessary, **do these sessions at meal time.** For example, you could sit at the usual meal table, and   
 your child has to come to you and the table to eat.   
 **Even better is to** (1) **Move** around the room.  
 (2) **Sit**, holding your child’s meal.  
 (3) **Call** your child.  
 (4) **Reinforce** with praise and food when she comes on request or on her own.  
 (5) Reinforce several times while she is **with** you.  
 (6) Then **move** to another spot.  
 (7) **Repeat**.   
 **This will give your child a lot of practice responding to the request.**  
 Don’t give the request over and over. Always wait till she’s calm. Gain attention and then give the   
 request. Keep the sessions short. If she earns very little food, have another session in a half hour.  
6. You might try having another person physically prompt the child from behind---a gentle nudge after you   
 say, “Come (to Momma, Dad).” The prompter should not say, “Go.” In fact, the prompter should not say anything! Fade this out as soon as possible.  
7. When your child reliably and quickly comes to you from across the room, work on larger distances. For   
 example,  
 a. She’s in the living room and you are in the kitchen but she sees you.   
 b. She’s in the living room and you are in the kitchen but she **can’t** see you. [Give a louder request.]  
8. Gradually have your child come to you in other places. Later, have her come to other persons.

9. *When your child is now with you, do an enjoyable activity*---have a short teaching session, play, make a   
 sandwich together, go outside. *Otherwise, it makes no sense just to have a child come to you.* “Okay, Pop, I’m   
 here. Now what?” In a later section, we will teach sitting and “working” with you.

Next kind of cooperation!

***6. The Child Responds to Gestures***

*We can’t always use verbal/spoken requests.* Your child might be too far away or there may be a lot of noise. Also, this behavior builds on responding to changes in the environment (LR1.1). It means that a child is “tuned in” to the behavior of other persons. And responding to gestures now, will prepare your child to respond to models when we work on Motor and Verbal Imitation. So, it’s a good idea to teach your child to cooperate with gestures. We did this earlier, when we taught your child to do Quiet Mouth in response to putting a finger over your lips. Remember? Table 8 on Quiet Mouth. First, we said “Quiet Mouth” at the same time that we put a finger over our lips---to connect the gesture and the words. Then we faded out the verbal request and used the gesture alone (which means “Do Quiet Mouth”), and we tag-reinforced Quiet Mouth behavior. Well, we’re doing the same thing now.

***Let’s Evaluate.***

(1) The child responds to gestures, such as a hand wave (meaning “Come here.”), a finger point (meaning   
 “Look there.” Or “Put it there.”), patting the sofa (meaning “Sit here with me.”), a hand with palm forward   
 (meaning “Stop.”). (Circle as many as apply, and underline.)  
 a. Child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) responds to (cooperates with) gestures.  
 b. When she does not cooperate, it seems like she doesn’t know what behaviors the gesture is telling her to   
 do. This is true (most of the time; about half the time; once in a while).   
 c. When she does not cooperate, it seems like she doesn’t know **how** to **do** the behaviors the gesture is   
 telling her to do. This is true (most of the time; about half the time; once in a while).  
(2) Please list below the **verbal/spoken** **requests** with which your child **does** cooperate. Maybe you worked on   
 these spoken requests in earlier sections; for example, putting something on a shelf, turning on a light,   
 coming to you, walking alongside you, doing Quiet Mouth, saying a good sound/word. *We’ll use these as   
 prompts (extra cues) when we teach your child to cooperate with gestures.*

The spoken request. What we say. What our child does when she cooperates. Responds quickly?  
 Does the whole simple action or task? Stops but then restarts?

1. 1.  
 2. 2.  
 3. 3.  
 4. 4.  
 5. 5.  
 6. 6.  
 7. 7.  
 8. 8.  
 9. 9.  
 10. 10.  
 More?

(3) Now, please list **gesture requests** with which your child does cooperate. For example, waving a child to   
 come over, a hand palm up to say “Stop,” pointing to a chair to say “Sit here.” *We’ll use these as a warm-up   
 for learning to respond to* ***new*** *gestures.*

The gesture requests that we use. What our child does when she cooperates. Responds quickly? Does the whole simple action or task? Stops but then restarts?

1. 1.  
 2. 2.  
 3. 3.  
 4. 4.  
 5. 5.  
 6. 6.  
 7. 7.  
 8. 8.  
 9. 9.  
 10. 10.  
 More?

Let’s make a plan to teach a child who rarely cooperates with gestures, who may not know what behaviors the gestures are telling her to do, and who may not know how to do these behaviors. Here are the main steps---starting with your child’s point of success.  
1. Warm up with gestures to which she already responds.  
2. Warm up with spoken requests to which she already responds.  
3. Teach her to respond to new gestures.

Look back at your answers to the evaluation questions above. We’ll make a list of requests to work on, starting with verbal requests and gesture requests to which your child **already** responds.

**Step 1. Warming Up With Spoken/Verbal Requests**We’ve been teaching a child to respond to spoken requests this whole book. Look at your answers to evaluation question 6 on the earlier item, “Responds to Verbal Instructions Generally.” You listed spoken requests to which your child already responds. You also made a list of simple tasks that you ask your child to do---in the section “Adding Simple Tasks,”above. Now combine those lists! We’ll give your child practice cooperating with the requests. For example,

What We Say. Movements the Child Does.

“Put IN trash.” Holds candy wrapper.   
 Raises and extends arm towards trash can.   
 Holds hand over trash can. Opens fingers. Tracks these movements.  
 1. 1.  
  
 2. 2.  
  
 3. 3.

4. 4.  
  
 5. 5.  
 6. 6.  
  
 7. 7.  
  
 8. 8.  
  
 9. 9.  
  
 10. 10.

More?

Post your list on the fridge so that everyone knows what to work on!

You know the basic method.

Gain attention. => Give verbal/spoken => Minimum prompt if needed: => Tag-reinforce +  
 Wait for spontaneous request. “Put IN repeat request, point, physically verify. “Yes, put  
 eye contact or request trash can.” guide. IN trash can.”  
 eye contact.

If the child makes a mistake or needs more prompting, try again. Repeat a few times. Try to fade out the prompts and only tag-reinforce less-prompted responses. **If your child continues to wait for or appears to need prompts, *practice the movements themselves to build “momentum”* (for example, closing a door) and then go back to requesting these movements.** “Steven… [He makes eye contact.] Close the door, please.” *Review/practice any examples on your list that your child still needs to firm up*

**Step 2. Warming Up With Gesture Requests**Now we’ll do the same thing with gesture requests. Please list **gesture requests** with which your child **does** cooperate. You already identified these in evaluation question 3, above. For example, waving a child to come over, a hand palm up to say “Stop,” pointing to a chair to say “Sit here.”

The gesture requests that we use. What our child does when she cooperates. Responds quickly? Does the whole simple action or task? Stops but then restarts?

1. 1.

2. 2.

3. 3.

4. 4.

5. 5.

6. 6.

7. 7.

8. 8.

9. 9.

10. 10.

More?

Again, the basic method.

Gain attention. => Give gesture => Minimum prompt => Tag-reinforce +  
 Wait for request. For if needed: repeat verification. “Yes,   
 spontaneous example, wave gesture, point, come to Dad.”  
 eye contact or for “Come to physically guide.   
 request eye Dad.”

contact.

Repeat and try to fade out any prompts, and only tag-reinforce less-prompted responses. **If your child continues to wait for or appears to need prompts, practice the movements themselves to build “momentum” (for example, walking to you) and then go back to making a “Come to Dad” gesture**. *Review/practice any examples that your child needs to firm up!*

*Check to make sure that your child responds differently to different gestures*. For example, give a “sit here” gesture, then a “come to Mom” gesture, then a “put wrapper in the trash can” gesture. If your child makes an error on one of them, practice it a few times until she’s more firm.

Gain attention. => Give gesture => Minimum prompt => Tag-reinforce +  
 Wait for request. For if needed: repeat verification. “Yes,   
 spontaneous example, wave gesture, point, come to Dad.”  
 eye contact or for “Come to physically guide.   
 request eye Dad.”

contact.

Then “test” that gesture again, mixed in again with other gestures—for sit here, open a book, close the fridgem pet the cat. ***Practice these weaker ones more later and on future days.***

**Step 3. Teaching New Gestures.**This will be fun. We are going to use the same spoken requests in your list above. But we’re going to add a gesture that means the same thing. *The* ***spoken request*** *(to which your child already knows how to respond)* ***is the prompt*** *that helps your child respond to the gesture.* Then we fade out the spoken gesture. The method is called “time delay.” We’ve used it before and we’ll use it some more. First, let’s list examples to teach.

Spoken Requests From Our New Gestures that Mean the Same   
 Warm-up List, Above. Behavior as the Spoken Requests.

Child already Responds to We Want the Child to Respond to

These. these.

For, example,

Child already responds to, Point to the place for child to “Sit here.”   
 “Come and sit here.”

Child is holding her wet Mom pretends to swab her own  
 wash cloth. Mom says, face with the wash cloth.  
 “Wash face.” Child swabs Maybe she says, “Do this.”  
 her face.

Your turn to list examples to teach.

Spoken Requests From Our New Gestures that Mean the Same   
 Warm-up List, Above. Behavior as the Spoken Requests.

Child already Responds to We Want the Child to Respond to

These. these.

1. 1.   
  
 2. 2.

3. 3.

4. 4.

5. 5.

6. 6.

7. 7.

8. 8.

9. 9.

10. 10.

More?

Here’s what the method looks like.

Gain => Give gesture => If the child does not respond to the => If the verbal => Tag-reinforce-  
 attention: for sit here; gesture, give a prompt (the verbal request) prompt is not verify correct or  
 calm, eye for example, to which the child already responds. enough, ADD close tries.   
 contact point to the “Indra, sit here.” The first try, give the a physical

nearby couch. verbal request prompt at the same time prompt to the  
 as the gesture (0 time delay) *which almost verbal prompt--  
 ensures that the child will do it*. Then fade gently move   
 the verbal prompt by waiting 1 second; the child part way.  
 the next try, 2 seconds; next try, 3 seconds; Then try again.  
 next try, 4 seconds. The idea is that you   
 have connected the gesture and the verbal   
 request so many times that the child

finally responds to the gesture BEFORE   
 you give the verbal prompt.

Of course, we try fading out any prompts---such as the verbal request or moving the child---and we only tag-reinforce quicker and LESS-prompted responses.

Once your child’s learning mechanism gets the rule---

“Don’t wait for the spoken request. The gesture tells me what to do.”

---it will take fewer tries for your child to learn to respond to more gestures.

Keep track of your child learning to respond to gestures by making notes on your list for Step 3, above.   
Add new ones.   
*Make spoken requests and gesture requests a common part of your child’s family life*. Use the requests in natural settings.   
Here’s Mom and Nancy in the kitchen.

Mom’s Notes  
 I make a gesture for “Come here.” She walks over and makes eye contact. I pat her little round head.  
 I give a spoken request, “Hold this pot, please.” Nancy holds it and looks at me.  
 I make a gesture for, “Put the pot on the counter.” Nancy does this.  
 Nancy, turns and looks at me.  
 I say, “Yes, pot on counter!” and hug her.   
 I give a spoken request, “Open the fridge door.” She hesitates. I point (prompt) to the fridge. She hesitates. I   
 make a gesture for “Grab and pull.”  
 She walks over and pulls. The door is too tight. I help her to open the door a little and she opens it the rest of   
 the way.  
 She looks at me. I say, “Yes, open the door!”  
 I give a gesture-request that means “Have some juice.”   
 Nancy looks at the bottle of juice on the shelf.  
 I say, “Yes, juice,” give her the bottle, and get a cup. Reward.

Keep track of how you are using gestures and spoken requests with your child, just as Nancy’s Mom showed you.

Okay, here’s our last type of cooperation. It combines the elements of everything we’ve taught so far.

***7. Imitating Simple Movements***

The definition of this behavior is: *You give a simple gesture (pat head, stand up), and your child quickly and accurately moves her body the same way.* We’ve already taught your child all the elements of Motor Imitation: eye contact, watching you, cooperating with spoken requests, cooperating with gestures. *Motor Imitation is a kind of cooperation in which your child’s response is the same as your gesture request.* Note: We work on Motor Imitation in the next (third) book in the series. It helps to prepare a child for imitating speech (Verbal Imitation), which is used to help a child learn Functional Speech---asking questions, describing, answering, and many more. However, if your child is firm on the elements, we might as well **begin** to teach Motor Imitation now so that we can use it to teach her to cooperate in more tasks, and to work with you on large and small motor skills (LR3.), play (LR4), and life skills (LR5).

***Let’s Evaluate.***

(1) The child (usually; about half the time; once in a while; basically never) imitates simple movements (raises   
 hand) or actions (picks up and moves an object) shown (modeled) by another person. (Underline one.)  
(2) Please list the motor models that your child does imitate. Maybe you’ve noticed that your child sometimes   
 does what he sees another person doing. Or maybe you asked your child to copy what you are doing. We’ll   
 warm up with these later.

Movement Models That the Child Imitates Pretty Well

1.  
 2.  
   
 3.  
 4.  
 5.  
 6.  
 7.  
 8.  
 9.  
 10.  
 More?

***How To Teach This Behavior***

This is so easy. You’ve used this format many times already. And the child knows HOW to learn with it.  
However, you have to practice this!! It’s the basic format for teaching almost every skill from now on!

**Table 17. Teaching Your Child to Imitate Motor Models/Gestures**

1. Warm-up. For a few days, increase how often your child imitates models that she already DOES imitate, at   
 least sometimes and pretty well. This will firm up all the elements, such as looking at you, cooperating, and   
 moving as you do.  
 Look at the list of models that your child *already imitates*---your answer to evaluation question 2, above.   
 Practice with a friend!  
2. Either sit or stand in front of your child (for example, when the model is to stand up or to put a block in a   
 box) or sit or stand next to the child so that your child can see the model just as you see it (for example, when   
 the model is to hold up your right hand). See which works best. Then,  
 Gain your child’s attention. “Mark, look!”   
 Then,  
3. Say, => Give the => Wait => Prompt if needed=> Child does => Tag-reinforce  
 “Do model. 0-4 *Verbal.* “Arm up!” pretty good + “Yes, you

this.” [arm up] seconds *Physical.* Help imitation. DO with Dad.”  
 Maybe repeat. before you child raise his arm [Or your own

prompt. while YOU raise words.]  
 **your** arm.  
 First try. Prompt at the  
 same time as the model  
 (0 time delay).  
 Second try. Wait 1 second.  
 Third try. Wait 2 seconds.  
 Fourth try. Wait 3 seconds.  
 Fifth try. Wait 4 seconds.  
 You want the child to respond  
 to the model BEFORE the  
 prompt.   
 Three things to notice.  
 a. If you physically prompt (move) your child so that she imitates the model, make sure to keep showing   
 the model while you prompt---so that she can see what she is supposed to do. You don’t want her to   
 have to remember, “What did Mom do?”  
 b. Use time delay (from 0 to 4 seconds) between the model and any prompts. The idea is that your child   
 eventually moves herself (imitates) before you give the prompt.  
 c. The first tag point is imitating with or without prompts in a few seconds. We will shape improvements-  
 --closer imitations, faster imitations, and imitations with fewer prompts—by giving the tag and the big   
 reinforcers (treats) ONLY for improved imitations. *But we will still give a pat or praise for good tries.*

If your child does not imitate pretty well and under her own muscle power during the series of tries (she resists moving, looks away, whines), stop; do something else for a while. Then come back, or continue at another time and place; have her practice *just making the movement* (raise arm, pat table) until that movement is firm. Then try to get her to imitate when you model the movement. If that doesn’t work, *try a different model*---something that she does easily. Reinforce when she imitates before you prompt.

**The goal is that your child eventually imitates more closely to the model, right after you show the model and before you give any prompts**. So, tag-reinforce these improvements. For example,

“Let’s do that again.”   
 Show model and say “Do this.”  
 Try to give less of a prompt; for instance, keep holding your own arm up, but let go of your child’s arm (a   
 little, at first) so that she is holding it up as you tag-reinforce. Or give the verbal prompt with a softer voice,   
 or say only a word or two: “up.”  
 Tag-reinforce.

4. When, during step 3, your child is imitating a model-gesture without you telling her what to do (verbal   
 prompt, “Arm up.”), begin to fade out saying, “Do this.”   
  
 Show the => Prompt if child hesitates. => Child imitates. => Tag-reinforce.  
 model. [“Huh? What am I “Yes, you DO   
 supposed to do?”] with Dad.”  
 Give the spoken and/or  
 physical prompt. Use as little  
 as possible---a whisper, a  
 gentle nudge---so it’s easier   
 to fade all the way out.

Repeat this a few more times, but only tag-reinforce when your child responds to the gesture model with less   
 prompts.

5. When your child reliably imitates one simple gesture just by seeing the model, add another---make it quite   
 different so your child won’t be confused.   
6. *When your child is imitating two gestures, give little “tests*.” Let’s say Nancy now imitates arm up, pat head,   
 tap table, stand up, sit down. Mom says,  
   
 “Nancy, let’s do our moves. When we’re done, it’s ice cream.”  
 Mom and Nancy do arm up, then stand up, then pat head, then sit down, then arm up, then tap table, etc.  
 *When Nancy makes errors, Mom just uses the format in #4 above.*

a b c d

Mom shows => Mom gains => a. If Nancy does it => Tag-treat + “Yes, you  
 arm up, but attention. b. If Nancy doesn’t DO with Mom.”   
 Nancy pats “Nancy, do do it, Mom gains  
 her head. this.” Mom attention; says, “Do  
 shows the this”; says, “Arm

model. up”; and maybe

uses a physical  
 prompt. If Nancy   
 NOW does it,  
   
Mom and Nancy repeat this format a few times to firm it up.   
Then Mom tries to fade out the “Arm up” and “Do this” prompts in part c., above.

*If Nancy still has trouble, Mom uses part-firming*. She has Nancy practice just raising her arm while Mom   
 says, “Arm up.” Then Mom goes back to the basic format shown in step 4 above.

7. Make it natural.   
 a. Make it somewhat fun by having your child imitate at random times.  
 b. Sometimes run through a half dozen models at once.

c. Use imitation during routine activities. Flatten a hamburger patty. Flip a pancake. Fill a cup with milk.   
 Roll a ball. Stack a block. Turn a page. Put on a cap. Push a chair under a table.  
 d. Practice imitation in other places and with other materials. From flattening hamburgers to flattening a   
 folded washcloth. Get other persons to give the models.

8. Keep a list of models you are working on, and tell how well the child is doing. “Imitates without a prompt.”   
 “Still needs some physical guidance.” For example,

**Keeping Track of Motor Imitation**

Models We’re Working on How Much Prompting How Well Child Imitates the Model We are Using  
Day 1

Raise arm above head. Have to tell her “Arm She’s close only when we move her arm.  
 up.”   
 Have to raise her arm  
 the whole way.  
  
 Day 2  
 Same

Day 3 She’s got it! She moves her arm right after I show the model.   
 We only have to gently touch her elbow to get   
 her to raise her arm all the way.

Okay, let’s go to the next chapter—Chapter4, Learning Readiness Skills 2, which is on sitting with you to learn certain skills, such as play, imitation, speech. But first,

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**Chapter 4 – Learning Readiness 2**  
  
In LR 2, we teach three skills:   
The child comes to the teaching area.  
The child sits.  
The child learns to interact with a family member or other person and work on simple motor or play tasks.

Why teach a child to sit—item LR2? Because   
1. Sometimes you’ll have sit-down teaching sessions where a child can get a lot of practice.  
2. Lots of social activities involve sitting---meals, reading stories, hanging out in the den with the family.  
3. Sitting on chairs and couches is a good place for independent activity, including calming down.  
So, this chapter teaches a child to come to the table or another place to sit; to “sit big”; and to sit or stand long enough to work with you on a skill. Our goals are to:

1. Get the child to a sitting area (such as a table) and to sit down:  
 a. Spontaneously, and   
 b. On request.   
2. Increase how well the child sits---“sitting big,” with head up, hands down, Quiet Mouth, looking at parent, teacher, and other persons.   
3. Increase how much time the child sits and works at simple tasks to about 10 minutes.  
If the child has already learned to cooperate with simple spoken requests (especially coming when called: Chapter 3, LR1.7), it should be pretty easy to get him sitting down. In fact, he may already have fairly good sitting behavior. But if you are dealing with a child that likes to tease and have tantrums, the methods in this chapter will teach her to sit.  
  
***Let’s Evaluate.***Observe your child. Think of what you already know. Take notes. Then circle as many as apply, and underline.

(1) Child (often; sometimes; rarely; never) sits down with someone to work at a task.  
(2) If the child will sit and work with someone, how often will he come and sit on his own? (often; sometimes;   
 rarely; never).  
(3) If the child will sit and work with someone, how often will he come and sit on request? (often; sometimes;   
 rarely; never).  
(4) If the child will sit and work with someone, how long will he stay sitting before he becomes restless and tries   
 to get up? (for 30 minutes or more; for 15 to 30 minutes; for 5 to 15 minutes; for less than 5 minutes)  
(5) The child will sit and work with (almost anyone; most persons; only certain people; basically does not sit and   
 work).  
(6) Does the child need to improve on “sitting big” elements, such as holding head up; holding upper body up;   
 looking at the parent or teacher; keeping feet on the floor (if appropriate); keeping hands down (if   
 appropriate); not making noises? (please underline as many as apply.)  
(7) When the child is sitting to work or play with someone using toys or other “manipulatives” (such as   
 household objects), how does the child do the following? (please underline.)  
 a. Notices toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

b. Looks at toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

c. Moves arm toward toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

d. Touches toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

e. Takes toy or object from parent. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

f. Holds toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)  
 g. Gives toy or object to parent. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

h. Manipulates toy or object---picks it up, turns it around, puts it with another object. (does this often;   
 does this sometimes; rarely does this)

i. Plays with toy or object---stacks objects, fits objects, works objects (such as pretending to use a spoon.

Okay, so now you have an idea of what aspects of sitting we need to work on.

***How to “Shape” This Behavior***

“Shaping” is teaching by reinforcing small improvements in the right direction**.** We might shape **skill** by reinforcing improvements in the child’s movements. We might shape **speed** by reinforcing small increases in how fast a child does a behavior. We might shape **independence** by reinforcing “performances” in which the child’s behavior gets less prompting. Now we will use shaping to increase **how closely a child moves** towards sitting at a table (couch, etc.), and **how long** the child sits. Here are lists of shaping steps.

**Table 18. Steps in Shaping Movements Closer to the Table and in How Long a Child Sits**

Getting Closer to the Table How Long the Child Sits  
1. Child takes two steps in the direction 1. Child sits big for a few seconds.  
 of the table---for instance, from the 2. Child sits big for a minute.  
 other side of the room. 3. Child sits big for 2-4 minutes.  
2. Child moves into what you might 4. Child sits big for 5-10 minutes.  
 call the teaching area; for example, 5. Child sits big for more than 10 minutes.  
 an area maybe three feet around   
 the table and materials.   
3. Child touches the chair or table.  
4. Child sits or stands at table.  
5. Child “sits big” at the table.

If the child already sits on request, we’ll increase how long he sits. But let’s say that the child *does not* sit on request. When you tell him to sit with you, he grins and runs the other way or pretends he does not hear you. Or maybe she is always on the move and hardly ever sits on her own. How do you get the child to sit down? Here are a few methods. First, please review Table 15 (Teaching a Child to Stop) in 4 (Child Stops on Request); and 5 (Child comes when asked) in Learning Readiness 7. We are going to use some of the same methods to get your child to come to you and then to sit with you…. Okay, here we go.

**The Method of Hot and Cold to Shape Sitting**

Did you ever play “hot and cold? You hide something in the room. The searcher walks around looking for the item. If he turns in the right direction, you say “Hotter.” If he turns any other way, “Colder.” If he walks closer, “Hotter.” If he walks farther away, “Colder.” Eventually, he is right on it. That’s what we’re doing now.

1. Make sure that you have a tagger and a strong reward you can give quickly and many times. Food, praise, and tokens are examples.   
2. Pick an hour or two to shape sitting. Let’s say the child is in another room or at the end of the room away from the teaching area. Look again at the shaping steps in Table 18 above.  
3. **You are standing in the room with the teaching area.** Watch the child. *The first tag point is walking a few steps towards the teaching area*. Quickly tag-reinforce taking those few steps. If he turns away after the reward, ignore it. When he turns back to teaching area, and takes a few steps closer again, tag-reinforce again.   
  
As time goes by, tag-reinforce only for *getting closer* and closer to the teaching area. *Each closer distance is the next tag point.*  
 a. 10 feet away.   
 b. Five feet away.   
 c. In a circle around the teaching area.  
 d. Standing right next to the chair or table.  
 e. Touching the chair, when the seat is easy to climb on.  
 f. Getting on the chair when it is turned at an angle from the table---easy to climb on.  
 g. Getting on the chair when the seat is more under the table.  
 h. At this point, you tag-reinforce slightly longer amounts (times) of sitting.  
 If the child stays seated, tag-reinforce *about* every 20 or 30 seconds of **calm** sitting.  
 [Of course, talk to the child, show interesting things and do something with them. Otherwise, what’s   
 the point of sitting?]

**Shaping by Waiting for the Child to Get Closer**

Another way to shape sitting at the teaching area or any other place (such as a couch) is to sit down and wait for the child to come to you. If you have been reinforcing other behaviors (like eye contact and cooperating with requests) and he sees you holding a tagger or treat, he is likely to come to you. When he is standing near you, tag and give the treat. Then ask him to sit down with you or in a chair next to you. If he does not, ignore it. But, next time, *tag-treat only for standing closer to you than before*. Later, tag-treat only when he is *touching* the chair or couch you want him to sit in. Finally, tag-treat only when he is *sitting*. Again, tag-treat about every 20 seconds or so that he stays seated---sooner if needed. And interact with the child to make sitting with you interesting and rewarding.

**How to Shape Coming and Staying in Other Places for Play and Family Routines**

You can use exactly the same methods as above to teach a child to join you in the kitchen, in a play area outside, on the couch.   
1. Have something interesting going on. The sounds of making a snack. The child’s favorite book or toy.  
2. Wait for the child to get closer. Tag-reinforce. Or,  
3. Ask the child to come to you. Tag-reinforce movements in the right direction.  
4. If the child walks the other way or “refuses” to join you, go about your business. Be prepared for the child to again move in your direction.  
5. Once the child is with you, give the child small actions to do (turn the page, look at a picture, spread peanut butter on bread) and reinforce it. “Here, have a bite!” We’ll discuss this a little later.

**What If These Shaping Methods (Hot and Cold, Waiting and Reinforcing) Do Not Work?**

If these two methods do not get (a young) child seated, because he runs away and teases when you ask him to sit down or after you tag-reinforce, just tell him he *is going* to sit, pick him up, put him in the chair, and *make him sit!* If he sits quietly for even a few seconds, tag-treat. If he fusses and tries to get up, *hold him.* Do not ease up until he relaxes in the seat. When he relaxes, give him more treats, stroke him, and *count* the seconds *out loud.* When he has been sitting quietly for a count of five or ten seconds tell him, “Okay, now you can (do something he wants to do),” and let him up. When he will sit quietly for ten seconds, slowly increase how long he must sit to earn the food reward and be allowed to get up. *But do not let him up until you say so, and only when he is quiet.* I would *only* use this method with a young (easier to manage) child. I would not use this method for getting a child to join you for play and family routines! Use shaping.

**Sitting on Request**

If the child sits when you ask, fine. If not, teach her to sit on request the same way you teach a child to make eye contact on request (LR 1.3). *Wait until she is about to sit.* Then slip in the request (“Indra, sit down.”). If she sits, give her lots of praise and a bite of food (if food is still needed). If she runs the other way, do not chase her. Ignore it and try again later. If she just stands there, *prompt* her to sit by pointing to or patting the place where you want her to sit, and reward her when he sits. Repeat the steps shown below:

Wait till she is => Give the request. => Prompt if needed. => Tag-treat +  
about to sit. “Sit here.” Point or touch “Yes, sit.”  
 the chair.   
 Physical  
 guidance

Do this several times a day.

If this works, request the child to sit when she is a *little further away* from the chair or couch. Ignore if she runs away, prompt if she needs it, and tag-treat when she cooperates with the request to sit.

After several days, if the (young) child still refuses to sit when asked, tell her to sit down, put her in the chair, and make her sit by holding her until she relaxes. Then reward her for sitting quietly and count to ten (even less if 10 is too long) *out loud.* Let her have an activity reward for sitting quietly. Slowly increase how long she is to sit quietly. Repeat this several times a day until she sits a *few minutes* without having to be prompted or held.

So, we’ve taught a child to come to a table and sit. Now we want “good sitting,” so the child can more easily interact with other persons and objects.

**“Sitting Big”**Sometimes Jimmy drapes himself across the table and puts his head down. Or he rocks back and forth. Nancy sits with one half of her bottom off the chair and one leg kicking under the table. Kids don’t have to sit as if they are cadets at a military academy, but certain postures are better than others when it comes to learning with you. Given what you know of your child, consider a range of sitting postures. Consider:

1. Head. How erect? How still and calm?  
2. Feet. Planted on the floor? How much movement is okay?  
3. Upper body. Against the back of the chair? Or is some “slouching” alright?  
4. Hands. Flat on the table? Or is hands somewhere on the table and calm, good enough?  
5. Looking at you.  
6. Quiet.  
  
You don’t want to be doing tug-of-war over sitting. So, if your child has the language, use model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce to teach the **routine** (the steps) in “good sitting,” “sitting big,” or whichever phrase you chose. For example…  
First, Dad uses model (I do) -test/check (You do).  
“Jack. Let’s learn how to sit big. Watch me. Feet on the floor….”   
“Now, you do it…. Yes, feet on the floor.”   
“Now I sit UP straight. ….”  
“Your turn…You got it. Up straight.” [Pat on shoulder.]   
Now, I put my arms on the table, like this…   
You do it. ….Arms on the table… Correct. I love those arms on the table!   
One more. Look at Pop right in the eye… OOoo, that’s looking right in my eye.”[Pop and Jack have some chips.]

Now Dad uses lead (We do).

“Okay, now let’s do the **whole thing** together. Ready?... Feet on the floor!....Terrific. Up straight!...Yup. up. Arms on the table… We are big sitters! And look each other in the eye!... Oh, man. We are the best.”

Now Dad uses test/check (You do). Dad fades out the verbal prompt.

“Your turn, Jack. Feet!... Yes, feet nice and firm on the floor… UP… You got it. Straight up… Now arms… Good arms, Jack…One more. Eyes… Yes, right in my eyes. Let’s have a burger.”

In future sessions, Dad and Jack will do this routine together. And then Jack will do it himself WHILE Dad sits there **modeling** sitting big. Later, Dad might slouch some and ask Jack to sit big.

Dad will reinforce Jack’s big sitting intermittently as they work or play together. Dad will occasionally ask Jack to check his own and Dad’s sitting. “Am I sitting big, Jack?... What should I do?”

Teach the steps one at a time if your child does not have enough language to learn all the steps at once, like Jack. It may take several days.

1. I would begin with a warm up on simple imitations at the teaching table: arms up, feet on floor, sit up, hands on table, pat head, touch nose.   
2. Then model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce one sitting-big behavior---such as Quiet Mouth.   
 “I’ll do Quiet Mouth.”  
 “Do Quiet Mouth with me.”  
 “Your turn to do Quiet Mouth.”  
3. Then start to work with the child on a simple task. Practice Quiet Mouth a few more times with model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce. Tag-reinforce intermittently when the child is quiet or does good sounds/words on his own. Make sure to **name** the behavior. “Yes, quiet.”  
4. Now work on a second sitting-big behavior---such as sitting upright. **Name** the behavior. Keep tag-reinforcing Quiet Mouth. When the child is doing both of these behaviors more often, teach a third behavior---such as hands calm on the table. Keep working on the simple task.  
5. Repeat step 3 for feet calm and then for looking at you.  
6. Continue to reinforce all these behaviors intermittently as you work on the simple task. Use the cue as a reminder. “Jimmy, show me hands calm.” Then tag-reinforce.  
Be patient. A little at a time. Once your child learns that ONE sitting behavior is tag-reinforced, it will be easier for her to learn the other behaviors.

**Teaching a Child to Interact (Learn) With You Using Toys and Other “Manipulatives”**

With all of our work on eye contact and sitting (above), the child should be coming to the teaching area, sitting, and maybe doing a few simple tasks with you. This section will help you to teach or to firm up basic interaction skills that your child will use from now on: learning large and small motor skills, play, and life skills in this book, as well as Motor Imitation, Verbal Imitation, Functional Speech, and Chores and Self-help Skills (in later books in the series). You already evaluated your child on this item earlier in this chapter. Here’s the item again.r   
  
When the child is sitting to work or play with someone using toys or other “manipulatives” (such as household objects), how does the child do the following? (please underline.)  
a. **Notices** toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

b. **Looks at** toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

c. **Moves** arm toward toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

d. **Touches** toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

e. **Takes** toy or object from parent. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

f. **Holds** toy or object. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)  
g. **Gives** toy or object to parent. (does this often; does this sometimes; rarely does this)

h. **Manipulates** toy or object---picks it up, turns it around, puts it with another object. (does this often; does   
 this sometimes; rarely does this)

i. **Plays with** toy or object---stacks objects, fits objects, works objects (such as pretending to use a spoon.

Please read the action words above—plays, manipulates, gives, holds. We will start working on these actions now, and will continue working on them in Chapter 5, on large motor and small motor movements.  
   
