

Guidelines for Using a Task Analysis

Definition and Goal

A task analysis is a process used to break a complex skill, routine or series of behaviors into smaller steps or teachable units. Some examples of skills or routines that have been taught through the process of a task analysis include getting dressed, purchasing an item from the store, doing laundry, making a phone call, sending an email, completing homework assignments, playing a game with a peer, having a conversation with a peer.

Materials Needed

Data collection sheet with task analysis of steps, token or reinforcement system, visual supports, and materials needed to complete the routine

Steps: Prior to Teaching the Routine

- 1** Observe a same-aged peer completing the steps of the routine or complete the steps yourself to identify and record the sequence of skills and steps required.
- 2** Transfer the identified skills and steps to a task analysis data collection form (see attached examples).
- 3** Conduct a baseline assessment of the student's current performance of the routine.
- 4** Identify the system of prompts you will use to teach the routine (e.g. least-to-most intrusive).
- 5** Identify the amount of time (5s, 10s, 15s, etc.) you will wait for the student to engage in each step of the routine prior to providing, assistance (prompts).

Steps: Teaching the Routine (using a least-to-most system of prompts)

- 1** Provide an initial instructional cue to encourage the student to begin the routine (e.g., “Get out your homework.”).
- 2** Wait for the student to respond.
- 3** If the student performs the first step correctly within the identified wait time with no additional prompts record an independent response on your data sheet for that step. Provide praise and any additional reinforcement as planned (e.g., token, edible, etc.)
- 4** If the student does not respond, provide the next prompt in the sequence (e.g., verbal prompt) to elicit a correct response from the student. Following a correct response, record a verbal prompt in your data.
- 5** If the student does not respond with a verbal prompt, provide the next level of prompt in your sequence (e.g., point to or model the step) and wait for the student to complete the step. Continue this sequence until the student correctly completes the step and record the level of prompt used.
- 6** If the student completes any step incorrectly, stop the student from continuing the response, repeat the instructional cue, and prompt with the least intrusive prompt needed to assist the student with a correct response. Record the level of assistance needed to complete the step.
- 7** Repeat steps 2-6 until the student has completed all steps of the routine.

Implementing a Least-to-Most System of Prompts

Level of prompt (following instructional cue)	Description
1 No prompt (Independent)	No additional verbal, model, gestural or physical prompts needed following the instructional cue, “Get out your homework.”
2 Verbal, gestural or model prompt	Adult verbally instructs (e.g., “open your math book”) or uses gestures (points to the book, models the step) to elicit a response from the student
3 Partial physical prompt	Adult physically assists the student with part but not all the step (e.g., lifts the corner of the book then lets the student do the rest)
4 Full physical prompt	Adult physically assists the student with all of the step (e.g., uses hand-over-hand to help the student open the book)

Problem-Solving Strategies

- Increase reinforcement for steps completed with less assistance
- Modify the step to adjust the difficulty of the response
- Modify the setting or materials to increase success
- Embed visual supports
- Increase the amount of wait time before assisting with the step
- Eliminate error patterns by stepping in to help before the student makes an error
- Teach problem-solving skills
- Teach difficult steps in isolation or outside of the routine



Routine Data Collection Form

Curriculum Supports: Routines

Student: _____

Date Started: _____

Date Mastered: _____

Independent Scoring Scale

4	3	2	1	0	N/A
Independent/no prompts	Gesture, visual, or verbal prompt	Partial physical prompt	Full physical prompt	Does not complete with any form of prompting	Not applicable

Routine Name: _____

#	Cue	Response	Scores			
			Date			
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						



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Independent/no prompts	Gesture, visual, or verbal prompt	Partial physical prompt	Full physical prompt	Does not complete with any form of prompting	Not applicable

#	Cue	Response	Scores			
			Date			
9						
10						
11						
12						
Summary Scores		Number of steps (do not include N/A steps)				
Percent of Independence		Number of steps with a score of 4				
		%= Number of 4's divided by number of steps				
Average Independence Score		Sum of steps scored				
		Sum of steps scored divided by the number of steps				