

Introducing and Expanding Small Group Instruction for Children Diagnosed with Autism and Related Disabilities

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Overview

- Determining Student Readiness
- Preparing for Instruction
- Group instruction

What is group instruction?

Why is group instruction important?

- ✿ Effective group instruction results in improved student performance
- ✿ Students will learn best if we teach essential skills in the most effective and efficient manner possible and focus is placed on explicit and systematic teacher-led instruction.

(Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004)

Principles of Effective Instruction (direct instruction)

- Present new material in small steps/break down complex skills into smaller units, model the steps and have students practice after each step
- Sufficient time allocation for instruction
- Limit amount of material presented at one time
- Sequence skills
- Begin lesson with clear statement of goal
- Use clear and concise language
- Provide opportunities for frequent responding/practice
- Review previously learned materials
- Monitor performance of ALL students
- Provide systematic feedback and corrections
- Deliver lesson at a brisk pace
- Provide many examples
- Use materials at appropriate instructional level
- Reteach material when necessary

(Marchand-Martella, Slocum, & Martella, 2004; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986, Rosenshine, 2012)

Goals for Group Instruction

- Active student engagement
- Choral/unison responding
- Clear targets

How to Determine Readiness Skills

- Assessment of group skills
 - ⊗ VB-MAPP (milestones and barriers assessment)
 - ⊗ Researched curricula pre-requisites
 - ⊗ Other curriculum assessments
 - ⊗ Classroom observations
- Where to start?
 - ⊗ Establishing instructional control
 - ⊗ Pre-requisite skills
 - ⊗ Balanced programming

Beginning Group Instruction

- Determine your group of students
- Identify common skills from intensive teaching
- Prepare reinforcers
 - ⊗ VRs
 - ⊗ Token Economy
- Focus of Instruction
 - ⊗ Responding to signals
 - ⊗ Choral responding
 - ⊗ Best to pre-teach with known skills prior to teaching targets in a group.

Direct Instruction

- ✿ Published, research-validated curriculum used in combination with **direct instruction** (effective teaching procedures)
- ✿ Main Components:
 1. Active student participation
 2. Group unison responding
 3. Signals
 4. Pacing
 5. Teaching to mastery
 6. Correction procedures
 7. Motivation

Group Direct Instruction

- ✿ Determine readiness skills
- ✿ Administer placement tests
- ✿ Determine appropriate research-based programs and student groups
- ✿ Establish data systems
- ✿ Begin instruction

Examples of Readiness Skills for Commonly used DI Curricula

• Language for Learning (LFL):

- ⊗ Echo words/phrases
- ⊗ Discriminate and Tact many items and actions
- ⊗ Respond to simple yes/no questions
- ⊗ Perform simple actions on command
- ⊗ Describe objects (parts/features)
- ⊗ Respond to name

• Reading Mastery:

- ⊗ Should start after student has completed lesson 40 of LFL
- ⊗ Echo sounds/words
- ⊗ Imitate prosody...speed (fast and slow)
- ⊗ Imitate prosody...duration (sustain a sound for about 3 seconds)
- ⊗ Follow simple instructions

• Distar Math/Connecting Math Concepts:

- ⊗ Echo words/phrases
- ⊗ Respond to simple yes/no questions
- ⊗ Respond to "Stop"
- ⊗ Rote count
- ⊗ Match-to-sample
- ⊗ Replicate patterns/sequences
- ⊗ Prepositions

What if student does not meet criteria?

- Some students may be missing one or more pre-requisites but may in fact have the component skills to begin academic training.
- Start teaching group responding and readiness skills:
 - Start with "show me ready":
 - Ready hands (hands folded on lap)
 - Seated in chair
 - Feet on floor
 - Body and eye gaze oriented toward teacher
- Other critical skills:
 - Choral/unison responding
 - Individual responding
 - Waiting/attending when others are engaged in unison responding

Set-Up for Successful Teacher-Student Interactions

- ⚙ Clear expectations (rules and routines)
- ⚙ Materials organization
- ⚙ Seating
 - ⊗ Assign seating
 - ⊗ Lower performers closest to teacher
 - ⊗ All students can see the teacher/materials
 - ⊗ Teacher can see all students in the group
 - ⊗ Teacher can see independent workers



Basic Teaching Template: Instructional Format Model-Lead-Test-Verify

Frame: The teacher states the learning task at hand.

Model (I do): The teacher provides the expected response verbally or through demonstration. If needed, the teacher repeats the model to make sure all students heard or saw it.

Lead (we do): The teacher and students respond together—several times if needed to ensure that all students practice responding correctly with teacher.

Test/Check (you do): Students perform the task independently, several times if needed to do it correctly.