Notice that the items above are arranged from the basic elements to more complex behaviors that use the elements. Each item prepares the child for the next. This means that we can use a shaping process combined with model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce to teach any behaviors that the child doesn’t know how to do.   
  
Here’s Mr. Tucker working with Tommy. Tommy’s attention and cooperation behaviors have (all his young life) been so weak that Dad works carefully on every tiny element (behavior) that persons use when they join another person in a task. In other words, *Tommy has no idea how to interact with another person on tasks.*

However, if your child has more skills than Tommy, you can skip some teaching steps, below. But, if you find out that some skill elements are weak (for example, picking up objects), just come back here to find out how to strengthen them, as Tommy’s Dad is doing.

What about tagging? It may be that a child does NOT need a tag to draw her attention to every desirable behavior, and to signal her, “Yes, do it like that!” Instead, immediate reinforcement (treat, hug, pat) and verification (“Yes, looking at the fire truck.”) may be enough to communicate, “Yes, like that!” and to keep her engaged. You’ll have to see. *If a child seems to need an immediate SOUND to communicate “Yes, do that!” for a certain behavior (such as sitting big), then go back to tag-reinforce-verify for that behavior.* Now , here is Tommy and his Dad.

1. *Pop firms up (warms up) most of the Learning Readiness skills that he and Tommy have worked on the past month or so*. Eye contact on request, good sounds/words, siting big, Quiet Mouth, and cooperation with simple requests (such as gestures and imitations). How does he do this? Easy.

It’s Saturday. For 5-10 minutes, Dad and Tommy go to different parts of the house. “Tommy, let’s go to the den…. Now let’s go outside and play…. Now let’s sit at our teaching table.….” Wherever they are, *Dad and Tommy practice the list of Learning Readiness skills that they’ve worked on,* just as basketball players practice the basics before a game, in all sections of the court. Here’s what it looks like.  
a. Dad says, “Tommy.” Tommy looks. => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, look at Dad.”   
 A few seconds later,  
b. Dad says, “Tommy, come to Dad.” Tommy comes. => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, COME to Dad.”   
 If Tommy doesn’t come, Dad ignores it.   
 Dad tries again later, using a gesture prompt or standing closer to Tommy. If Tommy comes to Dad,   
 Tag-reinforce + “Yes, come to Dad.” Next,

c. Tommy is quiet and calm. => Tag-treat + “Yes, Quiet Mouth.” Next,  
d. Dad says, “Tommy.” (Tommy makes eye contact.) Please put this (trash) IN the wastebasket (Dad   
 points).”   
 Tommy does it pretty well. => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, IN the trash.” Then,  
e. Tommy looks at Dad. Dad says, “Do this…” (Dad raises arms above his head.) Tommy imitates. => Tag-  
 reinforce + “Yes, arms UP.” Now,  
f. Tommy says, “uhhh.” => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, up,” and picks Tommy up. Then,  
g. Dad runs a small airplane across the table, and makes the sound of a jet engine. Tommy looks up at the   
 airplane and laughs. Dad takes Tommy’s hand and they both make the airplane move around. “Yes, UP…… now doooooowwwwn… You make it go UP.”

*Your turn.*

Make a list of Learning Readiness skills---responding to changes, eye contact (spontaneous and on request), cooperating with simple requests, Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words, sitting big, walking with you, coming when called, imitating gestures---to practice. What would you say? How would you tag-reinforce? We might as well practice BEFORE we do it with a child!  
  
**Table 19. Learning Readiness Skills to Firm Up**

LR Skill. Tag Point What We’ll Say to How We’ll Tag-  
 Start the Interaction Reinforce  
  
 1. Eye contact on Makes eye contact “Tommy… Look at Clicker + treat +  
 request. LR1.3 within 2 seconds. Daddy.” “Yes, you looked

at Daddy.”  
 2.

3.  
  
 4.

5.

6.

7.

etc.

“How long should we do this?” It’s up to you. We have already increased these behaviors, so it should not take long to firm them up. A few days? A week?

Now that the Learning Readiness elements of interacting with Dad are firmer (Tommy does them more often, more reliably, and more quickly), Dad starts working on interaction with Tommy around toys and other objects, one little step at a time.

2. *Child notices toy or object.*

Dad and Tommy are sitting at the teaching table. Dad holds up an interesting object. If needed, he prompts by moving it in front of Tommy, talking about it (“Red ball”.), pointing to it, making it do something. If Tommy turns towards it => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, look at the red ball.” If Tommy doesn’t respond, Dad tries again a few more times. If Tommy still does not respond, Dad does something else (rolls a toy car?) then tries again later.

Dad and Tommy repeat with several more objects.

Next, Dad teaches Tommy to FOCUS, not just notice.

3. *Looks at (scans) toy or object-----building focused attention.*

Dad holds up an interesting object. If needed, he prompts by moving it in front of Tommy, talking about it (“Fire truck.”), pointing to it. If Tommy turns towards it and seems to look at its features as Dad *turns the object* => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, look at the fire truck. (points) Wheels…. Ladder…. Hose…. Here. YOU touch the hose… (prompt by pointing and moving Tommy’s hand). Yes, that’s the HOSE.”  
If Tommy doesn’t respond, Dad does something else (looks at pictures?) and tries again later.

Dad and Tommy repeat with several more objects.

4. *Moves arm toward toy or object*.

Dad holds objects near Tommy. If Tommy reaches for it => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, spoon.”   
Dad moves the object to different places in front of Tommy.   
Whenever Tommy looks at it and reaches towards it, => Tag-treat + “Yes, cup.”

This step leads quickly to the next.  
5. *Touches toy or object*.

Again, Dad shows the objects. He’s already reinforced reaching. Now he waits (raises the tag point) for Tommy to touch the objects. He can prompt this by   
a. Moving the object a little closer to Tommy’s hand as Tommy reaches for it.  
b. Telling Tommy, “Hold it” or “Touch.”  
 Then Tag-reinforce + “Yes, (touch, hold) cup.”

Dad and Tommy repeat this with several other objects. Since the words “cup” and “touch” are always used, Dad is also beginning to teach Tommy the names for things. Please take a look at the section, “Begin To Teach The NamesFor Things Even If Your Child Cannot Say The Names,” at the end of Chapter 5.

6. *Takes toy or object from parent*.

This follows right from touching of holding the object. Now that Tommy is touching the cup, Dad says, “Take” or “Take cup.” If Tommy takes it (even if the grip is awkward) => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, TAKE cup.” If Tommy does not do the tiny movements of taking the object, Dad prompts by moving Tommy’s fingers, moving the object, or he simply waits! If Tommy still does not take the object, Dad puts it down, waits, and then goes back to tag-reinforcing touching. Then he moves ahead again to taking.   
   
Dad could start with objects that Tommy likes to hold---such as a spoonful of ice cream, a Cheeze Doodle, or an apple slice. Then when Tommy is reliably taking these objects, Dad could add less-interesting objects. Take apple slice… take cup… take apple slice… take toy car…

Notice that Dad can now teach Tommy to notice, look at, reach for, pick up, and hold objects *from off the table*.   
 Model: “I’ll pick up the car. I PICK UP.”  
 Lead: “You PICK UP the car with me…. Yes, PICK UP.”   
 Test/check: “You PICK up the car.” Dad prompts if needed; repeats and tries less prompting.

Dad will work on this same behavior---picking things up---in other places.

7. *Holds toy or object*.   
Please see items in the section, “Arm and Hand Movements,” in Chapter 5, where we do more work on these behaviors. Use the methods there if your child needs help on this next step.

Well, now that Tommy is taking objects from Dad, Dad shapes (improves) this behavior into holding an object. “How?” Like this.  
Dad  
 a. Models and prompts Tommy to wrap his palm and fingers around the object. Tag-reinforce + “Yes,   
 HOLD ball.”  
 b. Dad lets Tommy hold it for a few seconds (or physically helps him to hold it). Tag-reinforce + “Yes,   
 HOLD ball.”  
 c. Dad raises the tag point. Tommy holds the object for a few seconds longer and with less prompting   
 from Dad. => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, HOLD ball.”  
 d. Of course, they do this with a bunch of objects---perhaps starting with objects that Tommy likes.   
 Tommy looks at, reaches for, takes, and holds an apple => Dad cuts a slice out of it. => Tommy looks at,   
 reaches for, takes, holds and eats the slice.  
8. *Gives toy or object to parent.*

Now that Tommy is taking objects from Dad, Dad can teach Tommy to **give** objects. How?  
 a. Dad does the “take” part of the routine—step 6.   
 b. Now that Tommy is holding the block, Dad reaches his hand towards the block and says, “GIVE block”   
 (or a full sentence if Tommy has the language). If Tommy moves the block closer to Dad’s hand, Dad   
 takes it => Tag-reinforce + “Yes, GIVE block.”  
 If Tommy does not move the block closer to Dad’s hand, Dad physically prompts this tiny movement   
 and takes the block, and says, GIVE block.” He repeats this. The tag point is Tommy moving the object **any closer** to Dad’s hand so that Dad can take it and Tag-reinforce. After a few repetitions, Dad   
 raises the tag point. Tommy moves the object closer to Dad’s hand; Dad puts his fingers around the object, and Tommy opens his fingers to release the object. “GIVE block.”  
  
 *Perhaps Dad and Tommy can go back and forth, taking and giving objects.*   
 “Take truck…. Yes, TAKE truck. Look at the wheels. Spin, spin, wheels…. You spin wheels (or spin   
 wheels with me.)….Now, Tommy, GIVE truck… Yes, GIVE truck!”

*Repeat with more objects*---starting with interesting ones, and objects **that can be part of family   
 activities** that USE taking and giving. For example,

*Make a sandwich*.   
 Dad has Tommy take a slice of bread and put it on a plate.   
 Dad has Tommy pick up (or Dad hands Tommy a slice of cheese.   
 Dad has Tommy give the slice to him.   
 Dad and Tommy put the cheese on the bread.  
 Dad has Tommy take an open jar of mayo.   
 Dad and Tommy spread mayo on slice of cheese.   
 Dad has Tommy take another slice of bread.   
 Dad and Tommy put it on the cheese.   
 Dad has Tommy take the sandwich.

9. *Manipulates toy or object---picks it up, turns it around, puts it with another object*. This shouldn’t be too hard to teach. Jimmy is already looking at and holding objects.   
 a. Dad and Tommy take and give objects they will manipulate. This starts the routine. “Tommy. Look.   
 Car…” Tommy looks. “TAKE car.” Tommy takes the car.

b. Dad models how to manipulate objects: pick up, turn it around, touch it, put it next to another object,   
 turn it over, push it. Dad names what he is doing.  
 “GIVE car…” Tommy gives Dad the car. “Watch. Push, push, push car.” [I think “push” is better than   
 “roll,” because “push” means move the whole car, while “roll” points to the wheels; and Tommy may   
 not notice rolling wheels yet.  
 c. Dad has Tommy move objects with him. “Now, PUSH car **with** me (small physical prompt if needed   
 to help Tommy to hold and push the car) “Yes, push, push, push car.”   
 d. Dad has Tommy do this by himself. “You PUSH the car.” Dad gives small prompts if needed, and tag-  
 reinforces when Tommy pushes the car a little way **while looking at it.** e. They do pushing with other objects around the house. Dad tries to make pushing PART of a larger   
 routine that ends with a natural reinforcer.  
 (1) Push a chair under a table.  
 (2) Take milk from the fridge and push the door shut.  
 (3) Push a cup from the center of the table to Jimmy’s place; then pour the drink into his cup.

f. Once Tommy is firm with pushing objects, Dad and Tommy works on other actions, such as stacking,   
 rolling, fitting, and squeezing---using steps a-d.

10. *Plays with toy or object---stacks objects, fits objects, works objects (such as pretending to use a spoon).*At this point, the child has some of the basic elements for learning to play and to “work with” objects. Dad and Tommy (and we) then go to Chapters 5 and 6.

**Increasing How Long the Child Sits While Working at Some Task**

The main reason you want to teach your child to sit is that it is easier to learn some skills that way. Standing up gets tiring after a while. So, when you have gotten your child to sit---either by shaping, requesting, or physically prompting him to sit---give him something to do and reward him for doing it. Work on simple activities, such as puzzles, coloring, stacking blocks, reading him a story, pointing to pictures, or a lesson. Do this several times a day.

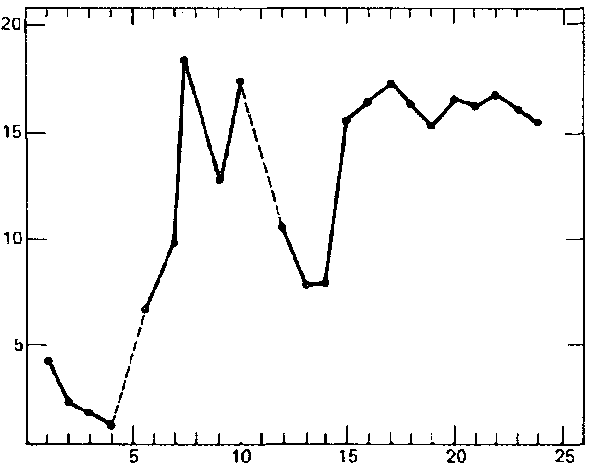
Tag-reinforce often with food, praise, or tokens for doing the task or activity well. *Also reward her for good: sitting.* Use a Changing Interval Schedule. One time, you might reward her for good sitting after 30 seconds; the next time, after 2 minutes; the third time, after 1 minute; and the next time, after 4 minutes. In other words, keep the rewards coming for doing the task and for sitting, but do not let her figure out how long she must sit before the reward. What to use as rewards? Use food (if needed) while she is sitting, and use *activity* rewards (by both of you getting up) after she has sat and worked *a little while.* You can use a kitchen timer at the table to signal when to get up and do *what she wants.*

Remember to keep eye contact going when you are working on tasks. Reward spontaneous eye contact a few times each session. Also use *chaining.* For example, wait for or request eye contact *before* you give the child the next puzzle piece, before you turn the page, or before you ask her to point to a picture.

If the child gets up during these little sessions, ignore it and wait for him to come back, but *reset* the timer when he is back. In fact, if someone else is sitting near you (parent, another child, or teacher), start doing the task with that person. Ham it up to get the child’s attention. Show him that people who sit and work with others are rewarded. When he comes back, *do not reward him right away;* that will only teach him to leave and come back for a reward. Wait until he has been sitting and working for a minute or so.

Often, when a child’s good sitting behavior weakens---he will not stay seated any more or he puts up a fuss---it has something to do with working at the tasks. Remember: at this time your goal is to get the child sitting and working for only 10 minutes. He should be *just beginning* tosit and work at tasks. Figure 3 shows the program on good sitting run by Nancy’s mother. For the first week, Nancy’s mother used shaping. She tag-treated Nancy when she came over and sat down next to Mom. As sitting increased, Mom began to request Nancy to sit with her. Then they would work on simple tasks. As you see from the chart, good sitting was increased in a short time. Nancy reached the goal of 10 minutes in one week.

**Figure 3. Increasing How Long a Child Sits With Mom**



Number of Minutes   
 Child Sat and Worked   
 Next to Her Mother

Days

When your child has learned to sit and work at tasks with you for about 10 minutes, and to sit on request, begin to work on *generalization*: sitting with you in other places inside and outside the home, working on different tasks, and with other persons. Remember to continue tag-reinforcing good sitting. If it weakens---your child gets antsy, whiney, or wants to leave---he may be bored by the tasks; tasks may be too hard; he may be making too many errors and getting too little reinforcement. Please look at Chapter 8 to see how to solve these kinds of problems. When good sitting is firm---as defined above---go on to Chapter 5, where we evaluate and teach many *movements or motor behaviors that are elements of just about everything else we’ll teach*. For example, a child must be firm on “tiny” movements/behaviors such as turning her head, reaching for objects, rotating her wrists grasping and fitting objects, carrying objects while walking, bending and standing, and more before we’ll have much luck teaching a child to play with toys, participate in dressing, or imitate.

**Chapter 5** **– Learning Readiness 3  
Looking, Listening, And Moving: Large and Small Motor Skills**

This is the Learning Readiness 3 skill area. We will evaluate and teach knowledge/behavior items 1-59. But first, we must use these….

***Guidelines for Keeping Earlier Behaviors Going Strong***

At this point a child should be pretty good at skills in Learning Readiness 1 and 2---doing them often and with a fair amount of skill. The child is  
1. Responding to changes around him.  
2 Making eye contact on his own*.*

3, Making eye contact on request.

4. Making eye contact to get natural rewards.

5. Reinforced/rewarded by (enjoying) social contact: praise, hugs, play.  
6. Using “Quiet Mouth” and good sounds/words.

7. Cooperating with (following) simple requests, such as walking with you, stopping, coming when called, responding to gestures, and imitating simple movements.  
8. Coming to teaching areas and other places, sitting, and beginning to interact with parents and other persons using toys and everyday objects.

How will we keep all these behaviors going strong at the same time that we are teaching new skills? Well, it’s not as hard as juggling 10 plates with one hand. It’s a matter of using a few guidelines and making a simple plan.

You’ve seen these reminders before.

1. Reinforce earlier behaviors---such as spontaneous eye contact, Quiet Mouth, and cooperation with requests---on an intermittent, variable schedule with treats, hug, praise, verifications, and activities. Especially *tag-reinforce* when the child does these behaviors with more skill or for a longer time. If a behavior weakens, reinforce it more often.

2. Keep giving opportunities to do earlier behaviors---to come to you, imitate, respond to gestures, sit, make eye contact.

3. Move to natural reinforcers.  
 a. Grandma’s Law. “As soon as you…., you can….”  
 b. Teach the child to use her new behaviors in interaction. Requests to open the fridge (so the child can get   
 a snack), to put clothes in the hamper (so the child can get a bubble bath).

c. Pause sequences so that the child has to do a behavior to get something she used to take for granted.   
 For instance, the child has to make eye contact, or to say a sound (if that is her point of success for   
 speech), or to stand calmly for 5 seconds, before you open a door.

4. This is a good time to use a token system for certain behaviors---such as cooperation, good sounds/words, sitting with you.

5. Be on the lookout for your child to DO earlier behaviors. Let’s say that she comes and sits with you, puts something in the trash, is walking calmly with you. Build on these. Turn these into something more. A play session, reading a book.

6. Try to integrate behaviors into a sequence, an activity. Here’s how? See if you can identify the Learning Readiness skills, using the list of “earlier behaviors,” above.

Mom is making happy sounds with materials at the teaching table. Pearl looks at Mom. “Hi, Big Girl!”   
 Mom gestures Pearl to come over. Mom moves the chair so Pearl can easily climb on. Hug and tickle. Pearl   
 giggles. Mom says, “Sit down, Toots.” Pearl sits. Head pat. Pearl smiles. Mom brings out a book of zoo   
 animals that make sounds when you push a button. Mom pushes a button and the book says “Mmmooo.”   
 Pearl turns to the sound and smiles. Mom points to the cow and says, “Listen to the cow.” Mmmooo. Pearl   
 moves her head closer to the book. Mom rubs Pearl’s arm. Mom says, “You say…. Mmmooo.” Pearl puts her   
 lips together. Tag-raisin. Mom says, “Yes, mmmmooo.” Mom turns the page. A duck. Mom says, “You PUSH button. She gives a partial physical prompt. The book says Quack….. Pearl turns to the sound and   
 looks at the duck. Big hug. Mom takes a rubber ducky named Ned out of the toy box. Pearl looks at the   
 duck. “This (Mom holds the duck closer to Pearl to emphasize “This.”) is a Duck. Watch the duck WALK.”   
 Mom moves Ned across the table top. She makes Ned start and stop to attract Pearl’s attention. Pearl’s eyes   
 follow (track) Ned. “Walk, walk, walk.” Mom hugs Pearl as Pearl watches Ned.

What does Mom do next? She modeled how to make Ned walk. Now she….  
   
 Do you see how Mom and Pearl used most of the Learning Readiness 1-2 skills?

They can do the same thing in the kitchen, during Pearl’s bath, in the yard, or even in a store. Do you think   
 Mom’s and Pearl’s life is different than it was before they started, in Chapter One? Pearl is a “different child.”   
 And Mom is both a mother and a proficient teacher.

A table like this will be a big help.

**Table 20. How We’ll Keep Earlier Behaviors Strong**

1. List behaviors you’ll keep strong. Tell what features of these behaviors you are trying to keep strong or even   
 to improve? How often the child does it? How fast? How long? More places? Less prompts? More   
 skill/fewer weak elements?

2. What teaching methods will you use?   
3. Comment on how well your child is doing and what you might try to improve. Please see Chapter 8.

Behavior. Methods Progress  
 1. Tag point.  
  
 2. Reinforcers and  
 reinforcement schedules.  
  
 3. Prompts. Physical,

gesture, model, template.  
 Details?  
  
 4. Keep the behavior going   
 and improving where?  
 Regular sessions at table?  
 Regular sessions in everyday  
 activities.  
 Opportunities that come up.

Okay, so let’s say you have planned how to keep earlier skills going strong. Now what?

Learning Readiness skills 1 and 2 are important for living and learning with other persons. So, what’s next? *Well, almost everything we do uses movements*. Remember how we did knowledge analysis earlier? We ask, What are the **steps** in getting dressed? Undies, shirt, pants, socks, shoes, bow tie, top hat. What are the **movement elements in each step**? Consider the last step--putting on a baseball cap before we go out. What movements do we use? Stand up. Move our head to receive the cap. Open and close fingers around the cap. Raise, extend (straighten), flex (bend) arms to put the cap on our head. Move our eyes to follow what we are doing. Pull the hat down to above our ears. Let the cap go.

Can a child learn to dress herself if she isn’t **firm** doing these movement elements?

NO. So, we must know the **steps** and the **movement elements** in all skills that we’ll teach from now on, so that we can:

1. Evaluate how your child does a new skill. Is she firm on the steps and elements?  
2. Firm up any weak steps and elements that are used in the new skill.  
3. Notice a child’s difficulties with any steps and elements while we teach the new skill, and then correct any errors or firm weak parts.

This chapter evaluates and teaches large motor movements (for instance, bending over and standing up) and small motor movements (for example, raising our arms, grasping objects with fingers) that are elements of play, imitation, family living, and self-care skills. Specifically, this chapter evaluates and teaches:

1. Large motor movements of torso and legs: LR3.1-13   
2. Small motor movements of:  
 a. Head. LR3.14-15.  
 b. Eyes. LR3.16-18.  
 c. Arms and hands. LR3.19-32.

3. Play and daily life routines that integrate and use the large and small motor movements. LR3.33-59.

The next Chapter (4) builds on this one. It teaches your child to use large and small motor movements to play. So, *please read Chapter 4 at the same time that you use this chapter.* You might as well skim Chapter 4 now to see where we are going.

***Let’s Evaluate and Plan***

We’ll do this the same way we did for Learning Readiness 1 and 2. Now, please skim all the items from LR3.1-59 to get familiar with them. Notice how we define each one by movements; notice the evaluation questions.

Nice work! Give yourself a hug.

Lots of items, aren’t there? But

1. You**don’t** have to teach *all those items*. And   
2. You **don’t** have to teach them *in the exact order they are arranged here*.

We teach what your **child** needs, in a logical sequence.   
“How do we know *which* items to teach and the *order* for teaching them?”

Well, here are guidelines.

1. *We* *teach in a logical sequence*. We first teach (acquisition) and then firm up (retention) the elements (simpler behaviors) that are used in more complex behaviors. For instance, we teach a child to make eye contact before we teach a child to cooperate, because the child is not likely to cooperate if he’s not paying attention to you.  
2. The items, from 1 to 59, are arranged so that *earlier items ARE the elements of the later items*. Please see item LR3.38: the child puts objects in a container. Notice the elements listed. If these are not firm, the child will have a hard time putting objects in containers. That’s why these elements are taught earlier. Please go backwards from item 38 and see the earlier items that teach the elements of putting objects in containers. For instance, items 16, 20, 25, 26. So, *when we teach these earlier items, we are preparing the child to learn the later items.* How does this help you to decide what to teach and when to teach it? See # 3 below.

3. If your child is like Jimmy, Pearl, Nancy, Tommy, and Steven (kids with many learning difficulties) it is *essential* ***first*** *to teach or at least to* ***firm up*** *(review) the early large and small motor elements (items 1-32) before you work on play and daily routines* (items 33-59). Why? Because if a child doesn’t hold her head up, pick up and grip objects, move objects precisely from one place to another, and watch what she’s doing (elements), she’s not going to learn how to work puzzles, string beads, color within lines, make a sandwich, or button her shirt. *And you won’t be able to teach these weak elements at the same time* you are trying to teach her to work puzzles or make a sandwich—routines that USE these elements. There’s just too much to teach and learn at once! So,

**We’ll start with items 1-32**, even if it’s just to practice and warm up.  
4. What about kids with more skills---like Tito, Jack, Indra, and Mark. Well, it would not hurt them to practice some of the early large and small motor elements, too, as exercise, and as a warm up of these elements when they learn more complex items.   
  
“What do we work on after we teach or practice items 1-32?” See # 5.

5. Let’s say you have worked on the earlier large and small motor items---1-32. Your child is much firmer. Now you want to teach **several** more complex behaviors, such as puzzles (LR3.57), peg boards (LR3.53), and Play-doh (LR3.54). So,   
 a. First, evaluate how your child does these new items. We’ll put circles around the weak elements and   
 around possible prompts.  
 b. Do you find *common weak elements* in how your child does the new items 53, 54, 57? Remember, these   
 weak elements are the simpler movements in 1-32.  
 c. If so, list these weak elements.  
 d. Also list prompts you circled. Think of and list more.  
 e. Then work on these weak elements that are in items 1-32.  
 f. When your child is firmER (NOT perfect!) on these elements, you can start working on the more   
 complex items (53, 54, 57) that use these elements

6. Or, let’s say you are interested in **ONE particular item**; for example, again, item LR3.38: the child puts   
 objects in a container.   
 a. Evaluate how your child does the behavior.   
 b. Is the child weak on any of the elements listed?   
 c. If so, teach these (items 16, 20, 25, 26) and then come back and teach item 38. Your child now has the   
 basic skill and is ready. Please see Table 20 below, that puts it all together for you.  
7. Where do we teach the elements?   
 a. Sometimes we have to teach or firm up weak elements in some kind of **session** *before* we work on the   
 more complex items that use the elements.   
 b But sometimes we can teach or firm up the elements **while we teach the more complex item.** It   
 depends on HOW WEAK (how much work your child needs) on the elements. For example,

*Let’s say that evaluation shows that some elements* (items 16, 20, 25, 26) *of a behavior that you want to teach* (38) *are so weak that it’s smart to work on these elements for a while* ***before*** *you teach the item (38) that uses the elements.* Otherwise, it will be like teaching someone to swim before they know how to kick their legs. Jack and Dad show us how.

**Dad and Jack Work on a Few Elements Before They Work on the Skill That   
 USES These Elements**  
 Jack loves working with tools, but he’s is not as coordinated as he’d like to be. He’s going to have a tough   
 time using ladders, screw drivers, and wrenches. So, it makes sense *first to work on the movement elements of using these tools.*   
  
 Jack wants to tighten the nuts on his bike. Dad evaluates how well Jack uses a wrench, and finds out that   
 Jack is weak on two elements---grasping an object firmly while rotating his wrist. So, Dad says, “Before we   
 work on your bike, let’s practice for a few minutes using the wrench. It can be tricky.”



Dad and Jack practice these elements before Dad and Jack work on tightening nuts with the wrench. This   
 will make it much easier and more enjoyable for everyone.   
  
 Rule: If some elements of a skill you want to teach are **very weak**, teach these elements in **short sessions**   
 (“Let’s practice with these wrenches.”) and **even more often during everyday activities** (“Let’s see how   
 much water we can twist out of this wash cloth.” “Jack, help me with this can opener, wouldja?”) before you   
 work on the item (tightening nuts with a wrench) that uses these elements.

However, let’s say that *evaluation shows that only a few elements need to be improved, and only a little bit.* For   
 example, a child needs to grasp small objects with the tips of her fingers, and she needs to look at what you   
 are modeling for a little longer than she usually does. If so, *you can try to firm up these elements* ***while*** *you   
 teach the more complex item (for instance, coloring with crayons) that uses these elements.* But you have to pay   
 close attention to these elements---with prompts, error correction, reinforcement, and repetition a few more   
 times until firm. Here’s Ma Ironton and Pearl.

**Mom and Pearl Work on a Few Weak Elements at the Same Time That They   
 Work on the Skill That USES These Elements**

Mom and Pearl are working on putting one object inside another---such as a small ball, block, toy cup, and   
 small teddy bear inside a shoe box (LR3.38). Pearl looks at the object, reaches for it, and grasps it, but her

**grip** is a bit weak (LR3.24). So, *Mom firms this element right here and now.*   
 “Pearl, **hold** the ball. That’s it.” Mom helps Pearl to wrap her fingers around the ball, and reinforces this.   
 “MORE hold the ball.” (The word “more” makes more sense to Pearl than “keep.”)   
 Pearl does and Mom reinforces this again.  
 “Now lift BALL UP.” (Mom said “ball” and not just “it.”) Mom nudges Pearl’s arm. Pearl raises her arm.   
 “Now PUT the ball IN the BOX.” Mom gently steers Pearls hand.   
 “Now open fingers.” Mom models this with one hand. Pearl imitates this, and the ball falls into the box.   
 Tag-treat and hug + “Yes, PUT ball IN.”   
 They practice with other objects. **Mom focuses on the grip element**. Mom fades out the prompts---from   
 moving Pearl’s arm, to a nudge with one finger, to “Up” and “Put in,” to “p” (for “put”), to a glance at the   
 box.

8. In summary,

a. Have the child practice the early items (1-32) for exercise, to keep these simple movement elements firm,   
 and to prepare the child to use these elements later, in more complex items (33-59).  
 b. When you evaluate several items and find out that a child is weak on some common elements IN these   
 items, teach these elements before you teach the items you evaluated.

c. Before you teach an item, see if your child is ready---does the elements. How?  
 (1) Evaluate your child on the item. If many elements are weak, you need to teach these first.  
 (2) If only a few elements are weak, you can try teaching these while you teach the more complex item,   
 but be prepared to use prompts, error corrections, and reinforcement for small improvements.  
 Table 21 will help.

**Table 21. Using Evaluation Information** **to Plan Teaching and to Keep Track of Progress**

Item Evaluated Weak Elements in Prompts to Child’s Progress During   
 and to Teach. Child’s Performance Try. Teaching.  
 For example, of the Item. Teach a. Point to the object. “She now looks at the object and LR 3.23. Reaches These First and/or Firm b. Say, “Look at the…...” reaches for it.”  
 for objects. Them Up While or “Point to the…” “We still need to teach her to  
 Teaching. c. Move object closer. watch (track) her hand the

a. Looking at object. d. Help the child to whole way to the object.”

b. Visually tracking do the movements. “We’ll try more interesting

her hand move objects that she’ll want to  
 towards object. examine---car with flashing  
 lights, toy monkey that bangs   
 a drum.   
 Your Child’s Items.  
 LR3….

LR3….

LR3….

LR3….

***Where and When Do We Work on Large and Small Motor Movements?***

In the home and school, have one or two teaching sessions each day, for 10 or 20 minutes. These should be set up ahead of time, say 20 minutes in the morning and during or just before a snack in the afternoon or evening. Also work on these skills *all over* the house and in places where the child spends lots of time (on the couch, in his room) or where you want him to learn to play (at the table, on the floor). Follow the child's lead. If he sits down near his toys, picks up a book, or starts to play with a ball, praise him and get a little session going. “Hey, those are nice pictures. See the dog. I am POINTING to the **dog**. Now YOU POINT to the **dog**.” If the child points, do we tag-reinforce?

***Tips for Teaching***

Once more, let’s review Chapter 2.   
No, really!

Then you’ll get to see more tips on teaching.

1. *Find the child’s point of success for whatever you’re working on.* Does she raise her arm just a little above her shoulder, or all the way up? Does the child move a puzzle piece near the spot, or does he fit it in? Does the child catch a ball but drop it, or does the child catch a ball and hold it? Does the child pick up small objects with finger tips loosely, or does the child hold the object firmly? *We start to tag-reinforce at the child’s point of success. As the behavior improves, we raise the tag point.*   
  
 You know all this.

2. The main method is:  
 a. Gain attention. That’s why we already worked on eye contact and good sitting.  
 b. Tell your child what you’re working on. “Now let’s…”  
 c. Model a small amount of information; for example, the first step. “Watch me pick UP the block.”   
 d. Have the child do the model with you--lead. “Now pick UP the block **with** me. Get ready… (signal)…”   
 Repeat if child needs to firm it up a little. Use a prompt if the child needs more help than just a repeat. Repeat again---this time try not to prompt.  
 e. Then have the child give it a try—test/check. “**Your** turn to pick UP the block all by **yourself**…. (point)   
 Get ready…Go.”   
 f. Tag-reinforce if child’s behavior meets the tag point---she picked up the block with one hand. But does   
 she still need a prompt to improve the behavior? Let’s say, yes. She could use a firmer grasp with tips of fingers. So…  
 g. Repeat “e” and this time use a prompt. Help her to close her fingers around the toy. Tag-reinforce   
 improved behavior. “Yes, pick UP.”

h. Maybe repeat once more. See if you can fade the prompt. If not, don’t push it.  
 i. Come back to it later. Use the same and different objects.  
 j. Work on the same behavior in different places.  
 k. Raise the tag point from “Grasps block with palm and fingers and lifts two inches,” to “Grasps block   
 with finger tips and lifts two inches,” to “Grasps block with finger tips and lifts six inches.”

l. Do not push it. Don’t do it over and over and over. A few times here and a few more there and more   
 tomorrow.

