Module: Task Analysis

Overview of Task Analysis


Task analysis is the process of breaking a skill into smaller, more manageable steps in order to teach the skill. Other practices, such as reinforcement, video modeling, or time delay, should be used to facilitate learning of the smaller steps. As the smaller steps are mastered, the learner becomes more and more independent in his/her ability to perform the larger skill.

Evidence

Task analysis meets the evidence-based practice criteria with five single-subject design studies, demonstrating its effectiveness for promoting appropriate behavior and communication skills for children at the preschool, elementary, and middle school levels.

With what ages is task analysis effective?

Task analysis can be used effectively with children with ASD, regardless of cognitive level and/or expressive communicative abilities. The evidence base shows that task analysis is an effective intervention for learners at the preschool (1 study), elementary and middle school levels (6 studies), and high school (1 study). It is reasonable to assume that it would be an effective practice for older learners as well. Task analysis can also be used to train professionals on how to interact with and/or teach their students with ASD.

What skills or intervention goals can be addressed by task analysis?

The research that constitutes the evidence base demonstrates that task analysis can be used to address issues in the academic, behavior, communication, and social domain. Any skill that can be broken down into smaller steps for teaching is an appropriate target for task analysis.

In what settings can task analysis be effectively used?

Task analysis can be used in school, home, or community settings. Generalization of skills is most likely when teaching occurs in multiple settings.

Evidence Base

The studies cited in this section provide the basis upon which this practice was determined to meet the NPDC on ASD’s criteria as an evidence-based practice. This list is not exhaustive; other quality studies may exist that were not included.
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Preschool


Elementary and Middle School Age


High School


Selected Additional References


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