Verification. The teacher provides specific praise—stating what the students learned.

Sample Format

		m	man
Model	Teacher	<i>"This letter makes the sound /mmm/"</i>	<i>"My turn to sound out this word. Mammaannn"</i>
Lead	Teacher and Students	<i>"Say it with me, /mmm/"</i>	<i>"Sound it out with me, mmmmaaannn"</i>
Test	Students	<i>"What sound?"</i>	<i>"All by yourselves, sound it out."</i>
Verify	Teacher	<i>"Yes, /mmm/"</i>	<i>"Yes, mmmmaaannn"</i>

Signals

- ⚙️ **Visual** or **auditory** cues that are used to control the timing of students' responses.
- ⚙️ Purpose of signals:
 - ⚙️ Increase the likelihood of ALL students initiating a response.
 - ⚙️ Allow ALL students to practice the task.
 - ⚙️ Allow the instructor to monitor every student.
 - ⚙️ Allow the instructor to hear incorrect responses and correct them immediately.

All signals have 4 basic steps:

- ⚙️ A focus cue to gain students' attention and present the task
- ⚙️ Brief pause (about 1 second) to allow think time
- 🔴 A verbal cue ("get ready")
- ⚙️ A signal
- ⚙️ Rules for signaling:
 - ⚙️ Instructor only talks on focus position
 - ⚙️ Instructor never talks and moves
 - ⚙️ Instructor only signals when it is time for students to respond

Goal for DI :Criteria for Mastery

- ⚙️ All students responding correctly on signal in the scripts original context.
- ⚙️ Criteria applies for moving on to next exercise/lesson as well as for mastering lesson

Error Correction

All statement corrections start with “My turn” and end with “starting over”

Error Correction Template:

- ✿ Model: “My turn”
- ✿ Lead: “Say it with me”
- ✿ Test: “Your turn by yourself”
- ✿ Verify: “Yes, ____”
- ✿ Starting Over: Start at beginning of task

Error Correction

If a student responds either before or too long after the signal...

- ✿ Teacher corrects by saying, “I need everybody to respond on my signal”, and returns to the beginning of the task.
- ✿ Alternatives:
 - ⊗ “You have to wait until I signal. Let’s try it again.”
 - ⊗ “You have to answer as soon as I signal.”

Error Correction

⚙️ **If students are not responding consistently, use the following format...**

- ⊗ "Keep your place"
- ⊗ "Eyes on me"
- ⊗ "Get ready"
- ⊗ Signal/call individual student's name
- ⊗ Verify in complete sentences
- ⊗ Turn individual responses into group responses

Error Correction

Specific Corrections:

- Vary depending on the specific response errors.
- Correction procedures are presented in the teacher's presentation book under the exercise for which they apply.

Error Correction

Correcting Alternative Responding

- Used when student responds with correct but alternative response (different from response on presentation book).
- Teacher indicates response is correct by saying, "right, some people call this ____, but it is also called a ____. Let's use ____."
- This is important for consistency across students and on future lessons.

Error Correction

Correct but Inappropriate Responding:

- Teacher immediately stops the students and follows this sequence:
- Models an acceptable way of responding (Example: "I can say that sentence the nice way. Listen. I am touching my head.")
- Leads students through response ("Let's all say that sentence the nice way")
- Tests students ("Let's hear you say that sentence the nice way all by yourselves").

Promoting Generalization

- Transferring Group Skills to naturally occurring instructional sessions
- Determine students readiness
- Determine type of instruction to be delivered
- Prepare materials for instruction
- Establish Data Systems

Example of Group Instruction: Morning Meeting



Pictures of Group Materials: Early Learners



Pictures of Group Materials: Early-Intermediate Learners



Pictures of Group Materials: Advanced Learners



Data Collection: Group Instruction

Morning Meeting Data

Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____ Staff Member: _____

Student	Responds to signal		Mands to peer		Raises hand	
	P	UP	P	UP	P	UP
Student 1						
Student 2 (give to peers)						
Student 3						
Student 4						

Snack Data

Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____ Staff Member: _____

Student	Raises Hand		Waits until called on		Mand with 3 or more words	
	P	UP	P	UP	P	UP
Student 1						
Student 2						
Student 3						
Student 4						

Staff Behavior During Group Instruction

- Teacher Role
 - ⊗ Prepares materials and instructional environment
 - ⊗ Only deliverer of instruction and prompting?
 - ⊗ Deliverer of reinforcement
 - ⊗ Training and Treatment Integrity
- Support Staff
 - ⊗ 2nd person partial prompts, if needed
 - ⊗ Supports delivery of reinforcement when needed
 - ⊗ Data collection
 - ⊗ Training and Treatment Integrity

Questions

Thank you!

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