You know all this!  
   
3. *Use Effective Reinforcers.* Tag-reinforce with plenty of praise, loud and clear, to reward the child for finishing a task. Praise and give her a soft pat or a treat now and then to keep the child working on hard behaviors. If you use food treats, make sure to praise and hug the child right before you give the treat.

Make sure the child *earns* rewards during the day and does not get them for nothing. Use Grandma's Law: “As soon as you put in this puzzle piece you can have the next one,” or “As soon as you stack these blocks, you can work the puzzle.”   
  
You might try using a *token system.* For example, the child might earn tokens during teaching sessions and whenever he plays well on his own during the day. After the session and at other times during the day, he exchanges his tokens for back-up rewards.

4. *Switch Tasks You Are Working On.* Work on a task for only a few minutes at a time. Then *switch* to another one. Practice earlier behaviors and add a few new ones every couple of days. We build skill little by little.

5. *It’s Useful to Warm Up at The Start Of Sessions.* Practice sitting big. Reinforce behaviors you worked on in past weeks. These should be easy for the child. Success will build momentum for when you add new tasks. For example,   
 “Okay, let’s sit big…That’s it. Hands on the table….Now you are sitting big!” Treat.   
 “Tommy, look at me.” Tommy looks. Treat. “Again, look at me…keep looking….That’s it. You looked   
 at Momma a **long** time.” Treat.  
 “Let’s play Do With Momma (imitation with movements taught earlier)…. Look at me.. That’s it…   
 Now do THIS! [Mom raises her arm. Tommy raises his arm a little. Not close enough for a tag.]  
 “Again, do THIS….” [Mom raises her arm and this time gives Tommy’s arm a small physical prompt to   
 get him moving. He raises his arm higher.] “Yes, you did WITH Momma!”   
 “One more time…. Do this.” [Mom raises her arm and Tommy quickly raises his arm without help. He   
 meets the tag point.] Tag-treat-“Yes, YOU did WITH Momma.”   
 They do a few more imitations.  
 Now that Mom and Tommy are working together fluently, Mom introduces the new item to work on.

6. *Use a Continuous Reinforcement Schedule at the Start of a New Task.* As the child gets better, slowly move to an Intermittent Schedule.  
7. *Keep Earlier Target Behaviors Going Strong.* Make sure to reinforce target behaviors you have worked on before--eye contact, sitting calm, calm hands, Quiet Mouth, cooperating with simple requests. *But do not overdo this.*  If you are working on a harder task and you have already rewarded the child a lot for easier behaviors, she will not try very hard to learn the new one. If these behaviors weaken, reinforce more often. As they strengthen again, raise the tag points---for example, slightly longer intervals of Quiet Mouth. But save most rewards for the new target behavior.

One way to keep earlier behaviors going is by *chaining.* For example, have the child make eye contact *before* you hand him the next puzzle piece, and make sure he is sitting and looking at you before you give him a direction. You can also use more *natural* rewards---praise, a hug, a soft pat, or a token every now and then.  
8. *Prompt the Child at the Start and Help Him Less (fade the prompts) As He Grows More Skilled.* There are many prompts to use: *moving* him through the right motions, *pointing* to what you want him to do, or *telling* him how. At first, try toprompt the child *before* he makes a wrong move. Later, let him do the task by himself and learn to correct his own mistakes by only tag-reinforcing improved behaviors..

9. *If You Correct Errors When Teaching a Routine (For Example, You Model-Lead-Test/Check Step 4 In a Task), Make Sure to Back Up Several Steps* (or re-do the whole routine if it’s not too long), *and Have the Child Do All the Steps Correctly.* For example, if a stacking toy has eight rings of different sizes that fit over a stick, and the child keeps putting on the fourth ring at the wrong time, model when to put on the fourth ring, have the child do it, but then have him *back up* and go through part of the task again. In other words, have him do some of the rings that lead up to the fourth one so that he will learn when it goes on.

Don’t overdo this. Have a child back up a few steps or start over only a few times in a row, or else the child will get sick of the task. Work on it some more the next day.

Every few days, *practice* old movements and add new ones.

10. As the child gets more skilled, cooperates, and enjoys the activities, work on them *in new places* (in the park or yard) and *with other people.* Have a new person reward the child. When she is used to being rewarded by the new person, that person can also work with the child on the activity. Also, add a few children tomake it a group.

*Outside of sessions, reinforce when the child does the movements you worked on; for example, she reaches high*. If you see her start, praise her and join in. For instance, if you have been teaching her toplay catch and she picks up a ball later that day, reward her and play catch. The idea is toincrease skill and the amount of *time* she spends at these activities.

10. *If a Child Becomes Disruptive or Stops Paying Attention, Look* *into Chapter 8.* Maybe we need to reward the child more often, prompt more, switch rewards, or go back to easier tasks for a few days.

11. *End Sessions on a Good Note.* End sessions *before* the child gets tired or stops paying attention. If you end sessions while she is fussing, she will learn that she can get out of sessions by not paying attention or by putting up a big enough fuss. Stop after the child has done a job well and has been rewarded---while she is still feeling successful.

12. *Keep Things the Way They Are.* You do not have to turn off the radio in another room, take down the pictures, or work in a barren room. If you find that the noise of other children, the TV, or some object keeps the child from paying attention, remove them during sessions until your child learns good learning habits.

Okay, here we go!

**3. LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENTS. LR3.1-13**

Large Motor movements use larger parts of the body (legs, back, chest). As a child gains skill at moving his body, he will be able to spend more time in constructive ways. It will also be easier to learn play, life skills, Motor Imitation skills, and chores and self-help tasks.

Work on Large Motor activities at *any* time. Have a few short teaching sessions alone with the child or with other children each day. Start with easy ones on the list and work up to the harder ones. You might play music during sessions to help the child learn to keep time. Here are some simple steps to follow.

Now Let’s Evaluate. and teach. Remember to summarize your evaluations on Table 21.

**LR3.1. Sitting.**

(1) How well does the child sit? (Circle the best description.)

a. Child sits without support.

b. Child sits using his or her own hands for support.

c. Child sits supported or assisted by another person---is held up, propped up, in special chair.

d. Child does not sit.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Holding head erect and steady.   
 b. Holding upper body erect and steady.   
 c. Paying attention to what she’s doing.

Use a signal such as “Let’s sit UP.” Identify elements to improve. Use model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce. Firm up only a few elements at a time; for example, helping the child to hold her upper body MORE erect. Tag-reinforce improvements in these elements. Tag-reinforce improved sitting almost any other time you see it during the day. When she is firmer on one element, begin working on another.

**LR3.2 Standing.**

(1) How well does the child stand? (Circle the best description.)  
 a. Child stands up and remains standing without assistance.

b. Child pulls self to standing position and stands for short periods of time.

c. Child stands holding onto support---for example, a table top.

d. Child does not stand.

(2) How often does the child try to stand up on his or her own, or at least try to get others to help him or her to   
 stand up? (Circle one)  
 Often Sometimes Rarely Never

(3) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Holding head erect and steady.   
 b. Holding upper body erect and steady.  
 c. Straightening legs.  
 d. Holding legs steady.  
 e. Balance.  
 f. Paying attention to what she’s doing.

Identify elements to improve. Use model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce to firm these up. As one element is improved, add another to work on. Intermittently reinforce elements you worked earlier to keep them strong. You can work on some elements during short sessions. You can also work on these during everyday activities.

**LR3.3 The child bends over and returns to a standing position—**for instance,to pick up an object from the floor. This behavior can be observed during naturally occurring activities---put an object on the floor for the child to pick up, or ask the child to pick up an object that is already on the floor.

(1) How well does the child perform this behavior? (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Holding head erect and steady.  
 b. Holding upper body erect and steady.  
 c. Bending legs.  
 d. Bending upper body.  
 e. Straightening upper body.  
 f. Straightening legs.  
 g. Holding legs steady.  
 h. Balance.   
 i. Paying attention to what she’s doing.

(2) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Stand up.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me stand UP” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to legs bending or straightening.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

Simply practice this behavior in short sessions and during ordinary activities. Focus on one or two elements and use the prompts that are likely to help.  
  
 “Pearl. Now let’s beeennnnd over. Watch Momma. Here, let me help.” Mom puts one hand on Pearl’s   
 back and another on her tummy, and gently bends her forward. Big hug. Then Mom says, “Now let’s stand   
 UP,” and she helps Pearl to stand up. Tag-treat-hug. Later, Pearl practices this by picking up toys and clothes   
 from the floor and putting them on a shelf.

**LR3.4 The child creeps or crawls forward on hands and knees.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Arm strength.  
 b. Upper body strength.  
 c. Leg strength.  
 d. Reaching forward with arms or legs.  
 e. Paying attention to what she’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Now lift your arm.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me crawl.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to arms lifting and reaching forward.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

Short sessions. Model how to do it; have your child do it with you; then have your child try it, with you giving assistance for weaker elements, such as reaching forward with the right arm and pushing forward with the left knee. A little at a time! Then use and firm up this behavior in play. “Let’s find your books. Maybe they are under the couch.”

**LR3.5 The child walks (rarely falling) or uses a wheelchair without assistance.**

(1) How well does the child walk or use a wheelchair unassisted to move around, in contrast to other methods, such as crawling, cruising (holding on to something), getting others to bring things to him or her, and so forth? (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady or has difficulty with certain movements.  
 c. Very unsteady or has difficulty with many movements.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Leg strength.  
 b. Extending (stretching out) or flexing (pulling back with) legs.  
 c. Holding upper body erect and steady.  
 d. Balance.  
 e. Paying attention to what she’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Now lift your leg.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me walk” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to legs lifting and stepping forward.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

Short sessions to firm up the elements individually, such as holding upper body steady. Perhaps you’ll need cloth bands to help hold a child erect. Then practice when there is a natural reward for walking---snack time, going outside to play.

**LR3.6 The child carries objects while walking.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady doing both.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Walking erect and steady.  
 b. Holding objects securely: fingers and palm are wrapped around parts of the object.  
 c. Paying attention to what he’s doing.  
 d. Hand and arm strength.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold the box.” “Now walk.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me walk” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to arms holding the thing being carried.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

You may have to work separately on carrying objects. You may have to work on even smaller elements of holding, such as grasping with fingers or holding objects against the chest. Then put these elements back into the larger behavior. Give lots of practice in everyday activities with lots of different objects. Focus on how holding has to be adapted to the objects—straps, handles, no handles, bulky grocery bag.

**LR3.7 The child runs without falling.**

The child runs (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

Same as walking---LR3.5.

**LR3.8 The child walks backwards.** You may have to initiate this behavior with a request and a model to assess the child's behavior.  
The child walks backwards (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

Same as walking—LR3.5.

**LR3.9 The child jumps in place with both feet off the ground at once.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Stands on both legs.  
 b. Bends the upper body forward.  
 c. Bending and then quickly extended the legs.  
 d. Holding out arms for balance.

e. Paying attention to what he’s doing.  
 f. Leg strength.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold up this leg.” “Bend your legs.” “Now jump!”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me jump.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to your legs as you bend them.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

Identify weak elements. Most can be taught as you model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce improvements---for example, the child has both feet off the ground or the child jumps higher. But you don’t want to be struggling with attention. Firm this up by itself and then come back to behaviors that use attention.

**LR3.10 The child hops on one foot.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Bends the upper body forward.  
 b. Stands on one leg.

c. Bending and then quickly extended the leg.  
 d. Holding out arms for balance.

e. Paying attention to what he’s doing.  
 f. Leg strength.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Bend your legs.” “Now jump!”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me jump” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to your legs as you bend them.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

Same as jumping, LR3.9.

**LR3.11 The child broad jumps 1-2 feet.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Bend the upper body forward.

b. Bending and then quickly extended the legs.  
 c. Holding out arms for balance.

d. Paying attention to what he’s doing.  
 e. Leg strength.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Bend your legs.” “Now jump!”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me jump” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to your legs as you bend them.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
Work on jumping and hopping first.

**LR3.12 The child walks up and down stairs without assistance.**

The child walks up and down stairs (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.  
  
Same as walking. Use physical prompts at first, if needed.

**LR3.13 The child goes through the house or school (from room to room, upstairs and downstairs) independently.**The child walks through the house (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Somewhat unsteady.  
 c. Very unsteady or doesn’t do this.

This could be a play activity. Keep track of places and movements that need firming up. This could turn into hide and seek.

Of course, you can add other large motor movements to the above. In fact, give the child some practice on the ones he really does not need help with.

1. Bending and stretching one arm or leg.

2. Bending and stretching both arms and legs on one side of the body at a time when the child is lying on the floor.

3. Rolling with arms at his sides.

4. "Freezing" in different positions.

5. Crawling forward and backward.

6. Side-stepping.

7. Marching in place.

8. Walking with one foot placed right in front of the other (heel-to-toe walking).

9. Walking with each foot crossing in front of the body.

10. Running in a straight line.

11. Running in a circle.

12. Jumping over objects.

13. Catching a balloon in the air.

14. Drawing a large circle with one hand.

15. Drawing two circles, with chalk in each hand.

16. Walking on a line.

17. Walking on a raised beam.

18. Walking on two beams side by side.

19. Following a crooked line.

20. Following an “obstacle course”---go under the table, go over the footstool, go around the table, kick the ball, throw the bean bag, and come back again.

**4. SMALL MOTOR MOVEMENT ELEMENTS LR3.14-32**

Examples of small motor movements are turning your head from side to side, visually following (watching) objects move, opening and closing fingers around an object, picking up objects, rotating your wrist, raising and lowering arms. These are elements of more complex play and life-skills, such as brushing teeth, working puzzles, stacking blocks, and copying simple figures.

**Increasing Skill At Small Motor Activities**

Please skim the rest of the items below. Start with play routines and daily living routines---LR3.33-59. Notice how the elements of these complex behaviors **are** the earlier large motor (1-13) and small motor (14-32) items. *Where we start in the whole sequence of items depends on your child’s skills.*

If your child already does some play and daily life activities (like Tito, Jack, Indra, and Mark), he or she may still be weak on some of the elements of these activities. So, our objectives are to: (a) improve your child’s skills in these activities; and (b) teach more play and daily life activities. Follow these steps for evaluation and planning.

**With Children Who Already Do Some Play and Daily Living Activities**  
  
1. Pick a half dozen or so play and daily life activities items **in a row** that are your *goals for now* (LR3. 34-59)---because each next one builds on the earlier ones.  
2. Evaluate how your child does these activities.  
3. Note weak elements in each item. These weak elements will probably be large motor (items 1-13) and small motor (items 14-32).   
4. Make a list of the weak elements that are common to the play and daily life activities that you just evaluated.  
5. Use Table 21to summarize what you learned and to figure out which simpler large motor (items 1-13) and small motor (14-32) elements to teach first---the ones that are weak.  
6. When these elements are firmER, start working on the play and daily living items you selected in #1. I’d start on items with the lowest number.

**With Children Who Are Not Yet Doing Much of Play and Daily Living Activities**

However, if your child does few play and daily life activities, and has little skill with these (such as Jimmy, Nancy, Steven, and Tommy), it is important now to strengthen large and small motor elements that will be used later when we do teach play and daily life activities. So, follow these steps for evaluation and planning.

1. Pick a half dozen or so small motor items in a row as your *goal for now*---LR3. 14-32.  
2. Note weak elements in each item.  
3. Make a list of weak elements that are common.  
4. Use Table 21 to summarize what you learned and to figure out what simpler (earlier in the list) items (elements) *to teach first*---the ones that are weak.  
5. When these elements are firmER, start working on the small motor items you selected in #1. I’d start on items with the lowest number.  
6. As your child’s large and small motor skills improve, start thinking of play and daily life activities that **consist** of the large and small motor behaviors that you just taught.

***Tips for Teaching***1. Identify a few skill items to work on---ones that are “within reach.” That is, the child can do some of the movements involved. Right before you work on the items, **evaluate them again with sample tasks**---such as raising and lowering arms, or picking up objects, or fitting pegs in a pegboard. For example,

a. Note the elements that are weak. For example, evaluate catching a ball---LR3.33. Let’s say you find that   
 “Hand strength is pretty weak.”  
 Work on hand strength (LR3.24) for a while and then come back to catching a ball. Ma Maretti says,  
 “So, we’ll have short sessions squeezing sponges, Play-doh, plastic mustard bottle, wash cloth, and more   
 solid objects. Then we’ll come back to LR3.33.”  
  
 b. Plan to use certain prompts and reinforcers.

2. Have sit-down sessions once or twice a day, starting with 5 minutes (or even less) and working up to 20 or more. A good time is just before a snack or favorite activity. Also, work on small motor activities wherever you can---the floor, couch, or any place where it’s natural for the child to play. Later, have other persons work with the child---brother or sister, grandparent, neighbor. The more places she learns and the more people she learns with, the more likely she is to playoutside of sessions.

Start with *easier items---ones with fewer elements.* These will be items nearer the start of the set, at LR3.14. Then work on items later in the list of small motor skills. Finally, work on items 33-59---play and life-skills. These items CONSIST of the large and small motor items you will have worked on.  
3. Teaching motor skills is ongoing. We are always learning new movements---finger movements in playing guitar; arm, hand, finger, head, and eye movements in putting on a bracelet; wrist movements in flipping pancakes; palm and finger movements in opening jars. So, our work with children on these skills is spread over a long time---little by little, from simple movements to complex routines that use these movements.

4. *Put the task objects---for instance, a ball to pick up, shapes to put in a shape box, a 4-piece puzzle---in front of the child*. It is sometimes easier to sit next to a child. That way, she sees things the same way that you do. And it’s easier to give some physical prompts. You can’t very well help a child to raise her arm at the shoulder if you’re sitting across the table. But opposite the child is fine, if it works.  
5. *Parents usually have sit-down sessions in a special place* in the living room, kitchen, or den. Then they generalize skills to other places and other materials. From fitting puzzle pieces at the teaching table to fitting eggs in a carton and forks in the dishwasher  
6. *Keep rewards (food, tokens) and everything else out of the way.* Sit next to or facing the child. Wait until he is sitting quietly (sitting big) and makes eye contact. Prompt or request sitting big and eye contact if you have to. When he makes eye contact, reinforce it. (“Oh, you are sitting so straight,” or “Hi, Jimmy”) and give him one object---toy bear to reach for, block to stack, puzzle piece to put in. Tell him what to do with it. “PUT the (tell him the name of the piece) IN the puzzle.” When he takes the piece, make sure he *looks at it* and help him to put it in the right place in the puzzle. Either point to the right spot or help him to put it *on the edge* of the right spot and let him push it the rest of the way. Reward him with a soft touch or a few kind words *while* he is working. “You are doing **puzzles** so well.”

When he fits the piece in place, tag-reinforce with praise, hug him, treat, a token (if you are using a token system). Tell him what he did and give him the *name* for the object. "Yes, you put the BEAR in the puzzle.” Every once in a while, reinforce older target behaviors, such as eye contact, Quiet Mouth, good sitting, and cooperating. Follow the same steps with the rest of the pieces in the task. Make sure that he is sitting quietly and makes eye contact before you give him each piece.

At first, use only one puzzle piece or block at a time. Hold back all the pieces but the one he is to put in. As his skill and attention increase, give him a few pieces at once. You can even let him dump them out.

One problem that will come up is *wrong movements.* For instance, the child may keep trying to put a puzzle piece in the wrong spot. At first, prompt so much that she does not make wrong moves. Later, let her learn to correct her mistakes. That is, *fade the prompts---*use less and less. Of course, do not reward mistakes. If she keeps making the same wrong move, prompt more and use *positive practice---*that is, have her back up a few steps in the task and go ahead again so that she does all of them in the right order.

Another method for teaching the right sequence of movements is *backward chaining.* This means teaching the task by starting with the *last step.* For example, while the child is watching, *you* can put in all the puzzle pieces but the last one, which he puts in. When he is firm doing this (next day?), you put in all but the last two pieces, and the child puts them in. In this way, by the time he is ready to start with the first step, he really knows the rest very well.

You can also backward chain by putting a piece almost in its spot, and the child finishes by snapping it in. Then you put it a little less in the spot, and the child finishes. Keep backing the piece away from the spot, which means the child does what’s LEFT, until the child is doing the whole movement cycle---from reaching for an object to putting it in. This could take several days.

**Please practice this!** You can and should do backward chaining even at this very tiny level. Put a child’s hat almost on, and she pulls it the rest of the way---one inch. Next time, put it a little less on, and she has to pull it two inches more. Until she is pulling it down all the way.

Do all the steps in brushing teeth but the last, as your child watches. The brush is in her mouth. Both of you are holding it. You move it back and forth a few times, and she does it a few more times to finish. Next day, you do everything, and put the brush in her mouth. She finishes by brushing. When she is firm on this, you do everything, but SHE puts the brush in her mouth and brushes. Keep working backward---you do less and she finishes more, until she starts by loading the brush.

The better the child gets at any task, the less you should prompt and the more specific you should be about which behaviors you tag-reinforce. Instead of reinforcing every correct movement (Continuous Schedule), tag-reinforce (1) *finishing* a task (and later for finishing two, three, and four tasks); (2) doing a task *by himself* (without prompting); and (3) doing a task *better* than before (for instance, making a tower of six blocks instead of five, or working a harder puzzle). In other words, after working on a task for about a week, raise the tag point to his current point of success, and do not tag-reinforce if he had to be prompted. Tell him, “Good try! Let's do it again.” Save reinforcers for a better job.

In the beginning, spend only a few minutes at the same activity. Switch to others and add new ones every few days before the child gets bored. You can even take a break and work on large motor activities during sessions. When you add a new task, reward and prompt the child more, until he gets more skill.

Once the child can do *many* simple tasks, add *harder* ones, such as (1) puzzles with four or five pieces making a picture; (2) cutting and pasting; (3) copying figures (squares, circles); (4) coloring; and (5) working with Play-Doh. Remember to *teach routines step by step.* For example, cutting paper with a pair of scissors means holding the paper and scissors a certain way, squeezing the scissors, and moving them through the paper. So, one way to teach a child to cut with scissors is to *teach him the elements first.* For example, make sure that he can hold the paper and scissors *before* you try to get him to cut. When he is fairly good at doing the *elements* of a task, help him to put the steps together. Have him hold the paper in one hand and the scissors in the other. Then have him open the scissors and put the paper between the blades. Finally, prompt him to squeeze the scissors to cut the paper. At each small step in the chain, prompt him if needed, tag-reinforce better tries, and tell him what he is doing: “That’s right-SQUEEZE the scissors. It is CUTTING.” Remember this method? Forward chaining.

Again, you can also use *backward chaining* by having the child learn the *last* *step first.* For instance, to teach him to draw a square, you could have him watch while *you* draw three sides. Then he draws the last side. When he has learned to draw the last side without prompting, you draw the first two sides and he draws the last two. (You might replace a solid line with a dashed line, or a fainter line, and then even fade that out.) Keep working backwards until he is starting with the first side.

Keep track of the child's skill at these tasks by using Table 21 to take notes on how well he is doing or what problems he is having. Okay, Let’s Evaluate. and teach.

**Head Movements. LR3.14-15**

Your child uses head movements to watch what other persons are doing, to watch what she is doing (handling objects, walking around), and during social interaction.

**LR3.14 The child holds his head up.**

(1) How does your child hold his head? (Circle one.)   
 a. Up and steady.  
 b. Sometimes not up or not steady.  
 c. Needs help holding her head up or steady.

(2) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Up.” “Still.” “Calm.”  
 b. Model or demonstration “Look. My head UP!”  
 c. Gesture. Pointing to how you are holding your head up.  
 d. Manual or move child. Gently move or hold child’s head up.

**LR3.15 The child turns his or her head from side to side when sitting or standing.**(1) What is the child's range of movement for head turning? (Circle one.)  
 a. Turns head all the way side to side.  
 b. Turns head part way side to side.  
 c. Turns head only a little side to side.  
(2) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Look here.” (At an object or activity.)  
 b. Show an interesting object and move it to the side so that your child can track the movement.  
 c. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn my head.” “I look at Kitty.”  
 d. Gesture. Pointing at something to look at.  
 e. Manual or move child. Gently turn child’s head. “Let’s see Kitty.”

**Eye Movements. LR3.16-18**

Visually following (tracking) is an element of routines with objects (catching a ball, putting spoons in the spoon tray) and with our own bodies (walking towards another person).

**LR3.16 The child visually follows objects moving from side to side (horizontal tracking).** For example, when a parent shows how to move puzzle pieces.  
(1) The child (Circle one.)  
 a. Follows all or most of the side-to-side movement she’s looking at.  
 b. Follows only a little and then looks away.  
 c. Does not follow moving objects.

(2) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Watch.” “Keep looking.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me move the block.”   
 c. Gesture. Pointing to moving object.

d. Manual or move child. Gently turn child’s head to moving object.

**LR3.17 The child visually follows objects moving up and down (vertical tracking).** This behavior can be assessed: (1) by observing how the child looks at moving objects while someone else is using them; and (2) during teaching sessions and routine activities, by holding up and moving an object at arm's length from the child.  
(1) The child (Circle one.)  
 a. Follows all or most of an object she’s looking at as it moves up and down.  
 b. Follows only a little and then looks away.  
 c. Does not follow moving objects.

(2) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Keep looking.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me move the block.” “Look. Airplane goes UHHHP!”  
 c. Gesture. Pointing to moving object.

d. Manual or move child. Gently turn child’s head to moving object.

**LR3.18 The child looks at (examines) objects, parts of his or her body and other persons’ bodies, faces, and mouths, both spontaneously and on request.** For example, you point to a picture, or you hold up the child’s hand in front of her, or you say, “Look at my mouth.”

(1) The child does this on her own (often; fairly often; once in a while; almost never). (Underline one.)  
(2) The child does this on request (often; fairly often; once in a while; almost never). (Underline one.)

(3) For how long will the child look at something on her own or on request? (a pretty long time, as if she’s   
 interested; for a little while and then loses interest; for a very short time, a few seconds) (Please underline   
 one).  
(4) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Keep looking.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me tell about this kitty.”   
 c. Gesture. Pointing to parts of an object.

d. Manual or move child. Gently turn child’s head towards something to observe.

**How to Teach This Behavior**

By now, the child should be making eye contact many times a day on his own and on request. But does he really look at things around him? Or does he mostly watch television, or stare out the window, at shiny objects, and at bits of string he is fiddling with? How can a child work hard puzzles or help during family activities, or imitate words if he does not look carefully at objects or at what people are doing?

*A definition of this target behavior is as follows: the child looks at objects and parts of his and your body, face, and mouth within 5 seconds after you point to them or tell him to look.* Work on this at the table and other places. You need a picture book, a box full of everyday objects (comb, fork, knife, spoon, socks, ball, blocks, cup, and so forth) and a mirror large enough so that the child can see your *and* his face in it. During sit-down sessions, the child could be in front of you. But sit where it works best. When he is sitting quietly, *hold up* one of the objects from the box and *wait* for him to look right at it. If he looks at the object within 5 seconds, tag-reinforce it and tell him the name of the object. For instance, “Yes, this is a SOCK.” If he does not look at it on his own, prompt him by (1) telling him to look; (2) moving the object back and forth; (3) pointing to it; or (4) gently moving his head. Start with *bigger* objects, like a ball, and when he is looking many times at them, hold up smaller ones.

Each time he looks at an object, say its name, tag-reinforce, and move on to another object. Once he is looking at objects, have him *point* to them, too. For instance, when he looks at the cup you hold up, say, “Yes, this is a CUP. Now POINT to the CUP.” Show him how to point and prompt if necessary. Try to get him to *say* the name of the object, but do not push this yet. You are not trying to teach him the difference between objects. At this time, the idea is just to get him to look at and point to things you hold up.

Also, have the child look at and point to parts of her and your body (hair, ears, eyes, nose, chin, mouth, tummy, arms, legs). Wait until she is quiet. Then *point* to what you want her to look at and *tell* her what it is (“This is my MOUTH”). *Prompt* her to look at it and point to it. *Reward* her if she does.

Use a mirror toteach her the parts of her own body. First, point to and name the parts of her face while she is looking in the mirror. Then prompt her to do the same. Switch between pointing while looking at the mirror and pointing without the mirror. For example, tell her to look at the mirror and point to her chin. Then move the mirror away or cover it and have her point to his chin again.

Work on looking and pointing in other places. Take him for walks around the block, house, and classroom. Have him look at and point to the sidewalk, car, house, chair, table, wall, lamp, and floor.

To sum up, the goal is to teach the child to look at and point to objects and parts of his and your face and body. You want him to look and point on his own and within 5 seconds after you tell him to look. Move to the next section when this behavior increases.

**Arms and Hands Movements LR3.19-32**

We use lots of tiny movements when handling objects, such as putting on a hat, stacking plates, or working with tools. We may have to firm up some of these before we teach a child to handle (use) objects in play and daily living routines—LR3.33-59.

**LR3.19 The child flexes (bends to raise) her arm at the elbows.** You can see this when she’s using her arms to lift or pull things, or when you are playing with her. For example, giving and taking objects from each other.

(1) How far does the child flex or bend each arm? (Circle one.)  
 a. All the way.  
 b. About half way.  
 c. Very little.

(2) How much strength does the child have when she flexes (bends to raise) her arms? (Circle one.)  
 a. Strong. Just fine.  
 b. Could use a bit more strength.  
 c. Pretty weak.

**LR3.20 The child extends (straightens, open ups) her arm(s) at the elbows.**You can see this when she’s using her arms to push things, or when you are playing with her. For example, giving and taking objects from each other.

(1) How far does the child straighten or extend each arm? (Circle one.)  
 a. All the way.  
 b. About half way.  
 c. Very little.

(2) How much strength does the child have when she straightens or extends each arm? (Circle one.)  
 a. Strong. Just fine.  
 b. Could use a bit more strength.  
 c. Pretty weak.

**LR3.21 The child raises and lowers his arms at the shoulders.**

(1) What is the child's range of motion for raising and lowering his arms at the shoulder? (Circle one.)  
 a. All the way up and down.  
 b. Part way.  
 c. Only a little.  
(2) How much strength does the child have when he raises and lowers his arms at the shoulder? (Circle one.)  
 a. Strong. Just fine.  
 b. Could use a bit more strength.  
 c. Pretty weak.

**LR3.22 The child rotates her hands at the wrists, as when you open a jar lid.**

(1) What is the child's range of motion for rotating her hands at the wrists? (Circle one.)  
 a. All the way side to side.  
 b. Part way.  
 c. Only a little.  
(2) How much strength does the child have when she rotates her hands at the wrists? (Circle one.)  
 a. Strong. Just fine.  
 b. Could use a bit more strength.  
 c. Pretty weak.

**LR3.23 The child reaches for objects.**(1) The child reaches for objects in front of her or held up to her; for example, when you are working a puzzle   
 with the child: often; sometimes; rarely; never (Circle one.)

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Looking at object.  
 b. Raising arm at the shoulder.  
 c. Extending (reaching out) arm at the elbow.  
 d. Visually tracking (watching) her hand move towards the object.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Pick up/touch/get the block.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me pick up/touch/get the block.”   
 c. Gesture. Pointing to the object to get.

d. Manual or move child. Gently moving child’s arm at the shoulder (least prompt), lower arm (medium   
 prompt), or move child’s hand towards the object (most prompt).

**LR3.24 If you hand the child an object, she grasps it with fingers and palm.** For example, the way you hold a can of soda or hold a ball when you throw it.(1) How well does the child do this? (Circle one.)  
 a. Just fine.  
 b. Mostly uses palm, but not fingers.  
 c. Things just fall out of her hand.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Opening or extending the fingers.  
 b. Wrapping the palm around the object.  
 c. Flexing or closing the fingers around the object.  
 d. Continuing to grip.

e. Watching your movements when you show how. Watching her own movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)   
 a. Repeated request. “Hold the ball.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “See. I do this with my fingers.”   
 c. Gesture. Point, to show your child how you are closing your fingers around the object.  
 d. Manual or move child. Gently close child’s fingers around the object (full prompt); touch child’s fingers   
 as a partial prompt.

**LR3.25 The child follows (visually tracks) movements of her hand that is holding an object**. For example, the child watches the spoon while she moves it to the bowl.  
(1) How does the child do this? (Circle one.)  
 a. Watches her movement all the way.  
 b. Watches her movement part way and then looks away.  
 c. Doesn’t really watch what her hand is doing.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Holding the object.

b. Raising the arm at the shoulder.

c. Straightening the arm at the elbow.

d. Moving the arm away from her body.

e. Rotating the wrist.

f. Observing the movement of hand and object.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Watch (look at) your hand.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Look at ME seeing my hand,” as you move an object.

c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand as she moves the object.  
 d. Manual or move child. Gently turning the child’s head towards her hand moving the object.

**LR3.26 The child lets go of objects from her grip; for example, to give an object to another person or to put down one object and pick up another.** The child puts down a block, or puts a large wooden spoon in the sink.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Just fine. Seems to try “landing” the object where it’s supposed to go.  
 b. Often sort of drops the object.  
 c. Often has trouble putting it down at a certain spot, as if her aim is off or she couldn’t get her hands to   
 “land” the object where it “goes.”  
 d. Doesn’t seem to try “landing” the object where it’s supposed to go. Doesn’t seem to care.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Responding to cues, such as, “Give me the book.”  
 b. Looking at another object to pick up; or looking at a place where the object might be released.  
 c. Rotating the wrist so that the palm is facing the direction in which the object can be let go.  
 d. Watching the movement of the hand and object to the “drop” point.  
 e. Opening fingers or opening the hand at the right moment---for example, when the other person's hand   
 is able to grasp it.

f. Moving the hand away from the released object.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Give me the ball.” “Open your fingers.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Look at ME drop the ball.” “Do this. (Showing releasing a cup.)  
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand as though to say, “Let it go.”  
 d. Manual or move child. Gently open the child’s fingers from the object.

