



Expressive Language

Labeling Prepositions-Incidental Teaching

Objective

Teach the student to label prepositions during everyday activities.

Supplies

Items the student wants or needs

Teaching Steps

Step 1: Teach the student to label a single preposition, or a set of prepositions.

Step 2: Teach the student to label a new preposition or set of prepositions.

Step 3: Randomly present all prepositions the student has learned.

Next Steps

Continue to teach additional prepositions from the list of Sample Skills to Teach.

Generalization

- Present a learned preposition with different materials (e.g., place the item under something new).
- Have different people ask the student to label prepositions.
- Ask the student to label prepositions when not engaged in the play/leisure activity (e.g., during a lesson, hold up a picture of a ball on a table and ask, “Where is the ball?”).

Exercise

1. Place preferred items in view of the student (e.g., a puzzle to complete, preferred snack items, figurines) and objects around you to place in relation to the items (e.g., a box, a pillow, a stuffed animal).
2. Play with the items in front of the student, or engage the student in the activity and stop the activity.

3. When the student initiates for the item (e.g., asks for it, reaches for it, or points toward it), immediately place the item in a specific prepositional location (e.g., place the item under a box).
4. Ask the student to label its location (e.g., say, “Sure, you can have it. Where is it?”).
5. To help the student respond correctly, prompt by providing a verbal model of the response (e.g., say, “Under the box”).
6. When the student responds correctly, immediately provide the item and verbal praise (e.g., say, “You’re right! It was under the box!”).
7. Gradually fade prompts by saying less of the model.
8. Once the student can label the preposition, place the items in the locations ahead of time, and wait to see if the student will request the items with the preposition (e.g., “I want the snack that’s on the box”).
9. To help the student respond correctly, prompt by providing a verbal model of the response (e.g., say, “I want the snack that’s on the box”).
10. Provide more/better rewards when the student responds correctly with less of a model, and the best rewards when the student responds correctly without a model.

Error Correction

Give the instruction, “Say, (preposition).”

Other Prompting Procedures

- Immediately hold up a written cue (e.g., “On”).
- Place written cues on target locations for the student to read.

Troubleshooting

Problem: The student confuses “in” and “on.”

Solution: Initially, teach prepositions that are very different in sound and appearance (e.g., next to, in). Eventually teach prepositions that are similar.



Expressive Language

Labeling Prepositions-Incidental Teaching (continued)

Problem: The student loses interests in the item or activity and walks away.

Solution: Since this lesson should be conducted when the student is interested in the item, change materials or take a break from the activity for a while and come back to it at a later time.

Helpful Hints

- It may be helpful to introduce preposition opposites at the same time (e.g., in front/behind), to show the contrast.
- Focus on prepositions. If you are requiring the student to label both the preposition and the object (e.g., “behind chair”), use only objects that the student can easily label.

Sample Activities

1. Place preferred toys in target locations in a play area (e.g., on shelf)
2. Place utensils or dishes needed to eat preferred food items in target locations in the kitchen (e.g., next to stove)
3. Place in target locations those clothing items the student has to put on before going outside to play (e.g., in drawer)
4. Place preferred outdoor toys in target locations on the playground (e.g., under slide)

Sample Skills to Teach

1. On/On top of
2. Under
3. In
4. Out
5. In front
6. Behind
7. Next to
8. Beside
9. Through
10. Between