

Instructional Strategy: Pivotal Response Training

1. Complete the Student Learning Profile (SLP) assessment to determine the skills to teach across all curriculum areas. The assessment will identify lessons to teach using the three strategies of discrete trial, pivotal response training and functional routines. Remember that it is not necessary to explicitly “test” each assessment item. You may also complete the assessment based on observations around the school and classroom. The point of the assessment, initially, is to guide the selection of appropriate lessons. Use the Program Guide to track lessons. The following is an example of the SLP assessment for three expressive language skills at Level 1 that are taught using the pivotal response training strategy.

Assessment

Expressive Language [PRT]

★ Level I

Criteria are based on performance of a skill without a prompt.

Lesson	Target Skills	Cue	Correct Response	Student Response (Date / /)			Student Response (Date / /)			Student Response (Date / /)			Notes
				Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	
1. Readiness Skills	Attending (Taught simultaneously with Babbling and Sound Pairing)	Cues are verbal, such as: "Look at me!" "Hands down!" "Sit down."	Student responds to the requests.										
	Babbling	Cues are nonverbal, such as: • tickling • free play • swinging	Student produces a variety of spontaneous vocalizations of phonetic sounds, those that can be written phonetically ("da," "ee," "wa")										
	Sound Pairing	Cues are verbal, such as: • "da"	Student produces vocalizations in response to a verbal cue										

2. Based upon the results of that assessment, identify appropriate lessons for instruction. Review selected lesson plans. The number of pivotal response training lessons you select for each student depends on the level – suggested numbers of lessons can be found in the front of the Student Learning Profile.

Lesson 3: Answering Questions

Objective: Student will give appropriate response to a variety of questions and generalize similar responses previously learned to discrete trial training, with 80% correct responses, for 2 consecutive weekly probes, in presence of a motivator and no prompts.

Prerequisite: Student has generalized skill of verbal imitation and spontaneously use a variety of labels to request items or activities (Level I, Expressive Language, Lesson 2: Initial Requesting).

Materials Included in Program

- PRT Lesson Focus and Weekly Data Probe form
- Pivotal Response Training (PRT) Lesson Reminders poster
- Pivotal Response Training (PRT) Level II Reminders poster

Materials Provided by Teacher

- Items and activities of increasing functionality and complexity that are highly motivating for student

PRT rules of interaction for response: Response may be either verbal or nonverbal, depending on lesson objective. Response is related to activity.

Student Response: Student vocalizes answer to teacher's question that is related to motivator. Response is always verbal for answering questions.

Student's response qualifies as a good attempt when:

- It is contextually related to motivator or activity
- Level of response is at least as high as current Maintenance Tasks require

Examples of answering questions:

- **Expressive labeling:** Teacher cue: "What color?" Student response: "Green," "Green"
- **Person ID:** Teacher cue: "Who is this?" Student response: "Cookie monster," "Moose"
- **Action ID:** Teacher cue: "What's he doing?" Student response: "Swimming," "He's in water"
- **Prepositional:** Teacher cue: "Where's blocks?" Student response: "I do," "You do"
- **Quantity:** "How many blocks?" Student response: "5," "1-3-4-5"

PRT rules of interaction for care (opportunity to respond): Control is shared. Student chooses activity or object (motivator). Turn taking occurs. Cue is clear and related to chosen activity. Maintenance tasks are interspersed in lessons.

Teacher provides selection of appropriate and enticing motivators that encourage engaging play activities. These motivators can be objects, activities, or even food. Motivators provide student with incentive to respond. Teacher maintains awareness of potential motivators in Student's daily routines.

Examples of motivators in daily routines:

- Lunch items in cafeteria
- Reclass activities (e.g., swinging, slides, obstacle course, hampster)
- Food at snack time or lunch

3. Gather motivating toys and material to be used for PRT time. Helpful tip: it's important that the toys and activities you select are motivating to the student, not just something we think should be motivating for the student... it can be helpful to rotate sets of toys and activities every two weeks or so.