**LR3.27 The child scoops or rakes objects to bring them nearer or to pick them up, and watches the movements.**(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Scoops only part way.  
 c. Fingers are too slack to scoop much.  
 d. Really doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Spotting an object to be reached for.

b. Raising the arm at the shoulder.

c. Straightening the arm at the elbow.

d. Moving the arm away from or towards his body,

e. Watching the movement of the hand toward the object.

f. Opening the fingers toward object.

g. Rotating the wrist and reaching fingers around the object.

h. Bending the arm at the elbow to pull the object closer.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)   
 a. Repeated request. “Scoop.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me scoop!” “Do this.” (Show how to scoop).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to scoop.  
 d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---guiding arm, hand, hand and   
 fingers.

**LR3.28 The child pushes objects away, and watches the movement.** For example, the child pushes her plate away, perhaps to show that she’s finished.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Pushes objects only part way.  
 c. Does not use enough fingers to push, or uses wrong part of hand.  
 d. Really doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Raising or lowering the arm at the shoulder.

b. Straightening the arm at the elbow in order to touch the object to be pushed.

c. Watching movement of the hand toward the object to be pushed.

d. Rotating the wrist and touching the object so that the object can be pushed.

e. Straightening the arm at the elbow to push the object.

f. Watching the movement of the object.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)   
 a. Repeated request. “Push!”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me push!” “Do this.” (Show how to push).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to push.  
 d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---guiding arm, hand, hand and   
 fingers.

**LR3.29 The child uses thumb and fingers to pick up and turn objects (pincer grasp).**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Picks up objects only part way.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Extending the fingers to open the hand.

b. Reaching for the object.

c. Flexing (squeezing) the thumb and fingers around the object.

d. Raising the hand and/or arm to lift the object.

e. Visually tracking and watching her own hand movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more)  
 a. Repeated request. “Pick UP.” “Use your fingers.” “Squeeze!”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me pick UP!” “Do this.” (Show how to pick up).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to pick up.  
 d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---guiding arm, hand, hand and   
 fingers.

**LR3.30 The child uses his or her hands to squeeze objects---**soft toy, washcloth.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Extending the fingers (opening the hand) to enclose the object.

b. Reaching for the object.

c. Enclosing the palm and fingers around the object.

d. Flexing (closing) the fingers around the object.  
 e. Applying pressure on the object.  
 f. Sustaining the pressure.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold.” “Use your fingers.” “Squeeze!” “Tighter.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me squeeze!” “Do this.” (Show how to squeeze).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to pick up and squeeze.  
 d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---guiding arm, hand, hand and   
 fingers.

**LR3.31 The child releases objects from a pincer (thumb and fingers) grasp and observes the movement of the object---**the child places one block on top of another or puts a toothbrush back in the holder).

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Positioning the object *over* the placement or “drop” point.  
 b. Extending the fingers (opening the hand) so as to release the object while observing its movement.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Open fingers.” “Put it down.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me open my fingers!” “Watch me put it down.” “Do this.” (Show

how to release object).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to release. Or point to the drop point.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---guiding arm, hand, hand and   
 releasing fingers.

**LR3.32 The child turns, twists, or rotates objects---**turns puzzle pieces around for a better fit, turns spoons around so they all fit one way in the spoon tray.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Flexing or extending arm at the elbow in order to reach for object.  
 b. Rotating wrist to line up object in order to place it, or in order to observe it as it moves.   
 c. Rotating object far enough.  
 d. Holding the object with a better grip---more fingers, stronger.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold the cup.” “Turn.” “Put it in.” “Look at the ball.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn the cup” Do this.” (Show how to rotate object).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to rotate.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions---clasping hand or finger   
 around the object; rotating the hand.

**5. PLAY ROUTINES AND DAILY LIVING ROUTINES THAT INTEGRATE AND USE THE LARGE AND SMALL MOTOR MOVEMENTS. LR3.33-59**

***Tips for Teaching***

1. As always, start sessions---at the table or other places---with a warm up on basic elements. Sitting big, eye contact, imitating a few movements, Quiet Mouth and good sounds/words, small motor tasks (look at, reach for, take, hold, manipulate objects; give objects to parent), and maybe naming and matching if you’ve worked on these. Reinforce the weaker behaviors more often.

2. The basic teaching method is  
 a. Gain attention: looking at you, sitting big.  
 b. Frame instruction. “Now, let’s do some puzzles.” Or, “Here are toys. Car, blocks, beads, paper and

crayons. Let’s play with our toys.” Or, “After we play, we’ll go for a ride.”

c. Model. “I’ll put kitty (puzzle piece) IN. A kitty. I pick up kitty….Yes, you are watching me pick up   
 kitty…. Now I carry kitty to her place. (point). Yes, this is kitty’s place. [Tag and/or-reinforce looking,]   
 Now I put kitty IN her place. Watch…. [Tag and/or reinforce watching.] Sllooowwwwly (moving piece   
 into the spot---snap!). Kitty IN her place. (Tag and/or reinforce looking. Repeat the last part if child was   
 not looking.)

Repeat once or twice so that child tracks the whole set of movements! “Watch again. I put kitty IN.”

d. Lead. “Now put kitty IN with me.” Prompt by pointing and giving minimum physical help needed.   
 Praise as child does the moves and watches. Tag and/or treat as the piece goes in. Repeat a few times to   
 firm it up.

e. Test/check. “Your turn to put kitty IN.” Hold up the piece. Child has to look at it before you give it to   
 him. “Look at kitty…. Yes, look at kitty… Now TAKE kitty.” Help the child slide it in. Tag and/or   
 reinforce. Repeat a few times to firm this up.

Remember! *If your child has difficulty with the last step in a task (fitting a ring on a stick, snapping a   
 puzzle piece in, stacking a block), use* ***backward chaining on that step****!* **You** put the ring almost all the   
 way down on the stick, and your child finishes pushing it one inch more. When he’s firm on that, you   
 push the ring half-way down the stick, and the child finishes. When he’s firm on that, you put the ring   
 barely onto the top of the stick, and your child finishes sliding it down. Next, you bring the ring to the   
 top of the stick, you child fits it on, and then finishes. Work backwards until your child starts by   
 reaching for the ring, and does the whole movement cycle. You see that the tag-point is changing! The   
 child does more steps.

Practice this with someone!!

f. Repeat with a second piece.  
 g. Once the child does one 3- or 4-piece puzzle during model-lead-test/check, fade out the model part, and   
 just do the lead (with you) and test/check. When your child is pretty firm on that (after several more   
 puzzles), try to have your child do the same puzzle *more* on her own. You’ll have to prompt more (“Pick   
 up…” “Put IN…” Point. “Here.”) because you’ve dropped the “with you” step. Reinforce MORE as   
 child does the small steps more on her own.

g. *Firm up weak movements (“errors”) WHILE you do each movement cycle---*look at piece, reach,   
 pick it up, move it, slide it in, look for the next piece.   
 In other words, *don’t do a whole piece and then try to improve your child’s movements on the next piece. Do   
 it right then.* For example, Pearl is putting the white cloud piece in its slot. She slides the piece off to the side. Mom helps Pearl to *back the piece up and slide it again*. Mom repeats one more time to firm it up.

You get that? Correct every error---even tiny movements---right then. *If a child has lots of difficulty with   
 that movement, use part-firming.* Work on the movement *by itself*, until the child is firm, and then do   
 the whole movement cycle with that movement in it. “Careful… Make sure to sslliiide it.”   
3. Work on one object for a few minutes and then switch to another.  
4. End sessions with success and while the child is attentive.

5. Notice, the items have a lot of steps. They are routines. How do you teach routines? Like this.

a. *Whole task presentation.* If an item has only a few steps (throwing or kicking a ball, showing someone an   
 object, putting objects in containers), try to model-lead-test/check all the steps at once.

Review and firm up the elements—pre-game warm-up.   
 Then start. Remember occasionally to reinforce Quiet Mouth, sitting big, eye contact, and watching.  
  
 “I’ll show you how to put this teddy bear (small, plastic) in the jar. (point). Watch! [reinforce] I pick up   
 the teddy bear…. I MOVE it to the jar…. Yes, you are looking! [reinforce] Now watch. I PUT the teddy   
 bear IN.” (model)  
  
 “Now put the teddy bear IN the jar WITH me.” (Do the steps above.) “WE pick up the teddy bear”…   
 “We put the teddy bear IN.” etc.) (lead) Perhaps repeat.

“Your turn to put the teddy bear IN the jar. **Pick up** the teddy bear. (Prompt if needed.) Yup, pick UP..   
 Now MOVE teddy bear to the jar. (Gentle nudge in the right direction and/or point to the jar.)….   
 [treat] Yes, MOVE teddy bear to the jar. Now put teddy bear IN the jar. (Gentle prompts, such as opening fingers.) [treat] Yes, teddy IN the jar.”

Correct any errors with model (“Watch me pick up teddy.”) and test/check (“Now you pick up teddy.”)

Repeat several times and try to fade the prompts. If the child was weak on a step or element (for   
 example, releasing the object), use part-firming: work on the step or element by itself, and then put the   
 step back into the routine.

You want a little improvement each day. That’s all.

b. *Forward chaining or backward chaining.* If an item has more steps than your child can watch or do all at   
 once (stacking objects, cutting with scissors, working puzzles), use one of the chaining methods.  
 (1) *Forward chaining.*   
 Warm up by practicing elements---watching, grasping, lifting, turning, placing, imitating.  
 Then use model-lead-test-tag-reinforce to teach step 1.  
 Then teach step 2.  
 Then teach doing steps 1 and 2.  
 Then teach step 3.  
 Then teach doing steps 1, 2, 3.   
  
 Correct errors as you do each part, above. This means DOING IT AGAIN. The correction   
 format is model-lead (maybe)-test/check-back up and retest. Practice the error part more later to   
 keep it firm.

“Let’s practice putting the string in the hole.”

(2) *Backward chaining.*  
 Warm up with elements.  
 Model the whole routine. Reinforce good sitting, eye contact, watching, and Quiet Mouth.   
 Tell what you are doing.  
 Model the whole routine again, and use model-lead-test/check-reinforce to teach child the **last step**.   
 Correct errors and repeat until firm. If the child makes the same error, teach that step separately   
 and then put it back in the sequence.  
 Then model all the steps up to the last two. Teach the second to last step and then have the child do   
 the second to last and the last using model-lead-test/check-tag and/or-reinforce.  
 Keep doing this one backwards step at a time.  
 Again, this may take time. But the more your child learns, the faster she’ll learn new skills.

(3) *Teaching the main step first.* For example, fitting puzzle pieces in their slots and fitting shapes in a   
 shape box, running the toothbrush along your teeth, swabbing your face with a washcloth, and   
 putting your arms through the sleeves of a coat, are the main steps in these routines---they are what the routines are about. So,   
 (a) Start with the main step.   
 (b) When the child is firm on that step, add the other steps to the sequence, one by one.   
 First. On the seat, hold handle bars, peddle bicycle. Main step.  
 Next. Ride bicycle a short distance. Follows from main step.  
 Next. Stop bicycle and climb off. Follows from riding.  
 Next. Climb on bicycle. Leads up to main step. Ride.

In my opinion, *teaching the main step first (#3 above) makes the most sense when there are too many steps to use   
 model-lead-test/check all at once (whole task presentation)*—because the child is starting with the whole point   
 of the task! Just make sure to add one step at a time to the main one.

Remember to reinforce strongly when your child does a step or even a tiny part of a step better---because she   
 must have tried hard! If trying hard (looking, persisting) isn’t reinforced, she’s not going to keep trying.

Use Table 21, above, to list the items you are working on, and write notes on how well the child is   
 cooperating and is learning.

**LR3.33 The child catches a ball or other objects--**soft toy.

(1) How does the child typically catch a ball? (Circle one.)

a. The child catches with both arms (cradles the ball).

b. The child catches with his or her hand(s).

c. The child catches a ball only if it is bounced or rolled to him or her.

d. The child catches a ball in the air.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Raising or lowering arms.  
 b. Reaching out (extending) arms.  
 c. Grasping object on the fly.

d. Tracking movement of the ball.  
 e. Arm strength.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold the ball.” “Watch.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me hold the ball.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the ball before throwing it to child.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Large, soft ball. Stand close.

**LR3.34 The child throws a ball or other objects.**

(1) How does the child typically throw a ball or other objects? (Circle one.)

a. Child throws overhand with one hand.

b. Child throws underhand; can do it with one hand.

c. Child throws underhand; uses both hands.

d. Child is somewhat unsteady or awkward doing this.

e. Child doesn’t really do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Grasps object.  
 b. Looks at parent.  
 c. Raises arm, flexes (pull back) and extends (straighten, push forward) arm.  
 d. Releases ball  
 e. Finger, hand, and arm strength.  
 f. Watches what he is doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Hold it.” “Throw.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. Show throwing movements. “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Pointing to the place to throw the object.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Use easy to hold objects.

**LR3.35 The child kicks a ball or other objects.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Stand facing ball.   
 b. Aim foot at ball.

c. Flex (bend) and extend (straighten leg).  
 d. Leg strength.  
 e. Balance.  
 f. Watching what she’s doing.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Kick ball.” “Look at ball.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. Show kicking movements. “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Pointing to the ball.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Use large balls.

**LR3.36 The child shows objects in his or her hand to adult.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Grasps object.  
 b. Looks at parent.  
 c. Holds object up.   
 d. Watches what he is doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Show me.” “Hold up hand.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. Holding object so child can see.

c. Gesture. Pointing to the object child is to show.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Objects child likes to use to play with another person.

**LR3.37 The child gives objects to adults**---the child puts objects in the adult’s hand or lap.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Grasps object.  
 b. Looks at parent’s hand.  
 c. Moves arm to parent’s hand.  
 d. Puts object in parent’s hand.  
 e. Releases object.  
 f. Watches what he is doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Show me.” “Give me.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. Holding object. Passing object to another.  
 c. Gesture. Pointing to own open hand.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Objects child likes to use to play with another person; a bowl for ice cream for the child; a   
 favorite book.

**LR3.38 The child puts objects in containers---**puts spoons in their compartment, plates in the kitchen sink, socks in a drawer, colored markers in their box.  
(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Holding the object.  
 b. Extending the arm at the elbow to move the object toward the container  
 c. Holding the object with hand over the container.   
 d. If necessary, lowering hand into the container.  
 e. Extending fingers to release object.  
 f. Holding the object with a better grip---more fingers, stronger.  
 g. Watching her hand move the object.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Put it IN.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me put it IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to put object inside another).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the child’s hand and then to the objects to put it. Point to the container.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions--clasping hand or finger   
 around the object; rotating the hand.  
 e. Adaptations. Containers with large openings and/or placed closer to the child. Use backward chaining:   
 start with the object right over the container. When this is firm, have the object a little farther and   
 farther away, until the child starts the action by picking up the object.

**LR3.39 The child turns over containers to remove the contents---**the child dumps toys out of box, sand tools out of bucket, or pours liquids out of cup.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the container.  
 b. Grasping the container.  
 c. Lifting the container.   
 d. Turning the container over.  
 e. Putting the container back.  
 g. Watching her hands do this.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Pick up.” “Turn over.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn this over.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the objects. Point into the container.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Backward chaining. Start with the container partly turned over so that objects roll out.

**LR3.40 The child turns over objects---**the child picks up and turns over an empty coffee can to place a block on top, turns over a book so that the front cover is on top, or turns over a puzzle piece to inspect the other side.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the container.  
 b. Grasping the container.  
 c. Lifting the container.   
 d. Turning the container over.  
 e. Putting the container back.  
 g. Watching her hand do this.  
(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Pick up.” “Turn over.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn this over.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the container.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Backward chaining. Start with the object mostly turned over; child completes the action.

**LR3.41. The child opens loosely wrapped or loosely covered objects--**the child removes the lid from a shoe box or tears the wrapper from a candy bar.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the wrapped object.

b. Grasping the wrapped object.

c. Lifting, tearing, or peeling cover or wrapper.  
 d. Watching her movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Hold.” “Now pull.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me open.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the wrapper

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Start with tasks that require few movements, such as pulling a cloth off a bowl of ice   
 cream. Then tasks that require holding with one hand and pulling a covering back with the other hand   
 in one movement. Then tasks that require several movement steps---as in opening a carton that contains a   
 toy, or unwrapping a sandwich.

**LR3.42 The child stacks objects---**blocks, saucers. This behavior can be observed in everyday environments as well as sessions.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the object to be stacked.

b. Picking up and grasping the object to be stacked.

c. Holding the object to be stacked.

d. Moving the object to be stacked near the object on which it is to be placed.

e. Holding the object to be stacked over or next to the one on which it is to be stacked.

f. Placing one object on top of the other.

g. Letting go of the object that has been stacked.

h. Watching her movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Put it ON.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me put it ON.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the top of the other object.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Start with objects that are easy to stack and that won’t fall over.

**LR3.43 The child fits objects inside one another, with a closer fit---**the child puts eating utensils in narrow compartments, replaces soap in soap dish, and works one-piece form boards. This behavior can be observed in everyday environments and in teaching sessions.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the object to be fitted.

b. Picking up and grasping the object to be fitted.

c. Holding the object to be fitted.

d. Moving the object to be fitted near the place where it is to be fitted.   
 e. Holding the object to be fitted *over* or next to the spot into which it is to be fitted.  
 f. Turning, twisting, or rotating the object so that it fits.

g. Releasing the object.

h. Watching her movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)

a. Repeated request. “Put it IN.” “Turn it.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me put it IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the place to put the object.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Start with objects that are easy to fit and holes that give leeway.

**LR3.44 The child holds spoons and uses them to stir.**(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Does this partly right.  
 c. Really doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Reaching for the spoon.

b. Reaching for, grasping, and steadying pot with the other hand.

c. Picking up and grasping the spoon.

d. Moving the spoon to the pot.

e. Holding the spoon over the pot.

f. Putting the spoon into the pot.

g. Moving the spoon in the pot (stirring)---rotating wrist.

h. Watching her movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more)

a. Repeated request. “Hold spoon.” “Put spoon in.” “Stir.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me stir.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to the place to put the object.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Stir with easy-to-hold spoons in large mouth pots. Stir food the child likes.

**LR3.45 The child strings beads.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for the bead.

b. Picking up and grasping the bead.

c. Holding the bead with one hand while reaching for the string with the other hand.

d. Picking up and grasping the string.

e. Fitting the tip of the string into the hole.   
 f. Pushing the string all the way in.  
 g. Pulling the end of the string out of the bead.  
 h. Repeating steps e-f.

i. Holding small objects with fingers.  
 j. Fitting one object into another.  
 k. Watching what he is doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it with your fingers.” “Push.” “Again.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me put the string IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the tip of the string or to the hole in the bead.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Stiff string. Large beads. Beads with large holes. Thin beads.

**LR3.46 The child unscrews jar lids.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for the jar.

b. Grasping and picking up the jar.

c. Gripping jar with one hand while grasping lid with the other hand.

d. Twisting jar lid and/or jar.

e. Gripping objects with palm and fingers.  
 f. Finger and hand strength.  
 g. Rotating wrist.  
 h. Watching what she’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts does the child seem to need or might the child’s behavior benefit from?

(Circle one or more.)   
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it with your fingers.” “Squeeze.” “Twist.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn it. “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the lid.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Lids partly opened already. A tool attached to the lid to grasp and turn. Jars that contain   
 things the child likes---jelly, mustard, liquid for blowing bubbles.

**LR3.47 The child turns pages singly.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Steadying the book or magazine with one hand while reaching for a page to be turned with the other.

b. Grasping a single page.

c. Turning the page by lifting it and moving it to the side.

d. Holding things with the fingers.  
 e. Putting fingers on the edge of a page.  
 f. Watching what she’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it with your fingers.” “Pick it up.” “Turn it over.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me turn it.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the edge of the page.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Books with large and thick pages. A tab to grasp on the edge of the page.

**LR3.48 The child winds up toys.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)  
 a. Grasping the key.

b. Twisting the key.

c. Releasing the key, returning wrist to starting position, regrasping the key, and twisting again.

d. Releasing grasp when winding becomes difficult.  
 e. Grasping with fingers.  
 f. Rotating hands at the wrists.  
 g. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child's behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it tight.” “Twist.” “Again.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me wind it.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to the key.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Toys with large key. Toys that move in ways the child likes.

**LR3.49 The child scribbles with crayon or pencil.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Steadying the paper; for example, with one hand.

b. Holding the crayon or pencil in the other hand.

c. Moving the pencil or crayon to the place to scribble.

d. Moving the pencil or crayon from side to side and up and down on the paper.  
 e. Holding crayon with fingers.  
 f. Rotating wrists.  
 g. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it tight.” “Put it here.” “Back and forth.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me draw.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to spot on paper.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Pre-drawn shapes, large crayons.

**LR3.50 The child traces vertical and horizontal lines, holding the paper with the other hand.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.  
(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Steadying the paper; for example, with one hand.

b. Holding the crayon or pencil in the other hand.

c. Moving the pencil or crayon to the place on the paper to draw.

d. Moving the pencil or crayon from side to side or up and down to make lines.

e. Holding small objects with fingers.  
 f. Finger and hand strength.

g. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it tight.” “Put it here.” “Now draw a line.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me draw.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to spot on paper.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Start with wide pre-drawn lines on the paper and gradually narrow; large pencils or   
 crayons.

**LR3.51 The child colors within lines** (e.g., parallel lines, circles, squares).

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Steadying the paper; for example, with one hand.

b. Holding the crayon or pencil in the other hand.

c. Moving the pencil or crayon to a point above the paper where the shape to color (prompt) is located.

d. Lowering the pencil or crayon to the shape to color.

e. Moving the pencil or crayon from side to side, up and down, or round and round in the shape.  
 f. Holding small objects with fingers.  
 g. Finger and hand strength.

f. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold it tight.” “Put it here.” “Now color.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me color.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Large pencils or crayons, pre-colored shapes. Start with shapes that give a lot of room   
 inside or between (for instance, parallel lines). Then makes the shapes smaller.

**LR3.52 The child uses paste or glue.**(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Placing the thing so that it can be glued or pasted.

b. Reaching for, grasping, and picking up the tube of glue; holding the tube in one hand while unscrewing   
 the cap with the other. *Or*  
 Reaching for, grasping, and bringing the jar of paste closer; reaching for and picking up the paste stick,   
 dipping it into the paste, and scooping out some paste.

c. Steadying the paper or object to be glued with one hand and putting on glue or paste with the other   
 hand.

d. Squeezing glue or spreading paste onto the specified area.

e. Pressing glued or pasted object onto the other object.

f. Recapping tube of glue or jar of paste.

g. Finger or hand strength.  
 h. Gripping things with fingers.  
 i. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Squeeze.” “Put it here.”  
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me paste.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Large handles, wide-mouth jars. Things that when pasted produce something the child   
 likes---a picture of a bird in a tree or a child eating a hamburger.

**LR3.53 The child puts pegs in a peg board.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for the peg.

b. Picking up and grasping the peg.

c. Steadying the peg board---with the other hand.

d. Locating a hole in the peg board---visually or by feel.

e. Moving the peg toward the located hole.

f. Holding the peg next to or over the hole

g. Inserting the peg into the hole.

h. Releasing the peg.

i. Repeating the above sequence with the remaining pegs.   
 j. Finger or hand strength.  
 k. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Put it IN.” “Here” (point)   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me put it IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Large pegs and holes.

**LR3.54 The child rolls Play-Doh or clay.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for and grasping the Play Doh.

b. Tearing off a piece.

c. Holding hand(s) over piece.

d. Pushing down on the piece with one or both hands and then rolling it forward and backward.  
 e. Pushing down with hands.  
 f. Arm and hand strength.  
 g. Watching what she’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Push DOWN.” “Roll it.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me ROLL it.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

e. Adaptations. Rod for rolling. Small hammer for banging.  
 f. Backward chaining. Start with lumps that have been mashed pretty flat. Child then finishes.

**LR3.55 The child folds napkins, washcloths, towels, paper.**(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for, grasping, and bringing nearer the object to be folded.

b. Turning the object so it can be folded.

c. Grasping edge to be lifted and folded over.

d. Lifting and folding one side over until one edge meets the other edge while observing movement.

e. Pressing down on folded cloth or running fingers along crease of paper.

f. Repeating the above steps if necessary---fold into quarters.  
 g. Using fingers to grasp.  
 h. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold this” “Now fold OVER.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me FOLD.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this).   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

e. Adaptations. Partly folded already. Lines showing places to fold.

**LR3.56 The child cuts dough or soft clay with cookie cutters.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for and grasping a lump of clay.

b. Tearing off a piece.

c. Holding hands over the piece to mash.

d. Pushing down on and/or pounding the piece till it’s thinner.

e. Reaching for, grasping, and picking up cookie cutter.

f. Holding cookie cutter over flattened clay.

g. Lowering cutter and pressing down until clay is cut through.

h. Lifting cutter out of the clay.

i. Replacing cutter on table.

j. Removing the cut-off clay.  
 k. Hand strength.  
 l. Watching what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold this” “Push DOWN.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me push DOWN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)  
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.  
 e. Adaptations. Placemat with pictures of where to put lumps of Play-doh and cutters. Cutters with   
 handles easy to grasp.

**LR3.57 The child fits objects together in a precise way.** For example, the child does four-piece puzzles, works shape box, turns nut on bolt, fits screwdriver onto screw head.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for, grasping, and picking up object to be fitted---nut, screwdriver, or puzzle piece.

b. Positioning the objects to be fitted---turning a puzzle board around or holding a bolt so that the nut can   
 go on.

c. Holding the objects steady.

d. Fitting one object into another.  
 e. Releasing the object (e.g., puzzle piece) once it is fitted.  
 f. Grasping objects with fingers.  
 g. Hand strength.  
 h. Rotating wrist.  
 i. Paying attention to what he’s doing.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold this” “Push it IN.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me push it IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

e. Adaptations. Use objects that are easy to hold, and that have holes that provide leeway.

**LR3.58 The child builds structures using repeated series of actions (movement cycles) --**the child puts together Tinker Toys, Lincoln Logs, or Lego sets.

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for, grasping, and picking up the object that is to be fitted---a Tinker Toy rod.

b. Reaching for, grasping, and picking up the objects into which one part (a rod) is to be fitted.

c. Positioning and steadying the objects that are to be fitted.

d. Precisely positioning or fitting the object to be fitted---pushing rod into hole.  
 e. Watching his own movements.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Hold this” “Push it IN.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me push it IN.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

e. Adaptations. Start with objects that are easy to connect, such stacking cups, push beads (with one bead   
 held for the child).

**LR3.59 The child cuts paper with scissors.**

(1) The child does this (Circle one.)  
 a. Very well.   
 b. Not firm on some movements.  
 c. Not firm on many movements, or doesn’t do this.

(2) Which elements of this behavior need work? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. Reaching for, picking up, and holding the scissors, perhaps with assistance from the other hand.

b. Reaching for, picking up, or lifting the edge of the paper.

c. Moving the scissors toward the edge of the paper.

d. Opening the blades of the scissors (extending fingers) and inserting the edge of the paper between the   
 blades.

e. Closing the blades of the scissors (flexing fingers) to cut the paper.

f. Repeating last two steps.

(3) What kinds of cues and/or prompts might improve the child’s behavior? (Circle one or more.)  
 a. Repeated request. “Put your fingers here (scissors holes).” “Open your fingers.” “Now squeeze.”   
 b. Model or demonstration. “Watch me cut.” “Do this.” (Show how to do this.)   
 c. Gesture. Point to hands as you do the routine.

d. Manual or move child. Move the child all or partly through the motions.

e. Adaptations. Easy to hold scissors. Stiff paper that can be kept steady. Partially cut paper, so that child   
 begins by finishing what was started.

**6. BEGIN TO TEACH THE *NAMES* FOR THINGS EVEN IF YOUR CHILD CANNOT SAY THE NAMES.**

The idea is to teach your child to point to objects or to match them based on their name. Sometimes it is called “receptive vocabulary.” For example, if you show him a toy car and a toy dog and say, “Point to the dog,” he does it. And he picks up a blue block when there are blue and red blocks on the table, and you say, “Pick up the blue one.”

***How to Teach This Behavior***

By taking the child for walks, telling her the names of things, and having her point to them, you give her a head start on Functional Speech---a later book in the series. This section tells you how to give your child even more practice. The definition of the target behavior is that the child *points* to objects when you say the name, and *matches* (puts in the same place) objects with the same name, color, or shape.

**Matching Objects**

This teaches the child to see how some objects are the *same* and some are *different.* Start by sitting down with him at a table with different objects on it. Take a box and divide it into two or three compartments, or use two or three shoe boxes. Paste a picture of a different object on each box or put a *sample* object in each box; for example, a spoon in one, a sock in the second, and a block in the third. Have extras of all of them.

When the child is sitting quietly, hold up one of the extra objects. When he looks at it, tell him what it is. Have him *point* to it. Then show him the one just like it (the sample) in the box or compartment. Give him the object you held up, and *quickly* prompt him to put it in the box or compartment with the one it matches. Try not to let him put it in the wrong box. Guide his hand to the right one. Slowly *fade out* your prompts (by waiting longer before you point to the right place and by guiding his arm less and less) and, later, tag-reinforce only when he does this matching right---“Yes, same!” Switch back and forth between the different kinds of objects. Add new ones every few days.

When the child is matching objects well, teach him to match *shapes* and *colors.* Have boxes with samples of differently colored objects (poker chips, paint samples) pasted on or in them. Then hold up one of the extras from your pile, tell the child the name of the color, and have him put it in the right box. Switch between the different colors. Do the same thing with simple shapes, such as squares and circles.

When you are working on matching, count the number of times each session that you ask the child to match objects (the number of tries) and the number of times that he correctly does it without prompting. You want the number of correct matches to get close to the number of tries.

**Pointing to Objects By Name**

Matching means that the child sees how objects are the same or different. You should also teach her the names for objects. If the child points to an object when you give the name, it is a good bet she has learned its name. You need pictures of many common objects (foods, furniture, toys, clothes), which you can buy or cut out of magazines, and a box of small objects (sock, ball, spoon, pencil, and so on).

1. Make sure that the child knows how *to point to* or *pick up* objects.   
2. Put *one* object or picture on the table in front of her.   
Wait for herlook at you or at the object. Then tell her, “This is a DOG. Point to

the DOG.”   
3. Prompt her to point if necessary and tag-reinforce when she does. Move to the next step when she correctly picks up an object or picture when you tell her to.

4. Now teach the child the names for the objects, one at a time. Wait until she is looking at you. Then hold up an object or picture. When she looks at it, tell her the name and prompt her to point to it. “This is an APPLE. POINT to the APPLE. [tag-reinforce] Yes, APPLE.” Repeat this a few times. Then go on to the next object or picture and do the same thing---tell her the name and have her point to it.   
5. Then put *both* on the table. When the child is looking at them, point to each and tell her the name. “Here is the DOG, and here is the APPLE.” Then tell her to point to one of them. “Okay, now POINT to the APPLE.” If she does this correctly within about 4 seconds, tag-reinforce + “Yes, apple.” If not, repeat, but *prompt* her by moving her hand to the right one or by pointing with your finger. Repeat this a few times, but move the pictures to different places on the table.

6. When the child correctly points to the first picture or object several times in a row, have her point to the second one. “Yes. Now point to the DOG.” Move the pictures around, and repeat a few times. Then switch back and forth between the two. One time ask her to point to the apple. Shuffle the pictures around and ask her to point to the dog. Slowly fade out any prompts. Be careful not to prompt by leaning toward or looking at the 1ight picture.

7. When the child correctly points to the first two even when they are at different places on the table, add a third picture or object. Teach her its name in the same way as you did the first two. Here are the steps again.

1. Wait until he is sitting still and looking at you.

2. Hold up the picture or object.

3. When he looks at it, tell him its name and have him point to it.

4. If he can talk, ask him to repeat the name.

5. Put the picture on the table next to one or two other pictures.

6. Tell him to point to it.

7. Prompt him at first, if needed.

8. Move the pictures around each time and ask him to point to the same one. Later, have him point to a different one each time.

9. Later, tag-reinforce only when he correctly points without a prompt.

As the days go by, add new objects or pictures. Work on these the most, but practice on the old ones too. Still later, use objects and pictures that look a little different but have the same name; for instance, two or three houses, dogs, cars, chairs, and so on. Also, keep taking the child for walks, and have him point to objects by name.

As with matching, count the number of times you ask the child to point to or pick up objects and pictures (the number of tries) and the number of times he does this correctly and without prompts. The goal at this early time is to teach him to point to or pick up about ten objects or pictures by name, without prompting, among others lying on the table. We will work on this more in the later book on Functional Speech.

This chapter did two things.

1. The child is using earlier skills (responding to changes around her, eye contact, cooperation, Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words, sitting, the beginnings of imitation) to learn and use new ones (motor skills).

2. The child is learning the large and small motor movement elements of more complex play and daily life activities or routines.

The next chapter shows you methods for teaching a child to play.

**Chapter 6 – Learning Readiness Skills 4 Play**

Please read and use this chapter along with Chapter 5, which teaches a child large and small motor movements that are elements of the play activities (which we work on here) and daily life activities (taught in Chapter 7).

***Let’s Evaluate.***

So far, in LR 1-3, we have assessed and taught responsiveness, attention, cooperation, and motor skills. These prepare a child for playing---and also for skills taught in later books---Book 3 (Motor Imitation), Book 4 (Verbal Imitation), Book 5 (Functional Speech), and Book 6 (Chores, Self-Help, and Participation in Family Activities). The behaviors below (LR4.1) are listed starting with basic elements of play skills. Based on what you’ve already learned about a child’s skills, how would you assess these?

(1) Child (usually; sometimes; rarely; never) listens to directions. (Please underline one.)

(2) While she is learning how to do a play task, or is playing (for example, drawing, puzzles), thechild (pays attention pretty steadily; drifts off sometimes;drifts off a great deal; will not sit and learn or do play activities). (Please underline one.)

(3) Child (usually; sometimes; rarely; never) looks closely atwhat he is doing when he is learning or doing a task. (Please underline one.)

(4) Child usually (cooperates and pays attention; makes half-hearted try; often ignores you; puts up a fuss) when you try to teach him or get him to do play activities. (Please underline one.)

(5) Child will usually learn and do play activities with (just about anyone; most people; only certain people; no one as yet). (Please underline one.)

(6) Child participates attentively and cooperatively when learning play activities and when playing (for 30 minutes or more; for 15 to 30 minutes; for5 to 15 minutes; for less than 5 minutes) before he becomes restless and wants to do something else. (Please underline one.)

(7) Child (has a lot of coordination; has average coordination; is a bit clumsy; is very clumsy) at Large and   
 Small Motor activities. (Please underline one.)

(8) Child spends (a good part of his time---several hours a day; some time---an hour or so, but not enough; a little time---maybe a half hour; almost no time) at play activities, such as working puzzles, coloring, using toys or other objects to build things. (Please underline one.)

As always (!) we review and practice (firm) the above behaviors before we teach a child to play, using methods in earlier chapters.

***1. Firming Earlier Behaviors***

Look at your evaluations, above. Which behaviors do we need to firm now, before we work on plays skills that USE these behaviors?

1. Observe the child for a few days.

2. If it’s a good idea for the child to do some of the above behaviors more often, for a longer time, in more places, with more accuracy, with more attention and cooperation, or with less prompting, please go to the chapters listed on Table 22, below, and fir them up.

3. Take your time. No rush.

5. If you think a child isn’t making enough progress, please see Chapter 8.

**Table 22. Earlier Behaviors to Firm up.**

These are shorter statements of the behaviors we just evaluated.

1. Child listens to directions. See Chapter 3, section on How to Teach Cooperation--Responding to Verbal   
 Instructions Generally.2. How well does the child pay attention while he is learning how to do a play activity, or is playing?See   
 Chapter 4, section on sitting; Chapter 3, How to Teach Cooperation--Responding to Verbal Instructions   
 Generally;and see Chapter 5, items LR 3 16-18, on Eye Movements3. Child looks closely atwhat she is doing when she is learning or doing a task. See Chapter 5, on how to work   
 on Eye Movements, items LR 3.16-3.18.4. Child cooperates and pays attention when you try to teach him or get him to do play activities. See Chapter   
 3, section on How to Teach Cooperation--Responding to Verbal Instructions Generally; See Chapter 4, the   
 section on Teaching Your Child How to Interact (Learn) With You Using Toys and Other “Manipulatives.”5. Child will usually learn and do play activities with just about anyone. See Chapter 3, section on How to   
 Teach Cooperation--Responding to Verbal Instructions Generally. Also see all the Tips for Teaching in   
 Chapter 5.6. How long does the child participate attentively and cooperatively when learning play activities and when   
 playing, before he becomes restless and wants to do something else? See Chapter 4, section on Increasing the   
 Length of Time the Child Sits While Working at Some Task. 7. Child’s coordination at Large and Small Motor activities. See Chapter 5, sections on Large and Small Motor   
 skills, and especially Tips for Teaching.(8) How much time does the child spend at play activities?

Take your time as you firm up these behaviors. No stress. *Just teach for a week or so as we’ve done before during review, practice, and firm up of earlier skills.*

Okay, let’s work on playing, starting with basic elements.

***2. Get Child to The Teaching/Play Area***

Well, in case a child stays away from teaching and playing areas, we’ll have to get her back. We’ll use methods in Chapter 4—the section on How to Shape Sitting. It will be good practice. Basic idea. As the hours or days go by,  
Wait till she gets a little closer to the chairs => tag-treat.   
Later, a little closer than that => tag-treat.   
Later, still closer than that => tag-treat.   
Later still, touches chairs => tag-treat.   
Later still, partly sits on the chairs (turned so that it’s easy to climb on, and maybe with a small prompt) => tag-treat.   
When she sits more fully on the chairs => tag-treat.   
Do this at times when the treat will be strong---snack or meal time.

***3. Teaching Your Child to Play***

Here are some guidelines.  
1. Keep toys and other interesting objects---books, utensils, dolls---in several places in the home. Rotate these every few days, before the child is bored with them.  
2. Whenever the child gets close to these, touches these, or begins to manipulate these, tag-treat and join the child. Look at the objects; talk about them; show the child how to manipulate them. Tag and/or reinforce looking and manipulating them---as well as occasionally reinforcing Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words, cooperating with requests.  
3. At the same time, have sessions where you teach the child to use the toys. The sections on Tips for teaching, in Chapter 5, tell you how. So does the section on Play Routines and Daily Living Routines That Integrate and Use The Large And Small Motor Movements. L3. 33-59,in Chapter 5. For instance, here’s how Tommy Tucker’s Mom does it.  
a. Mom and Tommy have one main teaching-play session each day before afternoon snack.   
b. Mom has a few toys on the table and more nearby. Mom starts with Play-doh, pop-beads (large plastic beads   
 to be stuck together), simple puzzles, plastic building blocks, finger paint, and Tinker toys. Later, she introduces toys that use more movements---jigsaw puzzles, a pegboard landscape, coloring, peg-  
 and-pull blocks (a large version of Tinker toys), stickers to paste, and a plastic to cut out and paste various shapes of paper.  
c. Mom tag-reinforces the main behavior---completing a movement cycle, such as fitting a puzzle piece,   
 stacking a block, copying a circle, stringing a bead. She uses food reinforcers.  
 Chapter 5 told her the elements that she might have to pre-teach--such as holding a string to push through a   
 bead) before she teaches the task itself. Chapter 5 also told her other elements that she should reinforce (such   
 as Tommy watching what he is doing, cooperating, sitting big, Quiet Mouth). She reinforces these with   
 praise and “Yes, watch the string go IN.”  
   
 Mom also uses little plastic teddy bear tokens, to reinforce Tommy when he is most attentive and involved.   
 After the sessions, Mom gives Tom back-up reinforcers (snack, music, a ride in the car) if he has earned   
 enough tokens. At first, he only needs a few.

Mom adjusts how often she tag-reinforces. She saves treats for the weakest behaviors—such as completing a   
 little task and Quiet Mouth. As Tommy does these more often, Mom reinforces with praise and hugs.  
d. If Tommy becomes disruptive, Mom ignores it and waits. When he is calm, she restarts teaching; gets   
 Tommy to make a few skillful moves; *and then ends the session*! If he does not calm down, she picks up the   
 materials and leaves. Tommy misses the snack, music, or ride. She runs another, short session, later.

e. Whenever Tommy comes to the teaching-play table on his own, Mom or other family members reinforce it,   
 and join him.  
f. When Tommy is well engaged, Mom has another family member observe how she works with Tommy.   
 Then she lets the family join them. At first, the family member only tag and/or reinforce desirable behavior. When Tommy is used to another person playing with him and Mom, Mom coaches the other person to sit   
 in her chair and to do some of the play tasks with Tommy from start to finish. Mom coaches this person. “Tag that!” “Have him do it again. Give his hand a nudge.” “Just ignore that…. Now tag Quiet Mouth!”

***4. Teaching A Child to Play Longer and More Independently***

As a child learns how to do many small motor movements (items 14-32 in Chapter 5) and play activities (items 33-59 in Chapter 5), teach her to spend more *time* at them outside of sessions, as play activities. There are three steps for doing this.

First, *teach her to do play tasks more by herself.* Put one or two tasks that she can do well on the table. Get her started. Then slowly stand away from the table. Tell her to keep playing (“Put this block on top.”) and that she is doing a good job (“Yes, you put it on TOP.”). Give her a soft pat and slip her a bite of food or a token now and then while she is looking at what she is doing. When she finishes the task, give her a big reward---a snack, a ride, or a bout of roughhousing. As the days go by, *fade* yourself farther from the table and for a longer time. Tell her, “I’ll be right back. You FINISH the puzzle.” If she stops playing when you stand away from the table, come back for just a minute and give her more rewards for working. Later, reward her only for working and finishing tasks by herself.

This would work pretty well with Jack, Mark, Toto, Indra, or Nancy, but not so well with Jimmy, Pearl, Steven, or Tommy. They need to learn in smaller steps. So, here’s how Tommy’s Mom does it. As Tommy gains more skill at a particular toy, Mom begins teaching him to *play by himself*. How? She *basically fades out.*  
1. Tommy is putting in a puzzle piece. Mom moves her chair back, and reinforces when the piece goes in.   
2. Now she hands him another piece, or she points to the next piece. As he works it, she stands up and then sits right back down. Get it? As long as he stays involved, Mom fades out a little more.

*She makes sure to reinforce the very next thing he does when she comes back.*

3. Eventually, she takes one step from the table and comes right back. Then one step and waits a little longer before coming back. Then two steps. Always coming back and reinforcing. “Yes, you are PLAYING.”  
4. Then she is farther away. She says, “You play” to get him started, and she walks farther away and comes back.  
5. Mom varies how far away she gets and how long she is gone.  
 1 step, 1 second.  
 1 step. 2 seconds.  
 2 steps, 1 second.  
 1 step, 4 seconds.  
 2 steps, 4 seconds.  
Tommy is learning that “It doesn’t matter where Mom goes and how long she’s gone. She always comes back and I get a treat!”

Second, *use Activity Rewards more*. During sessions, use Grandma’s Law to get the child to do harder tasks: “As soon as you finish this puzzle, you can play with the Tinker Toys (which he likes).” Also, have Activity Rewards come after sessions. When the child plays for a certain number of minutes or finishes a certain number of tasks, or earns a certain number of tokens, he gets to go outside, watch TV, or have a snack. Slowly *increase* the number of minutes or tasks he works during sessions. You can use a kitchen timer with a bell to signal when he has played enough. Use a *variable schedule* (the interval between bells changes after each reward). Make sure that he is working when the bell rings. (You can ring the bell yourself.)

Third, *start the child playing during the day, fade yourself out, and give him an Activity Reward* when he has played for a certain amount of time--a tiny bit longer each day. At first, you might use Grandma’s Law to start him playing: “As soon as you color the square, we will play catch.” Later, just set out play objects, praise him, and slip him a bite of food or a token while he is playing, and have an Activity Reward come after he plays. Switch the Activity Reward each day.

Remember: as the child learns work at tasks, teach him todo them in new places and with other people.

***5. Strengthening Good Learning Habits, Such As Sitting, Listening, And Doing***

While the child is gaining more *skill* at small motor and play activities, and is learning to spend more *time* at them outside of sessions, we also maintain good learning habits, such as sitting, listening to directions, and doing tasks for a longer time. Here are a few ways to strengthen good learning habits.

1. *Keeping Earlier Target Behaviors Going Strong.* The Learning Readiness area gives the child a head start on good learning habits---eye contact, Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words, sitting big, and cooperating. When you start on small motor and play activities, keep these earlier target behaviors going strong by reinforcing them once in a while. For instance, when your child sits down at the table, give her a pat; reward her with a small bite of food (if you use it) for spontaneous eye contact; reward her when she cooperates with a simple request and when she is looking at what she is doing.

Also, use *natural chains.* Make sure that the child is sitting and that he is making eye contact *before* you hand him a task object or give him a direction. For instance, either hold up a task object and wait until he makes eye contact, or say, “Do you want another one?” Give him the object when he makes eye contact. But do not reward earlier behaviors too often, or the child will do them instead of the newer and harder tasks.

2. *Teaching the Child to Do and Learn for a Longer Time.* Some children work on tasks for only a few minutes at a time and then “drift” or run away. There are two ways to keep a child doing and learning.

One way is to *let the reinforcement and reinforcement schedules do their job. You* do not have to keep a child “on task.” The reinforcement and reinforcement scheduleswill do this *if you use them right.* For example,   
a. Use *strong* reinforcers.  
b. Reinforce the behavior often enough on a variable schedule---so that the child does not know just when her   
 behaviors will be reinforced.  
c. Do not reinforce running or “drifting” away. The child will settle down and learn. *Slowly* increase the length   
 of time she is doing and learning before her behavior is reinforced.

Second, when the child runs or drifts away, *ignore* it. He just loses the chance to earn rewards, and misses the Activity Reward at the end of the session. Begin to work at the activity yourself or, better, with someone else---as a model. Make sure to use treats! Make the activity seem like fun. This will often get the child’s attention back. Then let him join in.

3. *Teaching the Child to Listen and Follow More Complex Requests.* Up to now, you have been prompting the child or helping him through the right motions of a task until he can do it by himself. But are you sure he *listens* to your directions? We need to make sure before we go on to harder skill areas.

The method for teaching the child to listen and to follow more complex requests is simple. Use it during sessions on large and small motor activities and play and at other times. Begin with simple directions for him to do something, such as “Stand up” or “Give me the ball.” In other words, start with movements he can *already* make---that you taught in Chapter Sixteen. Prompt him if needed and reward him for following the direction. Once he is warmed up by following simple directions, give him directions that ask him to do two and later three things in a row; for example, “Pick up the BALL AND the BLOCK” or “THROW the ball to me AND SIT DOWN.” Again, prompt him at first (“Now the block.”) and reward him. Repeat and begin to fade out the prompt. Like this.

1. “Pick up the ball **and** the block…Pick up the ball…” Child does it. “Yes, ball. Now pick up the block” Child does it. “Yes, block.” Treat. Then…

2. “Pick up the ball **and** the block…” (Point to the ball or say “ball.”) Child does it. Treat “Yes, ball.” (Point to the block, or say, “block.”) Child picks it up. “Yes, block.” Treat. Then…  
 3. “Pick up the ball **and** the block…” (Point to the ball). Child does it. (Point quickly to the block.) Child picks it up. Verify after each one. “Yes, ball…Yes block.” Treat when the child picks them both up.  
 4. “Pick up the ball **and** the block” (look at each object). Verify after each one. “Yes, ball…Yes block.” Treat when child picks them both up.

**This could take several days.** Add more directions. Make it a game. One-step direction, two-steps, one-step, one-step, two-steps.  
 It is also important to teach the child to follow signals that tell him to *stop* or *wait.* One way to teach the child to wait is to hold up an object (one that he has learned to point to). The idea is tohave him take the object, but *he must wait until you ask him to take it.* Prompt him to wait until you give the direction. You can hold up a hand, palm facing the child as a stop gesture that comes before the word, “Stop” or “Wait.” Reward him only when he waits for the direction and follows it.

Here’s another way to do it. While he is working at a task, tell him, “STOP a second, please.” When he does, give him a little hug or rub his head, and then let him go on with what he was doing. Or, when he is just about to open a door, tell him, “STOP. Pick up the ball FIRST, please.” Reward him when he does and then let him go back to opening the door. Do this once or twice during sessions and a few times at other times of the day.

6. PLAYING NEAR OTHER CHILDREN

Nancy knows how to play, but plays only by herself or when she’s with her parents or teachers. When other children came around, Nancy leaves. How do you teach a child to play near other children? The answer is pretty simple: Each day, reinforce playing a little *closer* to the other children than before. Then, either prompt the child to get started on a more constructive activity or wait until she begins to play a little closer to the other children. Give the child lots of attention when she is nearer the others. As the days go by, stay on the lookout for times when the child is nearer the others; and reinforce it.

COOPERATING ON A TASK AND TAKING TURNS

When a child can work or play by himself and sometimes does this near another child, teach him to cooperate or play with another child---who might be a sibling. Have two children sit next to each other. Start with simple tasks they both can do; for example, four-piece puzzles or blocks to stack. At first, give each child, in turn, *one* task object, prompt him to place it, and praise him when he does. When the whole task is done, reward both children with plenty of praise, food, or tokens---if you are using them. Repeat this with other simple tasks and add harder ones.

After a few weeks, give each child three or four objects at a time for the common task; for instance, puzzle pieces. Stand behind the children, prompt them to take turns (“Okay, Nancy, JIMMY put in the DOG. Now YOU put in the COW.”), and reward them when the task is done. Slowly *fade out* your prompts for them to take turns. Give *big* rewards to both children only when the task is done.

Still later, teach them to cooperate on things that are more like play; for example, farm, house and train sets. Stand behind the children and prompt them to move the pieces around and put the sets together. Talk to them about what they are doing. “Oh, that was very nice, Nancy. You are putting the COW in the BARN. Jimmy, do you see where Nancy put the COW? She put it in the BARN.” If Jimmy points to the cow or barn, or imitates the word “cow” or “barn,” repeat what he said and treat. Then, if necessary, prompt him to place one of the pieces and reward him when he does. If tokens were used during this activity, have a token exchange at the end of the session.

As a child learns to cooperate and take turns with one other child, have him work with new children. You can even slowly add enough other children that you have a small group activity.

You could measure these three behaviors by counting: (1) how many minutes a child plays near other children during a play period; (2) how many minutes a child sits and pays attention when he is supposed to be cooperating on a task; and (3) how many times a child takes his turn without prompting. Your goals are for the child to spend over half the time playing near other children, sit and pay attention for at least 15 minutes out of 20-minute cooperation sessions, and take his turn most of the time without prompting.

It’s a good idea to keep track of what you are working on and your child’s progress. Table 17-2 shows you how.

**Table 17-2. Motor and Play Skills**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

What We’re Working Elements and Steps We Need

On. to Firm up. Prompts We Use. Reinforcers.

For example…

Four-piece puzzles that fit in Need to model-lead-test (with

separate slots. prompts) the step of fitting the piece. Focus on how he slides the piece, looks where it’s going, and tries several times.  
 Reinforce watching. Tag-treat   
 fitting piece in. Maybe use even simpler puzzle. Just circles?

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

After you have taught your child to play with you, by himself, and perhaps with another child for at least 10 minutes at a time, and to stop or wait, you can also start working with your child on life-skills---Chapter Eighteen.

Chapter 5 **–**Learning Readiness 5. Life Skills

This is the last Learning Readiness area. We’ve worked on responsiveness, eye contact, Quiet Mouth, good sounds/words, and cooperation (LR1); sitting to learn (LR2); large motor and small motor skills (LR3); and play (LR4). This chapter is a head start on participating in daily-life activities. Our goal for now is **not** that your child becomes fluent and independent at these activities, but that she **pays attention,** **cooperates** in response to verbal and gesture signals, and begins learning to do her part (do the **right movements**). Our work now is slow and steady. The more your child learns, the easier and faster she will learn the next skills—because next skills consist of elements she has already learned. We continue in a later book in the series---Chores and Self-help skills. But you’ve been teaching your child the elements of play and daily life activities. So, it makes sense to put these elements to good use now, to make family routines easier (your child needs less help) and to make your child a more competent member in the family’s round of daily life. Here’s what we’ll work on.  
Cooperation with  
1. Shopping.  
2. Getting out of the car.   
3. Getting in the car.  
4. Car seat buckling.  
5. Dressing.   
6. Toileting.   
7. Tooth brushing.

8. Bedtime.

I know I don’t need to tell you that

When we teach daily-life skills, we keep earlier skills going strong.

Please reread the first section of Chapter Sixteen, Keep Earlier Behaviors Going, and use the methods there. We don’t want to be firming up elements at the same time we are teaching a routine that USES these elements.

“Hey, let’s ride bikes down a mountain.”  
 “Uhhhh. Well, I’m not firm on steering and braking.”  
 “Not to worry. We’ll firm them up as we go.”

**1. A FEW GUIDELINES**

1. *Life skills are routines.* You know what that means. They have *steps*, and each step *uses* certain knowledge *elements*. Like what? Like **concepts** (“hold,” “put in,” shirt, shoe, belt, pull, lift). And **movements**, such as grasping an object (toothbrush) with the palm and fingers of one hand, or raising both arms straight above the head so that Dad can slide the shirt sleeves onto his child’s arms. So, when we make a teaching plan,   
 a. The first thing *we do is a knowledge analysis of the routine*. What are the steps? What (elements) do you have to know and do in each step?  
 b. Then we use the knowledge analysis to *evaluate our child*. Does she do the steps? Is she firm on the elements in each step? If not,…  
 c. We either *teach* (acquisition of new knowledge) *or we firm up* (retention of earlier knowledge) *the weak elements*. Remember, many of these movement elements are in Chapter Sixteen. Please go there to remind yourself.  
  
 “Watch,” says Ma Roger to Steven.… “I PUSH (the block, chair, cup, plate, book)…. You PUSH the book.”

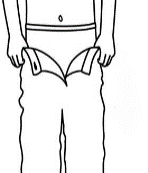
Why teach this concept and movement? Because Mrs. Rogers will be teaching Steven to push the shopping cart. See Chapter Sixteen, LR3.28.

“This (point and touch) is my HEAD. I touch my HEAD.”  
 “This (in front of a mirror) is Pearl’s HEAD. Touch Pearl’s/your head.”

Why teach this concept? Because Ma Ironton and Pearl will be working on Pearl putting a cap on her head.

Then,  
 d. We decide *how we will teach* the routine. We ask,  
 (1) When and how will we **first** teach and firm up the concepts and movement elements? And then  
 (2) How will we **teach the whole routine**. See #2, below.  
2. Please skim section 3d. Knowledge of routines, in Chapter Seven.  
 a. If a routine has only a few steps (such as putting on a knit hat), and if the child is firm on the elements (for example, the last step---grasping the bottom edge of the hat with the fingers of both hands, and pulling down), you could first try **teaching the whole routine with model-lead- test/check-tag-reinforce**. “I’ll put the cap ON my head (do all steps)…”  
 “You put the cap ON your head (child has her own cap) with me (do all steps)…” (Prompt as needed. Repeat to firm up.)  
 “Your turn. Put the cap ON your head (do all steps).” (Prompt as needed. Repeat and try to fade out prompts.)  
   
 Correct immediately any **simple errors** during the lead or test/check parts, and start over. “Watch. I PULL down…. Now YOU pull down… That’s it. Pull down. Start over….Let’s put on our caps.” Repeat **only two more times** and then practice again later.  
 Or, if you notice a weak element (such as pulling down), firm it up (part-firming) immediately, and start over. Repeat **only two more times** and then practice again later.  
 b. If (1) a routine has many steps, or (2) if it’s a short routine but the child has difficulty going from one step to the next, or (3) you find out that the child is not firm on some of the elements, then you could use **forward chaining**---where you’d focus on each step. Model-lead-test/check-tag- reinforce each part.   
 Teach step 1: grasp cap at the bottom edge.   
 Teach step 2: open bottom of cap.   
 Teach child to do step 1 and step 2.   
 Teach step 3: raise opened cap over head.  
 Teach child to do all three steps: grasp cap at the bottom edge, then raise open cap over head, then pull down and let go.  
 c. Or, you could use **backward chaining**---where you also focus on each step.  
 (1) You do all the steps with/for **the child**. Grasp cap at the bottom edge; lift cap above child’s head; lower cap to top of child’s head; pull down to her ears.  
 (2) Model again, only this time **teach her to *do* the last step**---pull down to ears. “Your turn. Pull down.”  
 (3) Then you do all but the last two steps. Teach her the second to last step (lower cap to the top of her head: “Put ON.”) and then teach her to do the second to last (lower cap on head) **and** the last step (pull down).  
 (4) Keep going backwards---teaching the next earlier step---and then teaching her to do the sequence of all remaining steps.  
 If she tries to join in at any time (for example, Pearl tries to hold the cap with you), let her + reinforce. “What a BIG girl. Pearl holds cap.”  
 d. Or you could start by teaching the **main step**. In going to bed, that might be climbing into bed. In putting on a cap, that might by pulling it onto the top of her head. In shopping, it might be pushing the cart down an aisle. In unbuckling a seat belt, it might be lifting the flat part of the buckle to release the catch. Once the child is firm on the main step, teach earlier and later steps one at a time with model-lead-test.   
 e. *I* *don’t think you can know ahead of time what the right first choice is*. The nice thing about backward chaining is that the child does not have to struggle with remembering steps (because she’s seen and done each next step more!), and when she does her part (at the end), she is always close to completion (“All done!”) and to the reward. “Let’ go outside!”   
 Same with teaching the main step first. Once she can do that, you are simply teaching steps that lead up to it and steps than follow it. But the main business is done. So, try one method, and if it is a hassle, try another!  
 f. Remember that *you can use backward chaining even* ***within*** *steps.*

Let’s say your child has trouble with the last step of the routine for putting on pants---which is pull them up.

 Pants

Start backward chaining from the pants as shown, or even higher on her waist (less for the child to do). Next, from a little lower. Next from a little lower. Reinforce each time. Fade prompts, such as “Pull up” and holding the child’s hands to pull with her.  
  
 Please practice this with someone—preferably someone wearing pants.

Another example. The last step in setting a place at the table. The child is holding his plate, but has a hard time moving the plate from spot #2, below, to lowering the plate onto the outlined spot on a placemat (#1). So,  
 (1) You’d model how to do the whole step, from spot #4 to lowering the plate onto the circle (#1). “I put the plate ON the circle.”   
 (2) Then you’d model it again, but this time teach the child to lower the plate to the circle from *right above* the circle (#1). Repeat a few times.   
 (3) Then model moving the plate from #4 to spot #2, and teach the child to (a) bring the plate from #2 to a spot over the plate (#1),   
 and then to (b) lower the plate to the circle. Repeat.   
 When the child can do that, **pretty well**,  
 (4) Model moving the plate from #4 to spot # 3, and teach the child to do the rest. Repeat. Finally,  
 (5) Have the child start at spot #4 and do the rest.

1 Backward chain starting with the closest.

2 3 4

When the child does it from 1, have him start at 2. Then at 3. Then at 4.

Please practice teaching this to someone!

*Your turn.* Let’s say a child reaches for, grasps, and lifts a small milk carton, and leans it over a cup, but has trouble at the end---pouring milk into the cup. How would you backward chain this tiny step? Pick one.  
 (1) Have the child pour milk from the next room.  
 (2) Have the child pour milk from about 6 inches above the cup.  
 (3) Help the child to position the milk spout right over the cup and then   
 pour. Then do this from an inch higher. Then have the child put it   
 all together: bring the carton to the cup from a few inches away, lean the carton over and pour from 1 inch above.

Please practice this!

3. It’s more fun to plan and teach with other families! If you and your partner families read and teach from the earlier chapters, each family will see things and think of things useful to the other families. Also, families can observe and coach one another (“You might want to tag-reinforce that behavior more often.”) and can assist in teaching. “How about if you stand at the end of the aisle and show Steven the treat, while I get him to push the cart with me?”

Let’s start with what LOOKS like a tough one. But we’ll see that it isn’t so tough when we ask the right questions. Planning and teaching life skills is no more difficult that planning and teaching puzzles. There’s just more steps.

**2. SHOPPING. LR5.1**

Stan and Mary Rogers plan to teach Steven everyday activities---playing in the park, helping to dress himself, taking walks, driving with the family to Ned’s Clever Cow for ice cream, and grocery shopping. Mom tried grocery shopping before. She said,   
 “Steven freaked out from the noise and colors and movement all around. He whined to leave. Wouldn’t walk with me. Tried to pull away and run. I threw things in the cart as fast as I could, but gave up. I left the cart in the beer aisle and walked out with him in tow. What fun.”

Ma and Pa Rogers are typical parents of kids with learning difficulties.

They don’t quit.

  
 Spartan

They’ve spent ***several months*** teaching Steven skills in the earlier chapters. Maybe now Steven he has the skill elements to do basic life skills, such as shop calm with Mom and Dad. How can they tell? How can they teach him?   
  
 When they ask the right questions, the answers are obvious.   
  
Planning is calming. No need to get tense, thinking, “We’ve got to teach him NOW! But how?!” It’s a step-by-step project. Each step makes the next one easier. Here are questions to ask.

1. *Grocery shopping is what kind of knowledge?* Hmmm. Are there steps when you shop? Yes. Okay, then shopping is a…..(pause)…..**routine**.   
2. So, *what are the steps in this routine*----from getting into the store, getting the groceries, and leaving the store? Also, what *knowledge elements* do you need in order to do each step? To find out,  
 a. Ma and Pa Rogers reread Chapter Eight, and examine examples of knowledge analysis. Please take a look at a few of these now.  
 b. They go to their local grocery store—The Happy Hog---and watch several persons shop. Or, they think about how THEY shop.  
 c. They write down the **steps**.  
 d. They also write down the knowledge elements needed to do each step.  
 How hard is that!? We did it a million times in Chapter Sixteen?

Here’s what they wrote.

**Rogers Family Knowledge Analysis of Grocery Shopping**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Steps in Grocery Shopping**  We went shopping and took notes on the main things we did---the steps. | **Knowledge Elements Needed**  As we did each step we wrote down what we had to know and how we had to move.  This was kind of tedious, but fun.  It gave us confidence that we would teach **everything** Steven needs to learn and do!  It made us feel smart---that we know what we are doing! Now we can do knowledge analysis more easily and faster each next time. |
| 1. Walk from car to store door.    2. Walk through door into store.    3. Look at and walk to carts.    4. Pull out cart.  5. Push cart into main part of store.    6. Push cart along the aisles.  7. Stop walking with cart.  8. Take package or can off of shelf and put in cart.  9. Push cart to checkout.    10. Load groceries on counter.  11. Push cart out the door and walk to car. | 1a. Walk calm with Mom or Dad.  1b. Look at store front and door.  2a. Look into the store.  2b. Walk with Mom or Dad through the door.   3a. Turn head and eyes towards carts when we point and say, “Look at the carts.” [Teach what “cart” looks like.]  3b. Walk calm with Mom or Dad to the cart area.  4a. Look at one cart that we will pull out of the line of carts.  4b. Help Mom or Dad to grasp cart handle and pull backwards while walking backwards. Visually track movements.  5a. Grasp both sides of cart handle. [Teach what “handle” looks like.]  5b. Walk forward---push.  6a. Grasp both sides of cart handle and walk forward with Mom or Dad in a straight line.  [Teach what “aisle” looks like.]  7a. Stop walking when Mom or Dad say, “Now stop,” and maybe give a gesture, such as a hand up, that means “stop”  8a. Turn and look at item on shelf when Mom or Dad point, say “Look at the (soup, noodles, cookies, etc.)” *We will use items where you can see what’s in the package and that Steven knows about—like noodles and chips. We’ll get these first!*  8b. Reach for items (raise arm at the shoulder, extend arm) and grasp item that we point to. *We’ll start with items at Steven’s eye level.*  8c. Turn to cart, still holding item. Extend arm at the shoulder; lower item into cart; release grasp. *All of these are in Chapter Sixteen!*  9a. Steven looks at the checkout counter when we get to the end of our last aisle, and we point, and say, “Now we go to checkout, and YOU get your treat!”  [Teach what “checkout” and “counter” mean.]  9b. Steven walks forward pushing cart, aiming it (with our help steering) to checkout. *We’ll plan this with a checker beforehand, so that he or she takes us by ourselves---no waiting in line at first.*  10a. When we point to and name an item, Steven reaches into the cart, grasps, the item, lifts it out, and places it on the counter.  Steven visually tracks his movements.  *Physical prompts, and pointing as needed.*  11a. With the cart loaded, we give Steven his treats and hugs, and say, “Now we go home. Push cart OUT the door.”  Steven looks at the front door.  Steven pushes cart towards the front door  11b. We pass through the door. Steven walks with Mom or Dad to the car. |

This is knowledge analysis. Notice that we worked on the elements, above, and many more---large and small motor movements---in Chapter Sixteen.

3. *Does Steven know/do enough of the knowledge/behavior elements that Mom and Dad identified above to shop?* Mom and Dad have kept track of Steven’s progress from Chapters Ten-Seventeen. They ask their friends, the Browns, to evaluate Steven’s progress with them one evening.

“Yup. He’s doing great with eye contact, walking with you, cooperating with lots of requests, and Quiet Mouth. Looks like he needs more practice with some of the small motor movements before you take him shopping--- like holding things with a palm grip, holding a bulky package, and putting one thing inside another.”

The knowledge analysis, plus evaluation of Steven’s progress, tells Mom and Pop which **new** skill elements they need to teach (“We haven’t taught him to load items into a shopping cart.”) and which **earlier skills they need to firm up** (“We’ll practice walking calm with Mom. Also, picking up and moving objects from one spot to another spot.”) before they start teaching the whole routine.

Does this sound like a lot of thinking? Yes, at first.   
 But soon it’s second nature!   
  
4. *How will they teach the new skill elements and firm up the earlier ones?* Easy. They’ll use methods they’ve used many times already. If you’ve already taught your child to walk calmly with you for a block (Chapter Fourteen), it will be easy to practice a little before you go to the store. If you’ve taught Quiet Mouth (Chapter Thirteen), it will be easy to practice using the cue, “shshshsh.” If you’ve taught your child to walk upright, to cooperate with simple requests, and to imitate your movements (using model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce), it will be easy to teach him to push a shopping cart a few feet.  
  
Ma and Pa use a table like Table 18-1, below, to plan **details** of the teaching.   
Mom and Dad look at the sequence of steps in their knowledge analysis. Then they think of the *sequence for teaching the steps*. For instance,   
 a. Will they teach all the steps of shopping **at once?** It better be a very short shop!   
 Enter store=> Get cart => Roll 10 feet to candy rack by check-out => Take candy bar from rack =>Pay => Leave => Eat candy. Next times, fade out prompts at each step and (as long as Steven is calm and cooperative) add few more grocery items to take from the shelves and to put in the cart.  
 b. Will they start with the **last step** andadd **earlier** steps (that Steven will do) the next times they shop? Backward chaining.  
 Mom models the whole shopping sequence, and tag-reinforces Steven as he walks calm with her. She teaches (and Steven does) the last step-- -putting a candy bar on the counter, watching the cashier put the candy in a sack, taking the sack and leaving. During next shoppings, Steven does more steps, working backwards from the check-out counter.  
 c. Will they start with the **first** step, and Steven will do more of the steps during the next shops? Forward chaining?   
 Mom teaches Steven to do the first step---enter store. Next time, she teaches him to enter the store and get a cart. Next time, she teaches him to enter the store, get a cart, and push it down the first aisle…  
 d. Will they start with the **main step** (going down each aisle), and add earlier or later steps, and more items to put in the cart, each next time they shop?

Please imagine doing these four methods!  
Whichever method Ma and Pa Stevens choose, it is tentative. They can always change the plan. We’ll see how in minute.  
5. For each step, they write which new skills they need to teach; which earlier skills they need to firm up; and how they will teach.  
6. Once they start teaching, they use their plan to evaluate Steven’s progress. The plan tells what Steven should be doing in each step (for instance, as they push the cart down an aisle), and how Ma and Pa will interact with him (requests, prompts, tag-reinforce) in each step. So, they can quickly and easily SEE what they need to firm up right then.

Note: *Everything they teach for* ***this*** *routine transfers (can be generalized) to many other routines!* When they teach Steven to pick up, move, and put items in the cart, that transfers to picking up, moving, and putting dishes in the sink and dishwasher, clothes in the hamper, clothes in his chest of drawers, toys in his toy box, and a dozen other activities. When they teach him to push a cart, that transfers to pushing his chair under the table, pushing his toy box into the corner, and pushing his bike up against the wall of the garage. So,   
  
 Every time they teach something new, it’s easier to teach the next thing. Because many of the steps and elements are the same.   
 The main difference will be materials (clothing, canned goods, dishes, toys) and place (bed room, store, kitchen, living room).

Note. When you examine Ma and Pa Rogers’s plan, you might say, “Dang, that is a DETAILED plan! How can I ever cover so much?”   
 Mr. and Mrs. Rogers are cautious. They don’t want to leave out steps or knowledge elements used in steps. They don’t want to be in the store with Steven and realize, “Uh, oh. He can’t push the cart.” Because then they’d have to go back to the drawing board. It took them a couple of revisions to get it as you see it below. They made one plan, read it, realized they left out some steps, and revised it. There is no rush! The simply asked themselves,   
  
 “Is there any little step or any little skill element that we left out?”  
 If so, they add that to their plan.

However, with Tito, Jack, and Mark—who have/do more skills and knowledge (concepts, how things work, movements)---parents would not have to make such detailed plans. For example, Ma St. Vincent’s plan for teaching Jack to grocery shop is little more than a list of steps, and a few prompts.

Teaching Jack to Grocery Shop.

Steps. What Jack Needs to Know.

1. Get the cart. The carts are on the right, as you come into the store. He already knows what a cart is.

2. Role cart into the main part The carts are lined up together. You have to   
 of the store. pull one out. He already knows how to push a cart.

3. Go to vegetable area. It’s on the right hand side of the store. He knows what the word “vegetables” means and what a pile of vegetables looks like.

4. Roll cart among the tables. He knows how to roll a cart around and   
 Pick up package of carrots, load items.  
 bag of onions, lettuce.   
 Put each package in cart.

5. Roll to the back of the store.   
 Make a left. Go down the   
 next aisle.

6. Next aisle, etc.

Left

Lettuce

Onions

Carrots

Image result for shopping cart black and white

When you make your plans, just use Table 18-1 as a model. *Or actually TRY the plans made by the families, below, with modifications for your family situation*

Remember. The goal now is not that your child is independent and fluent at all these activities right away. It’s that she is attentive, cooperative, and is learning how.

Okay, here we go.

**Table 18-1. Plan for Teaching Grocery Shopping. Steps in the Routine, Knowledge Elements Needed to DO the Steps, and How We’ll Teach or Firm up.**

|  |
| --- |
| **A. Pre-shopping Readiness Skills that we have taught Steven.**  We have to firm up these skill elements up before we start teaching shopping. It’s the same as warming up before you run a race, or checking your ingredients before you bake a pie. We already worked on these skills using Chapters Ten-Seventeen.  **We’ll take a couple of weeks firming these pre-shopping skills.**  **Practice sessions will be maybe 30 minutes a day!**  *When we made this list we said, “Gee, that is a LOT of behaviors to be thinking about and working on.” Then we realized that it is no more “work” that living with our other, “typical,” kids. We are always talking to them and doing things with them. It’s just that we are talking differently and doing different things with Steven.*  1. Steven has learned that whining, yelling, pulling and pushing get NO reaction, but waiting, Quiet Mouth, staying with us, and cooperating get immediate rewards. (Chapter Ten)  *How we’ll work on this.* We’ll make sure to increase tag-reinforcement for Quiet Mouth (Chapter Thirteen), walking with us, and cooperating with simple requests, such as “walk” (Tables 14-1 and 14-2), “stop” (Table 14-3), and “put in” (LR3.38, Chapter Sixteen).  For example,  To teach Steven the concept and the movements for “put in,” we’ll have short sessions. We’ll use different examples of put in. Blocks in a box, socks in the hamper, toys in the toy box, and then canned goods and packages from the pantry INTO a little basket that I “borrowed” from the grocery store.  Like this…  “Steven. Look. I put the package IN the basket….. Again, I put the package IN the basket.”  “You put the package IN the basket WITH me….Get ready. (Signal “Go” with a hand drop. Physical nudge to get him started if I need to.)… Again. Put the package IN the basket with me… Get ready…” (Signal. Fade out prompt.) “Your turn. Put the package IN the basket. Get ready… (Signal. Nudge, if needed.)… Tag-treat + “Yes, IN the basket.” (Repeat until firm.)  Next pre-shopping skill to firm up….  2. Steven notices and responds to changes---LR1.1, Chapter Eleven.  *How we’ll work on this.* 2a.We need to teach Steven to notice examples and maybe to learn the names of grocery store **concepts,** like the door to the store, the cart area, the cart handle and basket, openings to each aisle, the food on the shelves.   2b. Well look at pictures of stores, and point to and name different things. Later, when we’re driving around, we’ll stop outside of stores and point to and name “store,” “door,” “carts.”  2c. At home we’ll point to and name “shelf,” “can,” “package.” It’s good for him to learn these concepts, anyway!  Next pre-shopping skill to firm.  3. Steven looks at us on his own and on request—LR1.2 and 1.3 (Chapter Twelve).  *How we’ll work on this.*  3a. We’ll increase tag-reinforcement for eye contact and eye contact on request. We’ll follow eye contact with natural rewards to remind him that eye contact is a signal to do something with someone, like come to them---LR1.4, Chapter Twelve.  For example, “Steven. Look at me… (He looks. I smile). Come to Dad…” (He comes.). Big hug.  Next pre-shopping skill to firm.  4. Steven enjoys (is rewarded by) social contacts, such as hugs and praise---LR1.5, Chapter Twelve.  *How we’ll work on this.*  4a. We’ll make sure to use hugs and praise along with treats when we reinforce him. We’ll fade out the treats and use hugs and praise. These will be important “quick” reinforcers when we are at the store. We can’t be shoving food in his mouth every two seconds!  Next pre-shopping skill.  5. Steven walks with us, without holding hands—LR1.7, Chapter Fourteen.  *How we’ll work on this.*  5a. We taught this last month, and we keep tag-reinforcing on an intermittent schedule when we go for *walks*.  We’ll practice this outside the house. (Tables 14-1 and 14-2)  5b. Then we’ll go to the grocery store *parking lot* and practice, so that he’ll be used to walking from the car to the store door. This avoids having to teach generalization from home to store! At first, the tag point will be only 10 steps (because this is a new place); then a few more.  Next skill to firm.  6. Steven cooperates with requests such as “Pick up…” and “Put in.” These are elements of the *movement cycle*---reaching, grasping, lifting, moving, and placing items from the store shelf to the cart, and repeat. Best to firm up now!  *How we’ll work on this.*  6a. We’ll practice this with objects on the table (put blocks in a box), and then we’ll practice taking items off the shelves in the kitchen cabinet and putting them in a basket. LR3.38 (put in)  Next skill to firm.  7. Steven comes when asked.  *How we’ll work on this.*  7a. Well practice this in different parts of the house, in the yard, and on the sidewalk. We’ll start with BIG treats.  Next.  8. Steven already does Quiet Mouth on his own and in response to a cue, such as “Show me Quiet Mouth” and a finger over our lips.  *How we’ll work on this.* 8a. We’ll practice at home and other places---like the grocery store parking lot. We’ll make sure he is firm on responding to *shshshsh* and a finger over our lips.  Next.  9. Steven imitates simple movements, such as putting an object in a larger object.  *How we’ll work on this.*  9a. We’ll use this skill to help teach him how to take items off the grocery shelves and put them in the cart. (“Imitating simple movements,” Chapter Fourteen). We’ll practice in the home.  Next.  10. Steven does small motor movements such as watching objects move; reaching, grasping, holding, lifting, placing, and releasing objects.  *How we’ll work on this.*  10a. **These are elements of most shopping actions.** So, these need to be firm before we expect Steven to USE them. We’ll practice in the home with cans, bottles, and boxes. We’ll use model-lead-test. “I’ll put the box IN the basket.” We’ll practice items LR3.36-43, Chapter Sixteen.  Next.  11. Steven takes objects from us and gives objects to us.  *How we’ll work on this.*  11a. This is a tiny part of the movement cycle of putting things in the shopping cart. I take a box from the top shelf and hand it to Steven to put in the cart. (LR3.37, Chapter Sixteen). We’ll practice at home using items from the cupboard.  **Now that we’ve been firming up the pre-shopping skills, we’ll teach the shopping skill steps and elements.**  **B. Shopping Skills**  *Which method will we use?*  1. Teaching *the main step first* (walking down an aisle and putting stuff in the cart) is a good idea, but how will we get Steven TO that point, and how will we get from doing each aisle to leaving? He doesn’t have the skills.  2. *Backward chaining* would be weird. I would model how to get all the groceries; Steven would stand with me in line; then we leave? He would never last that long?  3. *Forward chaining* would take forever. And it would be weird. Walk from car to store (step 1); then go home. Next time, walk from car to store; go inside; go home. Next time, walk from car to store; go inside; get cart; go home. *Steven would never learn the point of shopping!*    4. Teaching *all the steps at once* with model-lead-test **makes the most sense**. *We’ll do the routine really fast----one item, candy*. This way, he doesn’t have to DO much; he only has to pay attention and be calm for a LITTLE WHILE; and he ends the shopping routine with a big TREAT. We’ll repeat most every day until Steven is calm and fluent---he “gets” the sequence and is with us every step. Then we’ll just add more---walking down the aisles, and each time adding a few more items and eventually more aisles.    *Working up to shopping at the Happy Hog.*  There’s a lot of noise, people, objects, colors, and space at the Happy Hog. This will be too stressful for Steven at first. So we’ll **make it easier for Steven to learn to shop by starting in a calmer place**---Ned’s Grub and Gas.  Ned’s has only a few aisles and little stuff on the shelves. Small carts---easy to push and load. Lines are short and the checkout is by the door. So are treats. Ned’s a helpful guy. Perfect.  1. Let’s say a week to teach the simple routine at Ned’s! Go in; get cart; push cart to snack rack; put snack in cart; check out; go to car; eat. Tag-treat after each step.  2. When Steven shops calm at Ned’s, and does two aisles and a few items, always ending with a treat, we’ll move to the Happy Hog. We’ll start with a simple routine---just like at Ned’s.   a. Go in; buy ONE thing at the express (empty) checkout counter; leave. When Steven is firm, b. Go in; take cart down closest aisle; one item; go to express checkout; leave. When Steven is firm, c. Go in; take cart down closest aisle; three items; go to express checkout; leave. When Steven is firm, d. Go in; take cart down closest aisle; three items; make a turn and go down the next aisle; one item; checkout; leave.  e. Etc.  Always leave before Steven is tense and always get him a treat at checkout. Stay as long as he’s calm and engaged.  Sister Sue will help. She’ll mostly set things up, like get the cart and line it up.  *We revised some of our steps from the knowledge analysis that we did earlier. We combined a few of them.*  **Step 1. Come into the store, calm and quiet.**  1a. Gets out of car quickly.  *How we’ll work on this.*  a. The Maretti family has a nice plan for teaching their Jimmy to get out of the car. (Table 10-3, number 3, in Chapter Ten). They analyzed getting out of the car into several steps: unbuckle seat belt; slide across the seat; get out of the car; walk. Our Steven already gets out of the car, but we can teach him to do these steps **faster**. I’ll say, “Steven, come out.” And I’ll show him the treat. Maybe I’ll count out loud. We could practice a couple of times—make it a game. When he gets out before I say “Five,” he gets the treat. We’ll work on this for a few days.  [See later sections in this chapter on getting in and out of the car, and car seat buckling.]  1b. Walks calm with Mom.  *How we’ll work on this.*  a. We’ll practice this at home. Then  b. We’ll practice this at the grocery store (Ned’s and Happy Hog), in the parking lot. We’ll build on getting out of the car fast.    Get out of car fast. => Walk with Mom or Dad.  **I’ll park near the doorway**. I’ll say, “As soon as we get to the door, you get…. (and I’ll show him the treat).” If I have to, I’ll tag-treat when he gets out of the car **fast**; then we’ll hold hands and walk to the door. Then treat.  I’ll point and name the door. “This is the door. Say, door.”  We’ll do this a few times.  He has to be firm on this step BEFORE we get into the store. I don’t want any tug-of-war before we even start!    If he’s calm when we get to the door, we’ll go in. If not, we’ll stand still outside till he’s calm. “Show me Quiet Mouth.” (No way I’m going in when he’s fussing!)  Repeat every day. There’s no rush! Maybe more times a day---that’s how he’ll earn his favorite goodies.  Gradually increase distance between where we park the car and going in. But this is not a big deal.  1c. Comes into store.  *How we’ll work on this.*  a. As soon as we are in the store, we will stand quietly. I will tag-treat Quiet Mouth and standing calmly. I will point and name things and ask him to look.  “Look. Apples… There’s bananas…. Juice!... These are carts.”  If he tries to say any words, tag-treat + Yes\_\_\_\_\_.”  b. Then we take a few steps in. Tag-treat. And a few steps more, to the carts. Sue will come in before us and put a cart near the door.  **Step 2. Get cart, start pushing.** 2a. We already taught about carts at home, and we practiced at Ned’s. We will walk to the carts maybe 10 feet away.  I will say “Hold handle,” and put Steven’s hands on the ends of the handle. Treat. “Yes, hold handle.”  Then we walk. “Now push.” [We already practiced this at home---pushing his tricycle.] I’ll help him to push straight. Treat. “Yes, push.”  As he pushes, I reduce my hold on the handle. When he is pushing by himself, tag-treat + hug + “Yes, push.”  Sue has gotten the checker to help. Empty line. Ready to ring us up fast. We go right to the empty checkout line. I help him steer.  He picks a snack.  I help him put coins on the counter. The checker says Hi and smiles at Steven.  We leave.  The car is right outside. “Walk with Mom.” He gets in the car. Snack.  We do this until he has this little routine down. Then we add more steps.  **Step 3. Go down aisle**  We’ve already practiced hold, handle, and push at home and at Ned’s. *We’ll teach what a longer aisle is in the Happy Hog*  3a. Grasps handle at ends; pushes cart with arms; walks forward.  Tag-treat + “Yes, push” every 5-10 feet.  3b. Movement cycle of getting items from shelf, moving them to cart, and putting them in the cart.  We’ll use backward chaining for this step.  Last step. Put in. I model how to get an item off the shelf and put it in the cart. (1) “Look. (Steven looks.) **Pick up** chips….. **Move** chips (move the bag to over the cart)…. **Put in** cart.” I put the bag back on the shelf and repeat.  (2) Now I teach **Steven** to do the last movement—put in cart. “Look.” (Steven looks.) Now I model pick up from shelf and move, and Steven will put the bag in the cart.  *How to teach this.*  I pick up a bag of chips from the shelf; I move it to the cart; I hold up the bag. When Steven looks at the bag, I move it towards his hand and say “Take.” Physically prompt if needed.  I say, “Put IN.” Prompt by pointing to the inside of the cart and by nudging his arm.  If he needs more help, I’ll use model (“Watch. I put in.”); lead (“Put in with me.”); test/check (“You put in.”).  (3) Now teach Steven the last two movements in the movement cycle: move object and put in cart.  *How to teach this.*  I pick up a bag of chips from the shelf; I hold up the bag near the shelf. When Steven looks at the bag, I move it towards his hand and say “Take.” I say “Move” and help Steven to move the bag to the cart. Then I say, “Put in.” Physically prompt if needed.  Repeat with another bag?  Now we move down the aisle. I say, “Push” and tag-treat when he pushes five steps.  (4) Now Steven will repeat moving an item from near the shelf into the cart.  (5) We walk some more. If Steven is firm on moving an item from the shelf and putting it in the cart, I will teach him the whole movement cycle, starting with picking up an item from the shelf.  *How to teach this.*  We do pick up (from the shelf), move (item from shelf to cart), and put in. Big tag-treat when the item goes in the cart. Maybe open the bag of chips and give him one.  Repeat right there; walk some more; repeat.  Or, I could use model-lead-test with the whole movement cycle.  We’ll do packages, cans, and bottles.  Reminder to self! We will turn around and leave after a few items if it looks like Steven is at his limit for now. We stay only as long as he’s engaged. So, we’ll get items he likes.  **Step 4. Turn cart at the end of one aisle and aim it down the next aisle.**  4a. When we get to the end of the aisle, I’ll say something like, “Now turn.” And I’ll help Steven to round the corner. Repeat Steps 2 (push cart) and 3 (take items from shelf and put them in the cart) in the second aisle.  4b. Try to have him do the whole movement cycle of pick up, move, and put in, but back up to just move item to cart and put in, or just put in, if these parts need firming.  4c. Increase the tag point to several items put it, and longer distance pushing.  4d. Leave before he gets antsy.  **Step 5. Check out and leave.** We’ll use backward chaining here, too.  5a. Help Steven to put one item on the counter (treat); pay; push cart to cart area; leave; go to car; eat treat.  5b. Then we’ll do two items. The second is a treat. Do more as long as he’s calm.  We’ll use this table to keep track of Steven’s progress. We’ll make notes on which steps and elements he’s doing well and which we need to work on---maybe at home and also (with more prompts and reinforcement) at the store. Before we start, we’ll practice the routine with other family members!! |

Here’s another life skill.

**3. GETTING OUT OF THE CAR. LR5.2.**

In Chapter Ten, we learned how Mr. Maretti taught Jimmy to get out of the car.   
Mr. Maretti wrote:  
 Jimmy is able to get out of the car by himself and walk to the door. He does these movements---scooting over, getting off the couch, walking---in other places. So, Jimmy can do---has done---all steps in this routine with no help at all, such as directions, models, physical.

However, he is VERY unlikely to do any of this routine. He just sits in the car. So, the **points of success** (and tag points) will be *each step*, just to be safe and not require too much behavior before tag-reinforcement.   
 a. We will park the car as usual, open the door, and unbuckle his seat belt. Then we will say, “Come to the house.”  
 b. Then we will wait a few seconds.   
 c. If Jimmy slides across the seat to the door, tag-reinforce.   
 d. If he climbs out of the car, tag-reinforce.   
 e. If he walks with us along the drive way, tag-reinforce.  
 f. If he does NOT make any move to get out of the car, we will leave the car door open, and then we will go inside the house and let him sit there. It’s about 20 degrees outside!

This is a good plan for getting a child who is fully capable out of the car, but *what if a child does not do the movements in the steps*? Mrs. Tucker writes…  
 Tommy just sits there. When we try to unbuckle his belt, he gets all upset. The usual tug-of-war. He won’t slide across the seat, so we have to half- drag and carry him. Then he won’t step out of the car. I guess we’ll have to teach him each step and all the movements in each step.

Ma and Pa Tucker make a plan, just as did Stan and Mary Rogers. Here it is. Remember, this is a long-term thing. The Tuckers are teaching Tommy to cooperate when they teach him. He’ll become more competent with the steps and with the whole routine over time and practice.

**Table 18-2. Teaching Tommy to Get Out of the Car.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **A. Pre-skills for Getting out of the Car.**  We have to know the steps. So, we watched each other get out of the car. We thought about tiny steps, so that we could be sure to teach Tommy every little movement. Here’s what we got.  After the seat belt is unbuckled (See the next section on buckling.), here’s what a person does.  Step 1. Slide across the seat to the door. We’ll use the left door, behind the driver’s seat. Movement elements. a. Look at the door you will use to leave the car.  b. Put hands on seat so that you can push yourself. c. Put feet on floor so that you can push yourself.  Step 2. Open the door. Movement elements. a. Look at handle on door. b. Pull handle upwards and push door open with shoulder. c. Keep pushing until door is open wide enough to climb out.  Step 3. Climb out and stand up. Movement elements. a. Hold onto the back of the front seat for support. b. Lift left leg high enough so that left foot clears the doorway. c. Extent left leg and foot out the door. d. Bend upper body to the left to clear the door frame. e. Hold onto the top of the open door for support and to hold it open. f. Stand on left leg. g. Bring right leg out of the door. h. Release grip on top of open door and stand up on both feet.  Note: At the start, we’ll close the door for Tommy.  *How we’ll teach or firm these movement elements.* We’ll work on most of these using the couch. It will be a large-motor play session. Lots of snacks and hugs.  1. We’ll practice standing up from a sitting position; standing on one leg; slide-bouncing across the couch 1 foot, then 2 feet, then 3 feet and stand up.  2. We’ll put a chair backwards in front of the couch, and teach Tommy to grasp the top of the chair and slide-bounce across the couch 1 foot, 2 feet, 3 feet, and then stand up.    Image result for Black and White Sofa Art  3. We’ll put a chair next to an interior door; have Tommy grasp the door knob, turn it, push it, and climb off the chair and go into the room.  At first, we’ll tag-treat just about each little movement, such as slide-bouncing 1 foot across the couch. When he’s firm on this, we’ll tag-treat only when he finishes---goes from sitting to slide-bouncing 3 feet.  We’ll use physical prompts as needed; repeat and fade these out.  **B. Getting out of the Car Skills.**  *Getting Tommy Comfortable in the Car.* The car is a hassle for Tommy. He doesn’t like being belted in. He doesn’t like being unbuckled. And he doesn’t like being taken out. It’s been a tug-of-war.  So, first, we’ll sit in the car with Tommy. In the driveway. Unbuckled. We’ll listen to music and look at pictures. These calm him. We’ll tag-treat when he is calm for a few seconds, and then for longer time.  We’ll do this once or twice a day for a week. He won’t be riding in the car. Just sitting.  *Backward Chaining Tommy Out of the Car.*  First of all, we’ll warm up by using the couch to pretend to get out of the car. Then we’ll go to the car with him to “Let’s play car!” I’ll show him the bag of treats.  **Step 1. Out the door. The last step.**  I’ll be in the back seat with Tommy. I’ll be right next to the door. He’ll be next to me. model-lead-test-check-tag-reinforce. I’ll show him the treat! 1a. I’ll model holding onto the top of the front seat for support. “Watch me go OUT.” “I HOLD the seat.” Then he’ll do it with me. “Hold the seat with me.”  Then I’ll put his hand **right next to** the top of the front seat and say, “You HOLD the seat.” Prompt if needed, and tag-treat + “Yes, Hold.”  The door will be partly open. I’ll say, “Out with me.” I’ll climb out of the car. “Out!” I’ll say, Now YOU out.” I’ll help him to move his left leg out the door and to let go of the top of the front seat. I’ll help him stand up next to the car. Then tag-treat + “Yes, out.”  If he is engaged and calm, we’ll do it again. This time, he sits next to the door and I help him to do each movement---hold onto the top of the front seat, scoot his bottom, pull the latch, climb out. We’ll repeat this as long as he’s engaged. There is no rush. He hasn’t been getting out of the car for four years. If it take him a month to get this, so what?  **Step 2. Slide over and out the door. Second to last step.**  Now, Tommy and I will be in the back seat. He will be one foot from the door. I’ll say, “Out,” and help him to slide over as in Step 1. Tag-treat when he’s out. Repeat if he is calm. Fade the prompt.  When he slides one foot, we’ll start from the middle of the back seat; slide to the door; and out.  **Step 3. A bit more independence.**  Now Tommy has to do it more on his own.  I’ll be outside the car by the door. I’ll show the treat. Tommy will be right by the open door.  I’ll say “Out” and help him out, if he needs it. Tag-treat + “Out.”  Repeat.  Then he’ll start a foot from the open door, and get out.  Then he’ll start from the middle of the back seat, and get out.  Then, we’ll do the same thing starting with him right by the door, but the door will be a little more closed, and he has to push it. “Push.” Tag-treat + “Out” when he’s out.  **Step 4. Open the door.**  Tommy is still a little kid. Not sure we want him to open the door. However, we’ll work on it. Like this. We’ll backward chain this step.  Tommy will be next to the door. I’ll be next to him. I’ll say, “Pull!” We’ll both hold the handle. I’ll pull the handle most of the way, and he will feel it move. The latch opens and we push the door open. Tag-treat. Repeat. This time, I pull the handle a little less and he finishes. “Pull!” Tag-treat. Repeat. I pull less and Tommy pulls more.  We’ll puts the plan on the fridge. We’ll all read it and practice before we work with Tommy.  We’ll use the plan to evaluate how well Tommy is learning. |

**4. GETTING IN THE CAR. LR5.3.**

Tommy’s Mom and Dad plan this the same way they planned teaching Tommy to get out of the car.

**Table 18-3. Teaching Tommy to Get In the Car.  
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| **A. Pre-skills for Getting in the Car.**  Here are the steps and the step elements.  1. Stand next to the back door---left, driver’s side.  Movement elements. a. Stand up on both feet. b. Face the door.  2. Open the door. Movement elements. a. Look at door handle. b. Reach, grasp, pull handle towards you. c. Watch what you are doing.  Step 3. Climb in and sit. Movement elements. a. Raise right leg. b. Move right leg and foot over the door bottom, reach in with right foot. c. Reach in, grasp top back of seat with left hand. d. Pull body in. e. Turn backside (butt) so that it faces the seat. f. Sit back and release top of back seat. g. Raise left leg and bring it into the car.  Step 4. Close door.  Movement elements. a. Look at, reach, grasp, and pull door handle to close door. b. Release door handle.  *How we’ll teach or firm these movement elements.* We can work on most of these using the couch.  1. We’ll practice with Tommy climbing on the couch and turning around to face the front. Prompt him to hold on to the top of the back of a chair in front of the couch.  2. We’ll have Tommy practice looking at, reaching, grasping, and pulling open different kinds of door latches.  We’ll use physical prompts as needed; repeat and fade these out.  **B. Getting Into the Car Skills.**  *Forward Chaining Tommy Into the Car.*  Backward chaining doesn’t make any sense. The last step is sitting facing forward. But he has to be in the car already in order to do that. So, we’ll teach using the usual steps---forward.  **Step 1. In the door.** Tommy and I will be right next to the rear door.  1a. I’ll model grasping and pulling the door handle to open the door. “Pull open.” Then Tommy will do it with me a few times. Then he will do it. But he will start with the handle already pulled almost open (backward chaining this one step). Tag-reinforce + “Pull open.”  Then I’ll pull the handle open half way and he’ll pull the handle the rest of the way. Tag-reinforce + “Pull open.”  I’ll keep pulling the handle less and less and Tommy will pull it more and more.  We will only do this a few times and then go to step 2. In other words, he does NOT have to be firm and independent on opening the door before we do the next steps. He’ll get firm over time and practice.  **Step 2. Climb in the car.**  I’ll be behind Tommy.  When the door is open, I will say, “In,” and help him in. I’ll put his left hand on the back of the front seat and help him to left his left leg and bring his foot into the car.  Then I’ll help him to turn around and put his backside (butt) against the back of the seat.  Then I’ll help him to slide-bounce to the middle of the seat.  Tag-reinforce at each little step.  If he is engaged, we’ll do it again. We’ll work on moving quickly from one little movement (pulling himself in) to the next (turning around and sitting back).  We’ll use this table to keep track of how we’re doing. Maybe we’ll need to part-firm some of the steps, or elements IN steps. No problem. Steady progress!  Next, well work on buckling and unbuckling. |

**5. CAR SEAT UNBUCKLING AND BUCKLING LR5.4.**

This is a pretty simple routine. One part (the catch) locks into another part (the buckle). The problem is that there are several types. Some have a kind of button that you push to release the catch. Image result for kinds of seat belts black and whitre A child may not be strong enough to push it far enough. I think this one would be the easiest.

  Buckle flap  
 Catch

1. Insert fingers under the lip of the buckle flap.   
 2. Pull catch out of buckle.  
   
   
Here’s the plan that the St. Vincent Family used.

**Table 18-4. Teaching Jack to unbuckle and buckle his seat belt.  
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| **A. Pre-unbuckling and Buckling Skills.**  Jack has trouble with small motor movements, like gripping with finger tips and fitting one small thing inside another small thing. This makes him hate tasks like buttoning clothes, writing neatly, using hand tools, and also using seat belts. So, he’s going to resist learning to do seat belts.  1. We need to firm up some small motor skills and then get Jack used to using these skills with a simple seat belt, like this.  Image result for seat belt buckle black and white  Catch Buckle Flap (Lifts to release catch)  (Slides in  and out)  First, we need to know the steps and movement elements.  Unbuckling Buckling **Step 1. Release catch. Step 1. Insert catch into   buckle.** Movement elements. Movement elements.  a. Grasp catch side of belt a. Grasp belt near the catch   with left hand with palm and with palm and fingers.  fingers. b. Hold tightly. b. Hold tightly. c. Rotate catch so that it faces  c. Grasp lip of buckle flap with right.  fingers of other hand. d. Grasp buckle with other   fingers of other hand. hand. d. Lift flap. e. Lift buckle. Rotate so that   the opening faces the catch.  f. Move catch so that it is   inserted into buckle.  **Step 2. Separate catch and buckle. Step 2. Release.**  Movement elements. Movement elements. a. Continue to hold catch side of a. Open fingers holding belt   belt ends.  b. Continue to lift flap of buckle. c. Pull sideways the arm holding the   catch side of the belt to pull catch   out of latch. d. Release both sides of belt.  Now that we know the movements needed, we’ll firm up small motor movements in Chapter Sixteen, such as gripping (LR3.24), using thumb and fingers (LR3.29), squeezing objects (LR3.30), and turning objects (LR3.32).  We’ll have Jack work sliding bolts, hasps, connecting electrical plugs, unscrewing the radiator and oil caps on the car, turning the outdoor hose faucets on and off.  Image result for sliding bolts for doors Image result for hasp Image result for three pronged plugImage result for radiator cap Image result for Outdoor Hose Faucets black and white  These will give him the movements and grip strength to insert buckle clasps, lift the buckle flap, and separate the two parts. These will also generalize to many other tasks.  3. We’ll also practice with a seat belt that we buy from an auto parts store or junk yard.  a. Well make a game of it. See how fast Jack and Dad can work the different devices, above.  b. Dad will model buckling and unbuckling the belt.  “Let’s buckle the belt. My turn. Watch.” “This is the clasp. What is this? *clasp.* Yup, clasp.” “I hold the clasp here.” “Now this is the buckle. [Point. Raise buckle.] Look… The clasp goes IN here….[Snap] That sound tells that the clasp is in. Look again. The clasp goes IN here…. [Snap] Is the clasp in?... *Yup.* How do you know? *It made a snap.* Right. The snap says that the clasp is IN.”  “Okay, now put your hands on mine and we’ll buckle the belt together. We hold the clasp here… Now we lift the buckle… Now we shove the clasp IN. Let’s do that again…..”  “Okay, your turn.”  I’ll prompt by naming and pointing to the parts, giving directions, and physical prompts if needed.  I’ll make it fun by saying, “Let’s do that again, faster.”  Big hugs and head rubs.  Then, we’ll do the unbuckling routine. I’ll model how. “I hold the clasp part in this hand. Now I lift the flap on the buckle. Now I pull the clasp out. Watch again. Hold…. Lift….Pull. Done.”  “Unbuckle with me.” We’ll do this hand on hand a few times. I’ll get Jack to imitate when I say, “Hold…Lift…Pull…”  Then it’s Jack’s turn.  “Now you unbuckle. Remember, hold, lift, pull. What do you do first? *Hold…* Right. Do it… What do you do next? *Lift…*Right, you lift the flap. Do it….. What do you do next? *Pull.* Yes. Do it. All done!!”  “Do it one more time, Jack. What are the steps? *Hold, lift, pull.* Yes, do it!”  Later, I’ll say, “Hey, let’s go to the Happy Hog and get spaghetti for supper. Maybe we’ll see Mrs. Rogers and Steven.”  We’ll model-lead-test/check buckling up in the car. And off we go.  When we get back, model-lead-test/check unbuckling, and into the house we go. |

What if a child gets really stressed out by being buckled in, like Pearl? I suggest that you spend more time getting her used to the seat belt by just having it around. Tag-reinforce looking at it, being nearer it, touching it, holding it, playing with it.   
 You play with it and reinforce yourself. Lay it on your lap and reinforce yourself. Do this with another child.  
 Then lay it on the child’s lap for a second, tag-reinforce, and remove it. Then for longer, and reinforce.  
 When she’s used to that. Model how to latch it on yourself, reinforce yourself. Keep reinforcing yourself.   
 Then lay it on the child’s lap, try to latch it for one second and treat. Then after a longer time.  
 When the seat belt fades into the background as something that is always there, and harmless, but connected to treats, try doing the same thing in the car.

**6. DRESSING LR5.5**

Ma Ironton says,  
 Pearl’s usually sweet as can be, but getting dressed is meltdown time. She’s weak on many motor movements and so I have to move her arms and legs for her. I guess that doesn’t feel too good, so she fusses and pulls her arms and legs away. There’s got to be a better way.

Here is Mom’s plan. I think it’s a good one.

**Table 18.5 Teaching Pearl to cooperate with dressing and undressing.**

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| **Making it easier.**  I looked at the clothes Pearl wears. No wonder she hates getting dressed! No wonder it’s so hard for us to put her clothes on! From now on, easy-peasy for us.  1. Big fat socks that go on and off easy. No elastic at the top that you have to grasp and pull. Sag is good.  2. Large undies.  3. Pants with big wide legs. Easy on and off. Not stiff and heavy jeans! Maybe try nylon running pants! Feet slide right through. 4. Baggy shirts with large holes for her head and arms. 5. Shoes.  a. Clogs with no back. Why didn’t I think of that?   b. Then clogs with a LOOSE strap on the back to hold them on.  c. When she’s older, sneakers without laces so she can shove her   feet in easily and kick them off easily.   When she’s good at that, one strip of Velcro to hold the sides   together---but real loose. Slowly, we’ll make the Velcro tighter.  6. No belt. Who needs a belt? A Velcro tab in front maybe. Later, a belt with Velcro. Better yet, pants with elastic waist band.  7. No coat! A nice warm poncho. Over her little head and on! 8. Big mittens, not gloves. 9. Big knit hat.  **Knowledge analysis, evaluation, and teaching.**  1. I did a knowledge analysis of putting on each item of clothing.  2. I looked over my notes from the evaluations of motor skills in Chapter Sixteen, and then I thought about her progress when we worked on motor skills.  3. I also watched Pearl for a few days and took more notes, to update my evaluation of her motor skills. She made a lot of progress during Chapter Sixteen, but we still work on these items! 4. **But we better be cautious and firm them up now!**  *I will teach the names for each movement. We will use the names as cues for Pearl to DO the movements.*  1. Standing on one leg. LR3.2 The cue word for this movement will   be “Stand up.”  2. Visually follows moving objects side to side (LR3.16) and up and   down (LR3.17). The cue word for this movement will be “Look.”  3. Examines objects. LR3.18 The cue word for this movement will be   “Look.”  4. Flexes arms at elbows. LR3.19 The cue word for this movement   will be “Up.”  5. Rotates hands at wrists. LR3.22 The cue word for this movement   will be “Turn.”  6. Grasps objects with fingers and palm. LR3.24 The cue word for   this movement will be “Hold.”  7. Visually tracks objects she’s holding. LR3.25 The cue word for this   movement will be “Look.”  8. Uses thumb and fingers to pick up. LR3.29 The cue word for this   movement will be “up.”  9. Turns, twists, rotates objects. LR3.32 The cue word for this   movement will be “push” or “pull.”  10. Fits onside inside one another. LR3.43 The cue word for this   movement will be “in.”  *We’ll firm these up during our daily play and family activities.*  1. We’ll focus on these elements during routines that use these elements; for example, we’ll focus on fitting objects inside one another when she helps put away eating utensils and works her shape box.  2. We’ll also focus on elements all by themselves; for example, picking up objects with finger tips.  3. I’ll try to make undressing exactly the opposite of dressing. Instead of words like “Up,” I’ll use “Down.” Instead of “On,” I’ll use “Off.”  I’ll teach concepts, such as pants, undies, shirt, socks, cap. We’ll do this by pointing, touching and naming clothing that I and Pearl are wearing, that is in her drawers, and in picture books. I’ll name the items, touch them, and have her touch them and say a sound to name them.  We will use the same words over and over for the same kinds of movements--hold, on, off, pull, in, out.  I’ll use the methods in Chapter Sixteen, the section on “Begin To Teach The *Names* For Things Even If Your Child Cannot Say The Names.”  **When and where.**  1. Sometimes we’ll work on just one item. Let her run around in her undies and socks. Who cares? Or just a shirt. 2. Other times, we’ll use Grandma’s Law. “As soon as you are dressed, we’ll (go see the ducks, ride on the bike, have some ice cream).”  At first, I’ll shove her clothes on real fast, and she’ll learn maybe one step on each item.  She dislikes dressing and undressing so much that it wouldn’t be smart to have long sessions with lots of clothes! A little at a time. With so much reinforcement, dressing and undressing may become more fun.  We’ll work on only a few items at a time---items that go together: undies and pants; pants and shirt; socks and shoes; poncho and cap; cap and mittens.  **Dressing and undressing.**  We’ll do on and off during the same sessions. I’ll make sure that there’s something rewarding about clothes on and clothes off—like playing or taking a bubble bath.  **1. Socks.**  Socks on.  The usual steps are: a. Grasp open end of sock. b. Pull sideways to open. c. Raise leg. d. Point foot at hole and shove foot in. e. Pull sock up to ankle.  *We’ll do this sitting down*. This isn’t a circus act.  I’ll model how to do this.  “Put sock ON. Pearl, touch the sock… Yes, sock. Watch. Hold… Open…Foot IN…Pull UP….” Treat for watching me.  Repeat. “Put sock ON… Touch the sock… Yes, sock. Watch. Hold… Open…Foot IN…Pull UP….” Treat.  *Then I’ll use backward chaining to teach Pearl the movements.*  I’ll put Pearl’s leg and foot in the right position and then shove her sock on as I say the steps. “Watch. Hold… Open…Foot IN…Pull UP….Look! Sock ON.” Treat.  Then we’ll do this together---my hands on hers. “Watch. Hold… Open…Foot IN…Pull UP….” Treat.   We’ll repeat this one more time, and I will relax my hands so that *she is doing more*.  When her socks are on, we’ll skate and dance around the hard wood floor.  Socks off.  With big socks, this will be easy.  We could do this back and forth with socks on/socks off. Also Grandma’s Law. “Socks off, play in the bath tub.”  We’ll do this sitting down. I’ll model with my socks. Hold at the toe end and pull. “Socks OFF….Watch….Hold… Pull…Off.”  Then I treat myself!  Now it’s Pearl’s turn. I’ll model the routine with her socks. “Socks OFF….Watch….Hold… Pull…Off.” Treat.  Then I’ll hold her hands and help her to do it. “Socks OFF….Watch….Hold… Pull…Off.” Treat.  Then we’ll repeat once more, and I’ll fade out how much I hold her hand.  **2. Undies.**  Undies on.  Here’s how a lot of persons do it. a. Grasp waist band while standing up. b. Open top by pulling hands sideways. c. Bend forward at the waist. d. Raise one leg. Extend leg and put into hole.  e. Pull undies up part way and repeat with other leg. f. Grasp waist band and pull up.  Baloney on that! Why stand up and make it harder? *Pearl will do this sitting down*, like this.  a. Sit down. b. Grasp waist band. c. Pull open. d. Raise both legs. e. Aim feet at holes. f. Point toes and shove feet in holes. g. Pull waist band up. h. Stand up and pull the rest of the way.  We’ll use backward chaining.  a. We’ll do the whole sequence as above. I will treat often but at random. Sometimes for when she watches; sometimes for when she holds; sometimes when she pulls; and big time at the last step.  b. I’ll repeat the last step a few times. Then Pearl will hold the waist band with me. Then we pull it up. Tag-treat. Then I lower the undies an inch, and say, “Your turn. Pull UP.” I release my hand so that she is doing it. We make a game of it, with funny noises as her undies go up and down. Treat each time she pulls them up.  c. Then I’ll put the undies in her hands and help her stick her feet through. Repeat a few times and try to fade out the physical help.  Undies off.  We’ll do this standing up. I think model-lead-test/check of the whole routine will work. There are so few steps.  Pearl will stand up. I’ll say, “Watch. Undies off.” As I pull them down her legs, I’ll say, ‘ooofffff ooooffff. OFF!” Then treat.  Next, Pearl will do it with me as I hold her hands (as little as possible).  Watch. Undies off.” As we pull them down, I’ll say, ‘ooofffff ooooffff. OFF!” Then treat.  Then repeat. “Your turn. Undies off.” As she pulls them down, I’ll say, ‘ooofffff ooooffff. OFF!” Then treat.  **3. Pants.**  No belts at first. Elastic waist band. No jeans. Too stiff. Something light.  Pants on.  Here are the steps we’ll use.  a. At first, Pearl will be sitting down. b. Grasp waistband of pants. c. Pull sideways to open. d. Raise legs. We’ll see if Pearl can raise both legs at once. If not, we’ll   work on it. It’s easier to shove both legs in at the same time. e. Shove feet into leg holes. f. Pull waistband up legs to about knees. g. Stand up.  h. Pull waistband up to waist.  I think I’ll first try *teaching all the steps at once,* so that we can get all the steps done quickly (because I’m doing them during the model part). The more we do it, the more Pearl will do the steps with me and then more on her own.  “Let’s put pants ON. Here are Pearl’s/your pants. (Point and touch). You touch Pearl’s/your pants… (Prompt by pointing or nudging her hand.)… Yes, PANTS. As soon as pants ON, we’ll play outside.”  a. At first, Pearl will be sitting down. “Pearl. Sit down.” Hug. “Yes, you sit.”  b. Grasp waistband of pants. “Watch Momma….. HOLD. You want to hold? Okay. Put your hands here… Yes, hold.” Treat and hug.  c. Pull sideways to open. Now I pull the waist open. “Watch Momma. OPEN. Watch again. OPEN. See? Open. (I point to the opening and move my hand in it. If Pearl tries to hold the waist band, too, great. And we’ll open the pants together.) “Yes, OPEN.” Treat and hug.  d. Raise legs. We’ll see if Pearl can raise both legs at once. If not, we’ll work on it---part-firming. It’s easier to shove both legs in at the same time.  Now I help her to put her legs into the pants. I’ll lift her legs and say “Legs UP.” Treat. I’ll relax holding her legs up and say “UP,” so that she is holding her legs up by herself. It will probably take a week to teach her to hold her legs up. **I should work on this earlier, when we firm up the other movements!! She can sit on the couch or a chair and hold her legs straight out.**  e. Shove feet into leg holes. I’ll pull the open pants onto her legs and also help her to push her legs into the opening. I’ll say, “Watch. Legs IN.” If she tries to hold the waistband with me, or if she pushes her legs in even a little, treat.  f. Pull waistband up legs to about knees.  I’ll keep pulling the pants up her legs, and say “UP up up.”  g. Stand up.  Then I’ll say, “Pearl, stand up.” Physical prompt if she needs it. Treat.  h. Pull waistband up to waist.  Then, “Pull UP,” as I pull the pants up. “All done.” Treat.  *The next time we do this, I will prompt Pearl to do the steps with me.* I’ll put her hands on the waist band and help her to pull up. If she has trouble shoving her legs into the open pants, we’ll work on that---part-firming. For example, I’ll teach her to hold her legs out straight and treat when she does this for more seconds.  Whenever I feel that she is holding and moving (like pulling the pants up), I will fade out the prompt and let her do it more on her own. Big treat!  **P**ants off.  We’ll do this at usual times.  a. Stand up. b. Grasp waist band. c. Pull pants down. d. Step out of pants.  We’ll practice the last step by itself because kids’ feet usually get tangled in the pant legs. I’ll backward chain this step. a. Pants are on the floor. Feet are almost clear of the pants. Step out. Repeat. b. Feet are covered a little by pants cloth. Lift leg and step out. c. One foot is free but the other is still in a pant leg. Pull out.  When she’s firm on the last step, we’ll do the whole routine at once.  HOLD. PULL down. STEP OUT.  We’ll do each step together. When I feel her holding or pulling the pants, I will relax my prompt. Then treat.  If she’s calm and attentive, we’ll repeat, and I will try to fade out the prompts.  **4. Shirts.**  We’ll use **pullovers**. No buttons for now. Short sleeves, loose. Wide necks.  We’ll teach the *whole sequence at once,* as we did with pants.  Shirt on.  “Let’s put shirt ON. Here is Pearl’s/your shirt. (Point and touch). You touch Pearl’s/your shirt… (Prompt by pointing or nudging her hand.)… Yes, SHIRT. As soon as shirt ON, we’ll play outside.”  If Pearl seems like she wants to join in at any step, I’ll help her to do that.  I’ll model the routine with my own shirt. “HOLD... Hold shirt….OPEN (I pull the bottom open.) Now, shirt UP. (I raise the opened shirt over my head.) Head IN. (I pull the shirt down, over my head.) Arms IN. (I shove my arms in.) Pull DOWN.” (I pull the shirt down.)  Now we focus on each step. I’ll give her hugs and head pats and praise when she watches me and does it with me. I tag-treat when she does it more on her own.  a. Grasp shirt by bottom edge. “HOLD.” I help Pearl to hold the shirt with me at the bottom. Then I let go so that she is holding it. Tag-treat + “Yes, hold.”  We’ll repeat that to firm it up.  b. “OPEN.” Open shirt by spreading hands apart. I help Pearl to open the shirt with me at the bottom. Then I let go so that she is holding it open. Tag-treat + “Yes, OPEN.”  c. Raise opened shirt.  I model raising the opened shirt. “Shirt UP.” Then I help Pearl to do it with me. “Shirt UP.” Then I have her do it more on her own. I signal her to do this with “Shirt UP.”  d. Put head in open shirt. This could be the tough step. There are so many ways to hold the shirt.  I say, “Head IN,” and put the shirt over her head. I’ll do this fast. As her head pops out of the neck hole, treat!  We’ll do this a few more times and make a game of it.  Then I’ll have her hold the shirt with me and pull it over her head till her head pops out.  e. Arms in. While her head is out of the neck hole, I’ll say, “Arms IN,” and help her to shove her arms in the shirt and through the arm holes. Big treat and hug.  Repeat a few times. Prompt her to hold and pull the shirt more on her own. Treat.  f. Pull down.  Now that the shirt is on, I will model pulling it down. “Pull DOWN.”  Repeat with Pearl doing it with me.  Repeat with Pearl doing it more on her own. “Pearl pull down.”  “Shirt ON!” I’ll have her look at herself in the mirror.  Shirt off.  We’ll do this the easy way.  a. Grasp shirt by the neck. Instead of model, I’ll just put Pearl’s and my hands on the neck. “HOLD.” Treat.  b. Pull off. Then we’ll quickly pull the shirt off so that her head comes out the bottom.  “Pull OFF.” Treat.  c. Arms out.  We’ll also do this together. “Arms out.” Then I’ll help Pearl to do this more on her own.  If she’s calm, we’ll do the whole shirt-off routine again.  **5. Shoes.**  This will be easy. Grandma’s Law. “As soon as your shoes are ON, you/we can….”  I’ll get her new shoes. She likes bright colors and presents.  We’ll start with clogs that have no back.  a. Line up shoes  We keep our shoes by the front door. I’ll make an outline of shoes in yellow, and we’ll put shoes on these. We’ll practice. Pearl has some idea what “picture” means, so we’ll put shoes “ON picture.” (I got this idea from Chapter Eight, add-ons. The picture is a *template* that guides movements.)  Model. “Watch. I put shoes ON picture.” Lead. “Put shoes ON picture with me.” It will be like working a puzzle piece. The shoes will almost be on the template. Test/check. “YOU/Pearl put shoes ON picture.”  Tag-treat anything close, at first.  b. Shove feet in shoes.  I’ll model putting my feet in my clogs. “Foot IN.”  Then I’ll help Pearl to do this with her clogs. I’ll use backward chaining.  I’ll put her foot mostly IN the clog. I’ll say, “Foot IN,” and help her push her foot in the rest of the way, if needed. Treat + “Foot IN.”  We’ll repeat this, with her foot farther out of the clog. “Foot IN.” One more time, and I’ll try to fade out helping her. Treat + “Foot IN.”  **6. Coat = Poncho.**  For now, we’ll use a poncho. Pretty much the same as shirt on and shirt off.  “Pearl look. (Show poncho.) This is a poncho.” I’ll say, “Say, poncho.” Treat if she moves her mouth or makes a sound. “Yes, pah.”  Then, “Touch the poncho.” Prompt if needed by moving the poncho to her hand or moving her hand to the poncho. “Yes, poncho.”  Poncho on.  I’ll teach all the steps at once, so we can do it fast. She’ll become more firm with practice.  I’ll model all the steps, and name what I’m doing. up (raise poncho), in (stick head in), out (stick head out), pull (pull poncho down).  a. Up. “Pearl, look.” I’ll model lifting the poncho with my hands inside by the neck opening. “UP” Then I treat myself.  Then I help Pearl to put her hands inside the poncho with mine.  “Poncho UP with me.”  b. In. Then we’ll both put our heads in the open poncho. “IN.”  c. Out. I’ll take my head out fast and say “OUT,” and pull the poncho so that Pearl’s head comes through the opening. “Yes, out.” Treat.  d. Pull. Now I help Pearl to pull the poncho down. Treat.  If she’s calm, we can do it again.  Either way, now we go outside and play.  Poncho off.  The steps are hold poncho near the head opening; pull head out; release poncho.  We’ll do all the steps at once.  “Let’s take the poncho OFF.”  I’ll model how to do this. “Pearl, look. Poncho off. HOLD (I grasp poncho near the head hole). Now PULL UP. (I pull it over my head). Now OUT. (I pull it off of my head.”  “Poncho off with me.”  a. I help Pearl to grasp the poncho near the opening. “Yes, hold.” Quick treat.  b. Still holding the poncho, we pull it over Pearl’s head.  c. As her head comes out, “Out.” Treat.  Repeat if she is still engaged. Fade how much I move her hands.  **7. Mittens.**  Little kids have a hard time with mittens. Especially the second one. All I want Pearl to do is hold her hands in the right positions.  a. Fingers together. I’ll model this. Image result for hand black and white    **Uh oh, we better practice this a couple of days ahead of time!**  Like this. We’ll call it “hand flat.” I’ll teach hand flat using model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce.  We’ll start by making a flat hand on a *table top.* A natural prompt!  “Pearl look. I make my hand flat…. Look again. Hand flat.” “You make hand flat with me…” I’ll prompt as needed, and repeat. Treat. “Now you make hand flat… (I’ll have my hand flat on the table as a model.) “Go.” (I’ll nudge her hand if needed, and repeat). Big treat + “Yes, hand flat.”  *Then we’ll do the same thing without the table.* Just flat hand in the air. Or maybe an inch *above the table.* Then farther away.  When she’s firm on this part, we’ll do the whole routine.  **8. Cap.**  Pearl is partial to knit caps. Maybe she feels safe.  We’ll teach this with forward chaining. She’ll be more firm with practice.  “Pearl, this is a cap… Cap. Touch the cap…” (Tag-treat + “Yes, cap.”) “Touch the cap again….. Now HOLD the cap. (I’ll put in in her hand. And physically prompt her to turn it over, open the bottom, grasp the bottom edge.) Soft.”  Cap on.  I’ll model the routine: hold, open, on, pull.    1. Grasp cap at the bottom with both hands, thumbs on the inside and fingers on the outside.  I’ll model how to do this. “Pearl, look. I HOLD the cap. Hold….”  Then she will do it with me. “Pearl, HOLD the cap with me.” I will move the cap towards her hands.  2. Pull bottom of hat open to make a hole for head.  I’ll model the first two steps: grasp cap => open bottom.  Pearl will hold the cap with me. We’ll do “hold” and then “open.”  Repeat. Use word cues and as little physical prompting as needed. Treat each time + “Yes, hold… Yes, open.”  3. Put hat on head.  Now, with both of us holding the open cap, I’ll say, “On head,” and we’ll raise the cap and slide it onto her head. Treat + “Yes, on.”  I’ll take the cap off her head and we’ll do it again. “Pearl, cap ON head.” I’ll try to fade the physical prompt. Treat + “Yes, cap ON head.”  4. Adjust hat on head.  Now the cap is on her head. We are still holding the cap by the bottom edge.  “Pearl, PULL down.” We pull the cap down. “Yes, pull down.”  Repeat. Try to give less prompting. Big treat.  Cap off.  This is two quick movements. We’ll teach both steps at once.  I’ll model the whole thing. “Pearl, cap OFF. Look. Hold…. I hold the cap… Now PULL…. (I wave the cap.) See. Cap OFF.”  I’ll do this again.  Now Pearl does it with me several times.  a. Hold cap.  I will say, “Pearl, HOLD with me,” and help her put her hands on the cap.  b. Pull off. I will say, “Pearl, pull off.” We will pull off the cap and wave it, to make it a big deal. “Yes, cap OFF.”  Repeat, using less physical prompting.  I’d say she’ll be pretty fluent in a month. |

**7. TOILETING LR 5.6.**

There are lots of ways to teach children to use the toilet.   
1. Some methods take weeks: Week one: read books about Timmy the Timid Turtle. Week two: sit and think about it. Week three: wear “Big boy/girl” undies; sit and think about it. Week four: Sit and produce.   
2. Other methods take a day or so. The child spends a lot of time in the bathroom, using the bathroom. It becomes commonplace. (Nathan Azrin and Richard Foxx. *Toilet training in less than a day. 2006.* Simon & Schuster.)   
3. Mark was four years old. He had no interest in using the toilet. We took him to “Potty School.” He laughed. I decided to end this comedy. I put him in underpants (no more diapers!) and jeans that had an elastic waist band. I fed him oatmeal, raisins, chopped nuts, and prune juice for meals and snacks. He fought the urge from noon to 4 PM. You could hear his insides gurgling across the room. He did not like to mess himself, and he wasn’t wearing a diaper. He had little choice. He was going to explode. I said, “Maybe you could try the toilet, huh? I bet you’ll feel better.” He finally went into the bathroom---groaning---sat down….. “Ahhhh,” he said. And that was that. Seven hours.  
 Whatever method you use, there will be steps. The idea now is to make your child comfortable and cooperative doing the steps. We deal with toileting more in a later book in the series. Here is what Ma and Pa Maretti did to replace tug-of-war with cooperation, to prepare Jimmy for a toilet training program.

**Table 18-6. The Marettis Teach Jimmy Pre Toileting Skills.  
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| Jimmy hates using the toilet. He will do number 1, but number 2 is a fight. Can you believe he still has “accidents”? Why? Because he holds off for so long that he finally can’t stop it. If you think we’re tired of changing his underpants, you’re right.  We had a meeting with our partner families---the Ironton, Rodriguez, Rogers, and Brown families. We described Jimmy’s behavior around using the toilet. We identified his difficulties, and thought of ways to help him.  **1. Being around the toilet.**   Jimmy hates or fears the toilet. Mr. Rodriguez said, “Teach Jimmy that the toilet is your friend.” Not a bad idea!  Here’s what we’ll do.  We’ll show Jimmy that you can use the toilet for more than the usual business. Some of these ideas may be---are---weird.  1a. We’ll sit with Jimmy in the bathroom and read stories or play with simple toys.  1b. We’ll get Jimmy to sit on the closed toilet seat, and we’ll read stories or play with simple toys.  1c. Fun with flushing. Jimmy likes to play with water in the sink. He can squirt food coloring in the toilet and watch it swirl around. If he likes this, we can use Grandma’s Law. “As soon as you…., you can play flush.”  **2. Pants off.**  2a. Before we work on this step, we’ll *firm up movement elements* such as grasping objects (including waist bands) with fingers; pulling up; and pulling down. LR3.21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31.  2b. Jimmy hates taking down his pants and drawers---probably because this leads to being put on the toilet, which he also hates. So, we’ll make a game out of pulling pants up and down.  We’ll start in his room. Dad and Jimmy will do this.  (Model) “Let’s play pants! Watch. (Dad drops his pants.) Pants DOWN.” Dad gives himself an M&M, and pulls his pants back up. “Watch again….Pants DOWN.” Dad gives himself another M&M.  “Now pants UP.”  Now Dad pulls his pants up and down several times, and treats himself.  (Lead) “Jimmy, play pants with me.” Dad says, “Pants DOWN,” and he helps Jimmy to pull them down **a little**. Tag-treat.  The tag point could be Jimmy just touching his waist band, or grasping the waist band, or pulling his pants down an inch or two. Whatever is Jimmy’s point of success.  “Now, pants UP.” Dad prompts if needed and tag-treats. “Yes, pants UP.”  (Test/check) Now Dad has Jimmy do at least a little of UP and DOWN on his own. Dad might prompt to get the movements started, but then fades the prompt (relaxes his hands on Jimmy’s) so that Jimmy does a little bit.  Dad does not push it. A little at a time.  **3. Sitting (or standing) can be fun.**  3a. Dad gets a kid toilet for Jimmy. “This is YOUR toilet.” He puts it next to the family toilet.  3b. When Jimmy’s pants are down far enough to do some business, Dad stands Jimmy in front of his own toilet, and models how to use it. Dad gives himself an M&M.  Dad can then invite Jimmy to do it with him---each using his own toilet. Tag-treat if Jimmy does anything. Dad squirts some food coloring in the toilet and has Jimmy watch as it does down.  3c. Dad does the same thing with sitting. Tag-treat fairly often. Dad could model reading on the toilet. [Might as well start kids off early.]  Actual production can come later, with methods described in a later book in the series. |

**8. BRUSHING TEETH LR5.7.**

Mark Stein has the movement skills needed to brush his teeth, but he can’t stand having the toothbrush in his mouth. “It makes me sick.” He gags. He also doesn’t like toothpaste. “It burns.” So, getting Mark to brush his teeth is a tag-of-war. He refuses to do it---unless you threaten to take away videogame privileges. And he acts like he’s being attacked when Mom or Dad try to help him. “Go away!” It looks like Ma and Pa Stein will have to reteach Mark about brushing teeth, so it isn’t so painful.

**Table 18-7. Teaching Mark to Cooperate with Teeth Brushing.  
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| Ma and Pa Stein brainstorm solutions with their partner families---the Tuckers and the St. Vincents. Here’s the main idea that they came up with.  Expose Mark to what he doesn’t like---the brush in his mouth, the tooth paste---in tiny steps so that he is not overwhelmed.  Connect brushing teeth with rewards.  **1. Getting to know the toothbrush in small steps.** We think that Mark hates the toothbrush in his mouth because it is so big. Sure, he puts food in his mouth! But he take small bites in sizes that HE wants. So, we’ll get him used to a regular sized toothbrush by starting with a **small one**.  I’ll get a toothbrush and cut the handle down to a few inches.  I’ll also cut off most of the brush end, so there are only a few bristles—but enough to clean his teeth.    I’ll make the handle all fancy with gold paint. Mr. St. Vincent, an Iraq War vet, suggested sticking the end of the brush into an empty cartridge case. Mark would like that!  *The idea is to make the brush nonthreatening and cool looking.* I’ll make another brush for myself.  I’ll introduce the brush like this.  “Mark. Brushing teeth is a big pain. We know that you hate the brush in your mouth. I made you this one. Is it neat or what? I made one for myself. Now, this brush is so small that it won’t bother you. Let’s try it out. We’ll brush a few times (**the tag point**) and then have a potato chip. Then we’ll brush some more and have another chip. Yeah, it sounds nuts, but who cares?”  Then I’ll model putting the small brush in my mouth *just a little bit*, and brush my teeth for **two seconds**. Then I’ll give myself a chip.  Then we’ll do it together.  “Let’s do that together. Brush and chip! Just put the brush in your mouth a tiny bit. Get ready…..”  If this step is too much for Mark, we’ll lower the tag point to just touching his teeth with the brush, or even just opening his mouth with the brush touching his lips.  We’ll repeat this a few times.  Then I’ll say, “Mark YOU do it. Two seconds and a handful of chips!”  If he does it, big treat and praise. If not, we’ll go back to doing it together, or even back to him watching ME brush and chip.  When Mark is calm brushing for two seconds, we’ll raise the tag point to three and more seconds. We could make a game out of it. See who does it the longest.  Gradually, we’ll do the lead part (brush together) less often, and he’ll brush more on his own. *But there’s nothing wrong with brushing together.* In fact, Mark and I could do the whole “get ready for bed” routine together---wash up, brush teeth, pajamas, put away clothes, get out clothes for the next day.  **2. Toothpaste in small steps.** Do we even need toothpaste? I don’t know. But let’s plan to use it, anyway. Figuring out how to teach is fun.  Mark hates toothpaste because it burns. Also, there is so much of it.  So, I’ll get sugar-free toothpaste that tastes like some kind of fruit, and is made with baking soda. You can swallow it.  Once Mark is calm brushing for 10 seconds or more, we’ll add ordinary paste in tiny amounts to whatever we are using as paste.  “Mark. Toothpaste is yucky. But this kind is special. It tastes like candy. AND we can eat it. So, let’s brush for two seconds with a tiny bit of paste.”  I’ll model this and give myself a chip. “MMmm, Yummy paste. I think I’ll have some more.”  Then I’ll get Mark to do it with me. We’ll put the paste on the brush. I’ll brush. But if Mark resists brushing with paste, that’s okay for now. I’ll keep giving myself chips.  We’ll repeat the lead until he finally tries it for one or two seconds.  **3. Raising the tag points.** As Mark is calm with a small brush and a tiny amount of paste, I will make a few more brushes with longer handles and more bristles. *I’ll let Mark decide when he’s ready to use a bigger brush.* I’ll make these even more fancy, with curved handles and military insignia that he likes from his video games.  Then we’ll repeat model-lead-test/check.  As he becomes used to a larger brush, we’ll add a little more paste.  **4. Doing the whole routine.** When Mark is calm brushing (even though the brush is smaller than usual and the paste is home-made), we’ll work on the whole routine.  I think the method we’ll use is starting with the main step, and then adding later steps and earlier steps. Like this.  a. Brush teeth for a little while—the main step. b. Spit and rinse. Then, c. Brush, put brush down, spit, rinse. Then, d. Load brush, brush teeth, put brush down, spit, rinse. Then, e. Get out brush and paste, load brush, brush teeth, put brush down, spit, rinse.  I’ll teach this with model-lead-test/check-tag-treat for each part (a-e).  This will be part of our getting-ready-for-bed routine, so we’ll always end with Mark and Dad time---a story, for example. |

**9. BED TIME. LR5.7.**

There’s nothing quite like a tug-of-war with your child every night over going to bed and staying in bed to make you think about becoming a lumberjack in Siberia.

“Here’s how it is,” says Nancy Brown’s Dad. “We say, ‘Nancy…Time to go to bed.’ Ha! Nancy whines and rolls on the floor. Typical!”

Dad walks away and looks for something to kick. He calms down and comes back in 10 minutes, and asks again. Nancy whines again---louder. Dad walks away again, and stays away longer. Dad comes back, tells Nancy to get ready for bed, and physically moves Nancy along. Nancy fusses, but ends up in bed. Fun for all!  
 Remember what we learned in Chapter Ten? What does Nancy’s whining get her? It lets her **delay** going to bed twice, for about 30 minutes, and it gets a lot of **contact** with Dad. So, her whining is reinforced. So, she will whine more often to delay what she doesn’t like---going to bed, taking out the trash, looking at pictures with Mom, getting dressed.  
 What about Dad’s behavior of giving in to (accidentally reinforcing) whining? When Nancy stops whining (because she got Dad to go away) Dad **escapes** from the painful noise. Dad’s behavior (reinforcing whining) is reinforced by escape from noise. So, Dad will back down more and more from Nancy’s whining---which means that Nancy will whine even more.

“Hey, I know we’re stuck,” Says Pop. “But, using Chapter Ten, we’re going to get UNstuck right about now!”

**Table 18-8. Teaching Nancy to Cooperate with Bed time.  
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| Ma and Pa Brown describe the daily tug-of-war with their partner families: Ironton, Maretti, Rodriguez, and Rogers. Everyone agrees that the Browns have to back up a little and firm up Nancy’s cooperation, using strong rewards.  “We feel like chumps. How did we go back to reinforcing   uncooperative behavior? We used to have it down---what we did in   Chapter Fourteen   Cooperate=> treat. Don’t cooperate => nothing.    And Nancy caught on, and became more cooperative. Now we have   to start all over!”  “Hey, don’t be so down on yourselves,” says Mr. Rodriguez. “It’s   not possible to do everything right all the time. You’ve been   working on so many skills. Of course, you’d forget to reinforce   cooperation some times, and accidentally reinforce UNcooperation   once in awhile.”  “Right,” says Mom Rogers. “When we got too lax with   cooperation and eye contact for a week or so, Steven’s desirable   behaviors decreased. But when we went back to lots of tagging   and reinforcing these behaviors, they came   right back, stronger than before! He didn’t have to learn IT all over   again. He HAD learned it. When the requests and rewards came   back, so did his behavior.”  “Okay, thanks for your support. Any ideas on what we can do?”   asks Ma Brown.  Here’s what the group worked out.  **1. Restrengthen cooperation.**  We’ll go back to Chapter Fourteen and work on cooperation in general.  1a. Save the strongest rewards or reinforcers for cooperation---snacks, bath, play outside.  1b. Lots of requests to do easy tasks such as eye contact, come when called from close by, put something in the trash, hand me an object, stand up, sit down, imitate. Followed by tag-treat + “Yes, you…”  1c. Ignore it if she doesn’t cooperate within a few seconds.  1d. Use Grandma’s Law a lot! “As soon as you (put your toys back in the box, wash your hands, give me the pot), you can (go outside, listen to music, have your bath).”  1e. Especially work on walking with Mom or Dad---especially down the hall to her bedroom! This is an element in the routine  1f. During the day, work on Nancy climbing onto her bed on request. Tag-treat and story. This is an element in the routine.  **2. Working on bedtime.**  We think that it makes sense to *work at once on all the steps in the whole going-to-bed routine*.  Forward chaining won’t work. Walk into the bed room. Then walk out, come back in and climb in bed. Then walk back out, come back in, climb in bed….? Weird.  Backward chaining won’t work. I’d have to pull up the covers on her---the last step. Then take her out of the bed and have her climb back in and put the covers on her… More weird.  Teaching the main step first---climbing into bed---won’t work. Because she resists even coming into the bedroom. So, we have to get her into the bedroom, and calm.  We’ll model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce step by step.  Here’s the main thing. If she resists any step---like not going into her room, or not climbing into bed, or not staying in bed---fine! *But we are shutting the door. She will be IN her room.* If she wants to lie on the floor, she can do it. But we’ll still try to teach her the steps and use lots of treats and other goodies. It will be more rewarding to cooperate than not to cooperate.  **Step 1. Come into the bedroom.**  To make this easier, Nancy will already be in pajamas.  For several days before, we will practice walking with me down the hall to her bedroom. Tag-treat every 5-10 steps with sugar-free chocolate covered raisins.  I’ll use a bell timer that tells Nancy when it’s time for bed.  “Nancy. Listen. When you hear this (ring the bell), it’s time for bed. Listen again. This (ring) means time for bed (model information). When you hear this, it’s time for….. *bed.* (Test/check). Yes, when you hear this (ring) time for bed.” (Verification).  8:00 Bed time. I ring the timer.  I’ll say, “Nancy. Time for bed.” I’ll hold out a cup loaded with sugar-free chocolate covered raisons.  “As soon as you stand up and walk, you get one.”  If, Nancy walks with me even one step, tag-treat. If she doesn’t, I will pick her up, carry her into her room, close the door behind me, and give myself a treat. “Mmmm. Yummy!”  I’ll say, “You want a candy?” If she nods or says yes, I’ll say, “Walk with me.” We’ll go back outside her room for one or two steps, and try again. “Walk with me.” Tag-treat of she does. Carry her in and treat myself if she doesn’t. I will say Goodnight, walk out, and close the door.  When she finally walks calmly with me into the bedroom, we go to the next step.  **2. Calm in the bedroom.**  If she stands in her room calmly for a few seconds, tag-treat.  I’ll say something like, “Let’s read a story” or something else she likes. I’ll sit on the bed. If she steps closer, tag-treat. I’ll start reading. If she gets closer, tag-treat. I’ll tag-treat for longer times that she’s calm.  If she wanders around the room, fine. As long as she’s calm, tag-treat. If she finds something to do, like mess with a doll, fine. I’ll join her.  **3.** **Climb into bed.**  When she’s close to the bed, I’ll say, “Now come ON the bed. Let’s (read, play with your doll, listen to a quiet piece of music on her music player).”  If she climbs onto the bed, tag-treat.  If she does not, I will try to prompt her by patting the bed or gently moving her.  If she resists, I will say Goodnight, leave the room, and shut the door.  I will come back in five minutes and try again.  If she still resists going onto the bed, I will turn on her night light, say “Goodnight,” leave, and shut the door.  No one goes in!  If she ends up in bed, great!  If she ends up on the floor, fine. It’s carpeted.  We want her to feel the difference between cooperating (lots of treats and cozyiness) vs. not cooperating (no treats, no fun).  We’ll just do the same thing every night.  **4. Tuck in.**  Once Nancy is in bed, I will draw the covers up on myself a little and invite her to cuddle. Tag-treat. Then I’ll put some of the covers on her. If she stays calm, I’ll cover her some more. If she gets antsy, I’ll leave it as is.  I’ll read her stories or we’ll listen to quiet music.  **5. Leaving.**  We can do this in steps.  a. I get out of bed and sit in a chair next to the bed. If she is quiet, I stay and tag-reinforce.  b. I move the chair a little farther away. I keep moving farther away over the days.  c. Then I’m in the hallway with the door open.  d. Then I close the door slightly. I stay there until she’s almost asleep.  e. In the future, the chair is farther from her room. |

Okay, then. That’s it for life skills---for now. More in a later book on chores and self-help skills.

Question. What do we do if our plans are not working too well? Answer. We go to the last chapter---Chapter Nineteen; we figure out what we may need to change; and we change how we teach. See you in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINETEEN  
  
Handling Common   
Difficulties Of Teaching

Sometimes all your hard work to increase a target behavior does not seem to be paying off. If a target behavior is staying the same or is decreasing, then this chapter will help. Simple things can keep a teaching program from working well for your child. I want you to know how to spot these and improve your program. Note: I am not saying that you are doing something wrong. You can’t know ahead of time exactly what your child’s learning mechanism needs. And you can’t know how those needs change as you teach different skills. Your teaching plans---the tag points, the examples you use, the words you use, the prompts and reinforcers---are just a good bet, not a certainty. Your physician isn’t certain, either. That’s why she says, “Try this antibiotic for a week and get back to me. In the meantime, if you turn blue and your teeth fall out, stop taking the meds and come in.”

1. SOME REASONS WHY YOUR CHILD DOESN’T SEEM TO BE LEARNING A BEHAVIOR

1. Measurement Is Not Correct.

Are you sure the behavior isn’t improving? Your child doesn’t seem to be making spontaneous eye contact more often. Maybe you have not noticed many times when she did make eye contact. Are you sure that your child is cooperating only about 20 percent of the time? It’s not possible to be sure! You can’t know if you observed everything. So, the first thing is to observe the target behavior again. This time, count how often it happens.

Number of Requests. Number of Cooperations.

4:00 – 6:00 PM  
 ////////// /////// = 70% Not as low as we thought!

But let’s say that your new observations do say that the target behavior isn’t improving enough. What then? See #2.

2. The Tag-Point Is Too High---Out Of a Child’s Reach.

Remember, we start to tag-reinforce behavior at a child’s point of success. The child has to DO the behavior for us to have behavior to tag-reinforce. If a child doesn’t do the “movement cycle” of reaching, grasping, lifting, moving, and placing objects, then it makes no sense for the tag point to be **finishing** that whole cycle. So, what IS her point of success? If you put a small object in her hand, and YOU move her hand near a spot on a place mat that has a picture of the object, can you easily get her to let go? If so, THAT is her point of success. Start increasing that last movement by tagging and treating. Then use backward chaining, to teach her to move the object tothe spot and then to release it. That would be the next tag point. So, always check that you are starting at your child’s point of success.

3. Maybe You Raised the Tag Point Too Fast or Too Much.

Let’s say you are shaping sitting at a table with you. As your child gets a little closer to the table or play area, you tag-reinforce. You’ve been tag-reinforcing whenever your child is within 10 feet and no farther away. In a few days, she’s hanging around the table, from around 10 feet. So you raise the tag point to five feet. Nothing. She stays at 10 feet. It looks like you are holding out for too much change.

Of course, you could not know that ahead of time!

So, back down a bit. Change the tag point to nine feet. Surely she’ll come a little closer without even thinking about it. Then tag-reinforce.

HOLD OUT FOR A BEHAVIOR OR AN IMPROVEMENT IN A BEHAVIOR THAT IS JUST A *LITTLE BIT* BETTER.  
*PROMPT* (HELP) THE CHILD TO DO THE BEHAVIOR A LITTLE BETTER AT FIRST; and   
USE *BIGGER REINFORCERS,* AND GIVE THE REINFORCERS FASTER FOR GOOD TRIES.

In this way, the child’s behavior will keep getting reinforced; she will stay interested; and you will have behavior to build on. For example, let’s say a child is not getting any better at saying “water.” Don’t keep pushing her to say it.

“Say water… Say waaaaateeerrr….Water….Look at me…. Waaaateeerrr. Look at me. Come back here…”

Instead, back up to reinforcing “wa-er,” and once she has that down solid (as a base!), go ahead again to “water.” And if she still doesn’t put the t sound in, work on the t sound. Then work on tah, tee, too, wa…teee….wa…tah…water.

4. Maybe You It Would Be a Good Idea to Lower the Tag Point for a While.

You’ve been tag-reinforcing eye contacts that last five seconds. For some reason, she now looks at you only for a second and then glances away. It’s not a good idea to “stick to your guns” and only tag-reinforce five-second eye contacts. Why? Because every time she makes a one second eye contact and you don’t tag-reinforce it, you are telling her that eye contact is NOT reinforced any more. So, if your child decreases a behavior somewhat, lower the tag point to “where she is,” and then when her behavior at THAT point is stable again, raise the tag point a **little bit**.

5. Are You Using the Basic Teaching Format? See Chapters Seven, Eight, and None. Can you use some add-ons? Also consider the following.  
  
 a. Don’t over-talk it. The learning mechanism needs signal (information), not noise.

b. Make sure that your child is sitting big, makes eye contact, and does Quiet Mouth at the start of sessions (at a teaching table and anywhere else) and intermittently during any interaction---because all interaction is teaching something.

c. If the child goes “off task”---noises, head on the table, won’t look at you-- don’t persist. Ignore it. Turn away. Leave the room if you have to. Use the child’s meals as reinforcers. You can’t nag or “push through” problem behaviors. You can only teach that: (1) problem behaviors get nothing; (2) only desirable behaviors get things he likes; (3) these rules will never change.

d. After you gain attention and your child is calm, frame the instruction. “Now we’ll…” “As soon as we……., then (you, we) will…..” If your child has the language, ask her to repeat what you’ll be doing.

e. Model a small amount of information.   
 A step in a routine. “First I LAY OUT the napkin, like THIS.”   
 An example of a concept. “This is round.”   
 A fact. “This dog is brown.”  
 A rule. “We always wear a helmet.” “All snakes are reptiles.”  
  
 Give the model again if you think the child wasn’t paying attention.

f. Add the lead step if you haven’t been doing that.  
 “This (point) is a circle. I’ll touch the circle and I’ll **say circle**. Listen. (point). **ccciirrrcle. Circle.** Again. (point). circle.”

“You touch the circle and SAY circle WITH me. Get ready… (only when child is looking.) (point---signal. Touch circle. Maybe give a small physical prompt)…. *Circle.*” Repeat a few times till firm. Make sure the child is looking! Use a minimum prompt, such as pointing to the circle *so that she sees it when she touches it.*

“Your turn to touch the circle and say… (pause) circle. Get ready.” (Make sure she’s looking.). (signal to “do it.”). Child touches and says something close to “circle.” Tag-reinforce.

Did the child move her hand only part of the way to the circle? Did she miss any sounds in “circle”? If so, use error correction. How?  
 Model the correct movements. Then  
 Lead and test, or just test, but use more prompts, to get her to make the whole movement of touching the circle. If you can teach the missing lll sound in circle, and can try again right now (part-firming), great. If not, work on llll another time, and then have her say words with the llll sound **first**. la, lee, loo…

6. Consequences Are Not Effective.

This is probably the most common problem. The target behavior may not be increasing because the consequence you are following the behavior with is *not really a reinforcer.* There’s only one way to find out if a certain thing *(consequence)* is a reinforcer, and that is to follow the behavior with that consequence over and over. If the behavior does not increase, that consequence is simply not a reinforcer *and you must try something else.*

Whenever we plan a teaching program, we are only *guessing* that the consequence will be a reinforcer for that behavior. *But it may not be!* It’s a good bet that food will be reinforcer (to a hungry child), but *praise* (“Yes! You put all the spoons!”), a hug, a gold star, or a tokenmay not be a reinforcer at first. *Don’t keep trying to “reinforce” a behavior with something that is not really a reinforcer. Try something else.*

7. Child Is Getting Reinforcers for Free.

If a child already gets whatever you are going to use as reinforcers, these consequences will have little effect. What do you think will happen if Steven’s mother lets him snack all day, and then at 4 o’clock in the afternoon she tries to use food as a reinforcer for playing with puzzles? Do you think he will play very long? Probably not! His belly is already full. *The same goes for attention.* If a child gets attention from you all day long---hugs, praise, or talking to her---these will not be reinforcers for her behavior during the few minutes or hours you are trying to teach her. Why should she *do* anything for your attention, and how can your attention “turn her on,” when she gets attention no matter what she does? Why should she do anything to get food, music, attention, toys, or roughhousing when she has been getting these all day and has learned that she will get them regardless of her behavior----at least tomorrow? You know the answer as well as I do.

IF SHE GETS THESE THINGS ALL THE TIME ANYWAY, YOU CANNOT USE THEM AS REINFORCERS.

The key is to make sure that you *save* the things you are going to use as reinforcers, and make sure the child *earns* them for doing the target behavior and other desirable behaviors. If you are going to use food as a reinforcer, don’t let the child snack all day; don’t let him eat before a teaching session; and don’t let him eat so much at meals that he is stuffed for hours afterwards. If you are going to use praise or other kinds of attention, make sure he is not already getting too much extra attention, *except* for the behaviors you are going to reinforce with attention.

This does not mean starving the child of food and attention. It simply

means that these are used *only to* reinforce behaviors you are trying to increase. In fact, if your program is working right, he will be getting more reinforcers than ever before, because the reinforced behavior will increase.

8. Consequences Are Not Given Often Enough.

At the start of any program to increase a behavior, *it is very, very important that the behavior be reinforced immediately and just about every time it happens;* that is, on a *Continuous Schedule.* In other words, the reinforcers are always there when the behavior happens.

The reason it’s important to reinforce a *new* behavior every time (on a Continuous Schedule) is that, each time the behavior happens but is *not* reinforced, it’s as if the behavior is being ignored---and you know what happens when a behavior is no longer reinforced or is ignored. It decreases. So, if you don’t reinforce a new behavior just about every time in the beginning, you’ll be working against yourself. You’ll be increasing the behavior each time you reinforce it and decreasing it each time you don’t reinforce it. So, at the start of a new teaching program, *reinforce the behavior on a* *Continuous Schedule* or *as many times as you can.* And tag-reinforce immediately---while the child is still doing the behavior if you can---so that the child’s learning mechanism connects what her body is doing with the tag and the treat.

9. Shift from a Continuous Schedule to Intermittent Schedule Was Made Too Fast.

At first, a new target behavior should be reinforced every time at the tag point *(on a Continuous Schedule).* The tag point might be that the child does the behavior again; does it faster; does it with less prompting; does it without extra movements; does it more accurately. But the more it’s reinforced, the faster the child will get sick of the reinforcer *(satiated).* Besides, it’s just plain impossible to keep on reinforcing every desirable behavior that happens. So, after a target behavior has increased and leveled off at the tag point (she’s doing it a lot, or is doing it **reliably** faster, with less prompting, without extras movements, more accurately), begin to *reinforce it less and less.*

For example, when the child is first starting to work hard toys, you must reinforce the behavior immediately and every time he does a correct or improved movement *(a Continuous Schedule).* But, once he is playing/operating with many toys a day, the behavior doesn’t have to be reinforced every time. It still should be tag-reinforced immediately, but it can be reinforced after (at random!) three out of four movements (e.g., stacking a block, fitting in a puzzle piece), two out of three, one out of two, one out of three, etc. (*an Intermittent Schedule).*

But when you start to reinforce a behavior less often *you must reduce the reinforcement very slowly.*

What would happen if for a week you reinforced every time the child correctly named pictures and objects, and the next day you reinforced only one out of ten times? He would be confused (“What gives?”), get upset, maybe throw a tantrum, and *stop talking.* Therefore you must *wean* the child from a Continuous Schedule slowly. For example, instead of reinforcing the target behavior every time, reinforce it four out of five times, then two out of three, and so on. In this way, the child will hardly notice that his behavior is being reinforced less often. In fact, you may increase the target behavior even more if you move to an Intermittent Schedule slowly enough.

10. Consequences Are Not Given Fast Enough.

*It’s very important that the tag and the reinforcing consequence happen* ***at the same time*** *as the behavior or within* *1 second if possible.* If your child is doing Quiet Mouth, you aren’t going to wait till he starts making noises, and then tag and reinforce! And if you wait too long to tag-reinforce (for example, Tito comes out of his room and his hair is nicely combed), how will the child learn what he did right or what behavior you are tagging and treating? The answer is that he might not learn, and the behavior might not increase very much.

Another reason to reinforce a behavior immediately is that *whatever*

*behavior came just before the tag-reinforcer is the one that was reinforced and*

*is the one that will increase.* If you wait too long to reinforce the behavior, the child will have already done something else, and so the *wrong behavior* will have been reinforced. For example, if your child makes eye contact with you and you tag-reinforce 3 seconds later, he may have looked at the ceiling in the meantime, and that’s the behavior that will increase. No one wants their child walking around all day staring at the ceiling waiting for a click and a banana chip.

“But what if I am too far away to reinforce the child immediately?”

If the reinforcer is food or a token and you are too far away to give the reinforcer immediately, use the CLICK to tell your child, “That’s the behavior to do again” and “The treat is on its way!”If you are not tagging a behaviorwith a clicker, tag with praise---“Hey, you are looking at the toys.”

11. Consequences Are Given Too Many Times.

How do we like it when someone says “Hello” the *same way* every day? How would we like to eat the same thing for lunch every day (“More gizzard pot pie?”) or watch the same movie every night? “Beverly Hills Cop again! Nnnoooooo!” How long do you think the same kinds of food, attention, or activity would be reinforcing to a child if she’s been getting them over and over again, minute after minute and day after day? The answer is that they would stop being reinforcers. They would no longer increase the behaviors they follow.

The word we use when a person has gotten the same reinforcing consequence so many times that it is not a reinforcer any more is “satiation.” The person is just plain full of food or sick of hearing someone say, “Good” or “Yes.” He is *satiated.* And he will stop doing the behaviors which are followed by the reinforcers he is sick of. You stop laying your money on the counter (behavior) when you are full of beer (satiated).

So one thing to do is to *switch between many different kinds of* reinforcers*, from day to day and even during the same short teaching session.* Reinforce the child with a big hug (if this is a reinforcer) one time, with a bite of food the next, and with some roughhousing the third time. *Keep her on her toes.* Make things exciting by not letting her know just what the reinforcer will be each time. Use a *different tone of voice* and *different words* when you praise. Switch between different kinds of food reinforcers if you use food.

Also, *stop an activity before the child has had enough.* Turn off the music or stop free time while the child is still enjoying it. In that way, he will want the activity again later and will work to earn it. *Rotate* the different Activity Reinforcers you can use. Every few days, take some of the toys away and bring back others.

Above all, *once a child is satiated on (full of) a reinforcer, do not use it for a long time.* You cannot push it on him. He will just stop paying attention, start whining, or fight you off.

12. Does the Child Know (Do) All the Behavior Elements?

Sometimes a child doesn’t do a target behavior more often or in an improved way (faster, fewer unneeded movements, with less prompting) because she doesn’t “have” the behavior/knowledge elements needed*.* For instance, you are working on a small motor activity, such as folding napkins, clothing, blankets. You are using model-lead-test/check-tag-reinforce, and you are teaching this using forward chaining (step 1; then step 2; then steps 1 and 2; etc.), but she’s just not doing the steps well; and is not going from one step to the next. What could be wrong?  
 Carefully observe—or have someone else observe.   
 a. Is she watching your models?  
 b. Is she listening when you give instructions?  
 c. Is she firm on movement elements such as using one hand to hold down one side of the cloth, and using the other hand (palm up) to fold the cloth over?  
 d. Is she firm on concept elements, such as the words “Fold it,” or “Pat it down,” when you give instructions?  
 e. Was she firm on the earlier step before you taught the next?  
 f. How well does she imitate your models?

Do a knowledge analysis of what you want her to learn? What are the steps? What are the elements needed to do each step? How well does she do the elements? At what steps does she have trouble? Back up and firm up the elements and then the steps that use these elements.

13. Wrong Behavior Is Being Reinforced.

Of course, if you reinforce the wrong behavior, the target behavior you are measuring will not increase. It’s easy to reinforce the wrong behavior, even if you know exactly what the target behavior is. If you *wait too long* to reinforce the behavior, the child will have done something else in the meantime, and that is what you will have reinforced. (Please reread number 10 above.)

Sometimes we reinforce the wrong behavior by accident. A good example of this is trying to stop some kind of problem behavior by telling the child to stop. In fact, you may be accidentally reinforcing the problem behavior with your attention. With some children, just about anything you do to stop a problem behavior really reinforces that behavior, and it will increase. The best thing to do then is to *ignore the behavior, as if were not even happening.* But *do not make a show of ignoring!* If you turn your head away or cover your eyes, you *may* still be reinforcing the behavior, because that behavior has gotten you to do something. *Ignoring behavior means not reacting to it at all.*

14. Child Is Given a Signal When He Is Not Looking.

What are the chances that a child will imitate some movement of yours if he is not looking at you when you show him? What are the chances that he will learn how to say “Mama” if he does not look at your mouth when you say it for him? Very slim!

But the problem is even worse than that. Every time you give the child

a *signal* (for instance, when you say, “Look at me” or when you show him a movement to imitate) and he *does not* do what he was signaled to do because he was not looking, your signal loses its power to *direct* or guide his behavior. Every time you run a red light, it gets easier to do so. The red light loses its control over your stopping behavior. Every time someone asks you to do something and you do not do it, it is easier to ignore them when they ask you the next time. So, when you are trying to increase a behavior, *it is very important* *that the child look at you when you give him a signal.* This increases the chances that he will do what the signal says. Of course, if the child’s attention behavior is weak---for example, he does not make spontaneous eye contact or eye contact on request very often, he does not look at your face or at things you point to, he does not look at what he is doing---you must work on these behaviors during sessions.

15. Child Is Asked Questions Instead of Being Given Directions.

Answering questions (such as “What is your name?” or “What color is the horse?”) is important behavior. It’s one of the kinds of Functional Speech. But we often ask people questions when we want more than just an answer. For instance, we ask, *“Will you* do this for me?” or *“Can you* take out the trash?” We really don’t want just a “Yes” or “No” answer; we want the person *to do* what we asked. In other words, we are not saying what we mean, which is all right since the person “understands” that we want him to do something.

But, when you ask a child questions like this, when you really want to

signal her todo something, she will not always do it, either because she does not understand what you *really* want, or because she is giving you a straight answer (“Can you say ‘Mama’?” ... “No.”). So, if you want to start a behavior, give the child a direction (“Say ‘Mama!’”), not a “Can you” question. If it seems that a target behavior is not increasing, check yourself to see if you are asking “Can you” or “Will you” questions.

16. Same Signal Is Given Over and Over.

It’s easy to get in the habit of using the same signal over and over when the child does not cooperate with it. For example, if you hold up a picture and ask, “What is this called?” and the child does not answer, you might repeat the question over and over, until either the child answers or you give up. Or, if the child is outside and you want him to come back in, you may say, “Orlo, time tocome in.” If he does not come in, you may say, “I said, it's time to come in,” and still later, “Come in this minute!” Finally, you get so angry that you drag him in. And, when you do, you have reinforced not cooperating with *all* of the signals.

The point is this: Each time you repeat a signal, you are reinforcing not cooperating with the request. As a result, not cooperating with signals increases, until you feel you are wasting your breath. At that point, the child looks as if he “is out of it'” or “has poor attention” or “does not understand.” But he has really *learned not to listen to you or to do what you say.* The fix?

GIVE THE CHILD A SIGNAL ONLY WHEN HE IS PAYING ATTENTION TO YOU

and

GIVE A SIGNAL ONLY ONCE.

If the child does not cooperate with the signal, *do not* repeat the same signal over and over. Instead, *wait* 5 or 10 seconds. Then, either (1) let him find out that the consequence of not cooperating is *missing reinforcement;* or (2) *give the signal again* and *prompt* him through the motions of cooperating with the signal. For instance, if you hold up a picture, and ask, “What is this called?” and the child gives the wrong answer or does not answer at all, put the picture down, wait about 5 seconds, hold up a *different* picture, and try again. In this way, the child gets no attention for not answering, and he misses rewards he would have gotten if he had answered correctly. Of course*, if the child does not know the answer, you would prompt him at first by telling him the answer.* [Point] “What is this..cow…. What is this?” [Zero delay between the question and the prompt.]

On the other hand, if you give the child a direction or a request to do something (“Jimmy, hang up your coat, please.”), and he ignores you or starts to do the behavior the wrong way, *do not* keep telling him to hang up his coat. Instead, wait a few seconds, give the signal again, and *put him through the right motions* of hanging up his coat.

So, if your observations show that the target behavior is not increasing (or show that it is decreasing), check yourself to see if you are repeating the same signal even though the child is not cooperating with it. If you are, ignore the fact that the child has not cooperated, wait a short time, and either give a different signal or put him through the right motions the next time. Also, set things up so that not cooperating with signals is followed by *nothing rewarding* and may result in *missing* a chance to earn a reward.

17. Threats Are Used as Signals.

Use signals in a *positive* way. Avoid telling the child what he will not get if he does not do something, or what bad thing will happen to him if he does something you do not like. Threats only start fights and make the child less likely to cooperate.

18. Child Is Not Being Helped (Prompted) Enough.

When you are trying to increase a behavior, you want the child to do it many times so that you can reinforce it. Often, she will need help doing steps in the behavior, doing it with more accuracy or faster; for instance, imitating movements, getting dressed, talking, or doing a chore. When you help the child by moving her hands for her, by putting her through the motions, or by telling her how to do something, we call this “prompting.” *Prompting* increases the child's chances of doing the behavior well enough to be reinforced.

If you do not prompt the child so that she does the behavior well enough to be reinforced, she is not being reinforced even for *trying.* After a while, she will stop trying. *So, at the start, it is important to prompt the child so that she does the behavior well enough to be reinforced.*

19. Child Is Being Helped (Prompted) Too Much.

Sometimes a behavior does not increase or get done with more skill because the child is being prompted too much, when he no longer really needs so much help. If you keep on *prompting* the behavior, the child will get so used to your prompts that he will hardly try to do the behavior unless you prompt him. He will wait for your prompts. In other words, he has learned to *depend* on your *prompts.* You will know that this has happened when you try to stop helping *(prompting)* the child and he does not even try to do the behavior by himself. In that case, *go back to a simpler behavior that the child did learn to do by himself, and then work up again to the new behavior, but this time use less prompting.*

The best thing is to avoid this problem, by (1) using as *few prompts as*

*you can* from the start; and (2) *slowly* helping *(prompting)* the child less and less as he gets more and more skill. When you slowly help him less and less, we call this “fading the prompt.” For example, at first you might have to prompt the child to say “Mama” by moving his lips and jaw. But once he *starts* to move them the right way by himself, let go of his lips and jaw just *before* the right sounds come out. As time goes by, let go of his lips and jaw earlier and use less pressure *(fade the prompts),* Finally, he will be saying “Mama” by himself.

20. Child Has Been Working Too Long at the Same Thing.

Just as the child can get sick of the same reinforcer *(satiation),* so he can get sick of the same task *(boredom).* Variety is the spice of life---and learning. *Do not work on the same behavior for too long at one time or for too many days in a row.* Once you find out how long it takes before the child *starts* to get a little restless (squirming in his seat, looking away, not trying very hard), you must run your teaching sessions so that they *end before he becomes bored.* Otherwise you will have a hard time ever getting him back to another session.

If the target behavior is not increasing because the child is bored, *switch to a new activity for a few days.* To keep this from happening again, *switch often between the behaviors the child has already learned and the new behaviors you are teaching. Do not spend too much time on one behavior. Work on many behaviors during the same teaching session.*

21. Child Is Making Too Many Errors in a Row.

If you ask the child to point to the picture of the red ball *(signal)* and he points to the picture of the house *(error),* are you going to say, “Yes, red ball”? If you clap your hands *(signal to imitate)* and he stamps his feet, are you going to say, “Right!”? Of course not. You are not going to reinforce errors, or else you will be increasing them.

Every time the child makes an error two things happen. First, the signal that you used gets *weaker,* because the child did not do what the signal told him to do. (See numbers 14-16.) Also, if his behavior was not correct enough but was partly correct, and he was not reinforced, you have ignored the fact that he made some attempt---he tried. This will decrease his trying.

So you can imagine what will happen if the child makes the same error over and over, many times in a row. *The signal you are using will lose all its power. And, if the child is not reinforced because he was making errors, even though he was partly correct, he will stop trying.* After a while, the child will stop looking at you and listening to you; he will walk away, and you will have a hard time getting him back. The solution is:  
 a. Correct every error immediately. (Chapter Eight)  
 (1) Model the correct response.  
 (2) Have the child to it with you. Add prompts if needed.  
 (3) Have the child try it. Repeat a few times until firm.  
 (4) Have the child back up a few steps (in a routine) and then go forward. Remind the child of the right response as she gets close to the spot. “Remember, slide it in.”  
 (5) Practice later.

b. If you think it wasn’t mistake, but a weakness, use part-firming. Teach the element or step that is weak by itself. Then put it back in the sequence.  
 c. If that doesn’t work---the child keeps making the same error---*go on to a different behavior and come back to the first one later. Or go back to a simpler behavior and make sure that the child can do it before you move ahead to the one he was having trouble with. Or reteach any weak elements before you work on that behavior again.*

22 . Other Desirable Behaviors are Not Being Reinforced.

One of the biggest mistakes is to reinforce only the behavior you are trying to increase---the target behavior. But isn’t the child doing many desirable, and even essential behaviors besides the target behavior? Of course he is. Eye contact, Quiet Mouth, calm sitting, cooperating with requests, skillful movements, watching. Therefore *it is most important to reinforce every so often behaviors you worked on earlier, and any new desirable behaviors that she does.* For example, when you are working on speech and are way past working on eye contact, reinforce eye contact once in a while anyway. *But do not overdo it!* You want him to keep learning harder behaviors. If you reinforce easy behaviors *too* much, he will stop trying the hard ones. The key words are “once in a while.”

Also, *stay on the lookout for any desirable behaviors to reinforce, especially*

*at the start of a program.* The reason is that the more the child is “rewarded,” the more he will enjoy working with you, and the more those behaviors will increase. So *take every chance to reinforce desirable behaviors.*

23. Child Is Not Being Told What He Is Doing Well.

It is a good idea to *tell the child what behavior is being reinforced.* In this way, he learns what that behavior is *called* and you can use the name for it in a signal. For example, if you are trying to increase eye contact, tell the child when he makes eye contact, “Yes, look at Dad.” or “Good for looking at me.” In the future, as we discussed in Chapter Eleven, you can then say “Look at me,” to request eye contact.

**2. WHAT DO I DO WHEN THE TARGET BEHAVIOR IS NOT INCREASING?**

When your observations show that the target behavior is not increasing as it should, look at the Checklist of Common Difficulties of Teaching (Table

19-1 below). Then ask yourself if any of the items on it may be keeping your teaching programs from increasing the target behavior. Here are some guidelines tofollow.

*If your program is just getting started, and the target behavior is not increasing, it is a good bet that the problem has something to do with the reinforcing consequence.* For example, the consequence may not be effective, the child may be getting reinforcers for free, the consequence may not be given often enough or fast enough, or you may be reinforcing the wrong behavior. On the other hand, the child may not “have” the elements needed for that behavior; it may be too hard for him, or a problem behavior may be getting in the way.

*If the target behavior was increasing but now is decreasing,* maybe the shift to Intermittent Schedules was too fast, the same reinforcers are given too many times, the child is given signals when he is not looking, he is asked questions instead of told what to do, the same signal is used over and over, the child is threatened, he has worked too long at the same thing, he is making too many errors, he is not reinforced for other desirable behaviors, or he is not told what he is doing well.

When you think you have spotted the problem, change or *revise* your

*teaching program plan.*

TRY, TRY AGAIN.

Most of the time, the solution to a teaching problem is simple and can be found in this chapter.

TAKE A BREAK.

When you come back, think of how you might change the teaching so that it is easier for your child’s learning mechanism to get knowledge, and easier for your child’s body to act on that knowledge. Just write notes on Table 19-1.

**Table 19-1. Checklist of Common Difficulties of Teaching**  
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1. Measurementis not correct.

2. The Tag-Point Is Too High---Out Of a Child’s Reach.

3. Maybe You Raised the Tag Point Too Fast or Too Much.

4. Maybe You It Would Be a Good Idea to Lower the Tag Point for a While.

5. Are You Using the Basic Teaching Format? See Chapters Seven, Eight, Nine.

6. Consequences Are Not Effective.

7. Child Is Getting Reinforcers for Free.

8. Consequences Are Not Given Often Enough.

9. Shift from Continuous Schedule to Intermittent Schedule Was Made Too Fast.

10. Consequences Are Not Given Fast Enough.

11. Consequences Are Given Too Many Times.

12. Does the Child “Have” (Do) All the Behavior Elements.

13. Wrong Behavior Is Being Reinforced.

14. Child Is Given a Signal When He Is Not Looking.

15. Child Is Asked Questions Instead of Being Given Directions.

16. Same Signal Is Given Over and Over.

17. Threats Are Used as Signals.

18. Child Is Not Being Helped (Prompted) Enough.

19. Child Is Being Helped (Prompted) Too Much.

20. Child Has Been Working Too Long at the Same Thing.

21. Child Is Making Too Many Errors in a Row.

22 . Other Desirable Behaviors are Not Being Reinforced.

23. Child Is Not Being Told What He Is Doing Well

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This, Dear Reader, is the end of our work on Learning Readiness. The next books in the series teach Motor Imitation, Verbal Imitation, Functional Speech, and chores and self-help skills. I hope to see you there!

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