

# STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

## Implementing Simultaneous Prompting

### ***Step 1. Establishing Learner Attention, Delivering the Stimulus, and Providing the Cue***

1. Team members establish the learner's attention by:
  - a. delivering the target stimulus,
  - b. using an attention-getting strategy (e.g., saying learner's name, saying, "Look;" having the learner touch the stimulus), and/or
  - c. presenting the cue or task direction.

Eye contact is often used as an indication of attention, but other behaviors, such as matching the stimulus, touching the stimulus, or repeating the task direction also have been used. Once attention is secured, the team member presents the cue or task direction to let the learner know a behavior is expected from him/her.

*EXAMPLE:* A team member says, "David." David looks at the team member. She presents a flashcard with the word "stop" on it (target stimulus) and says, "What is this, David?" while pointing at the flashcard.

The team member behavior used to secure attention was saying the child's name. The target stimulus is the word "stop." The cue or task direction in this example is the team member saying, "What is this, David?"

### ***Step 2. Implementing the Prompt***

During the instructional sessions with the simultaneous prompting procedure, team members immediately provide the controlling prompt to the learner with ASD. During the probe sessions, no prompts are provided.

#### *A. Instructional Sessions*

1. After securing attention, presenting the target stimulus, and delivering the cue/task direction, team members immediately deliver the controlling prompt.

In the previous example, after saying, "David" (to get his attention), showing the word "stop," and saying "What is this David?," the team member would immediately say, "stop" (controlling prompt).

2. If the learner's response is correct (prompted correct), team members immediately provide positive feedback by:
  - a. offering reinforcement (e.g., praise, access to materials, break) and
  - b. stating what the learner did (e.g., "You said, 'More,' Here's more snack," "You said, 'Two times two is four.' That's right. Two times two is four.").
3. If the learner's response is incorrect (prompted error), or if the learner does not respond, team members ignore the response and go on to the next trial.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

With chained skills, when errors (prompted errors) occur, the team member may have to correct the step before moving on to the next trial.

### *B. Probe Sessions*

1. After securing attention, presenting the target stimulus, and delivering the cue/task direction, team members deliver the response interval (no prompt is provided).

In the example used above, after saying, “David” (to get his attention), showing the word “stop,” and saying “What is this David?,” the team member would look expectantly at David for him to provide the response.

2. If the learner’s response is correct (unprompted correct), team members immediately provide positive feedback by:
  - a. offering reinforcement (e.g., praise, access to materials, break) and
  - b. stating what the learner did (e.g., “You said, ‘More,.’ Here’s more snack,” “You said, ‘Two times two is four.’ That’s right. Two times two is four.”).
3. If the learner’s response is incorrect (unprompted error) or if the learner with ASD does not respond, team members ignore the response and go on to the next trial.

When errors occur with chained tasks, the team member may have to correct the step before moving on to the next step.

### **Step 3. Monitoring Learner Progress**

A key component of simultaneous prompting is collecting data to monitor a learner’s progress. This is accomplished by (a) collecting data during instructional sessions and (b) collecting data in the daily “probe” sessions in which no prompts are used. The probe sessions allow team members to evaluate learners’ acquisition of skills.

#### *A. Instructional Data*

1. Team members collect data daily during the instructional sessions.

Data gathered during instruction tell team members whether (a) the prompt is providing enough support for the learner to do the target skill correctly and (b) the reinforcer is effective. The following table provides an example data sheet that can be used during instructional sessions.

Table 5. Sample Data Sheet for Simultaneous Prompting Instructional Session

<b>Trial</b>	<b>Stimulus</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>PE</b>	<b>NR</b>
<b>1</b>				
<b>2</b>				
<b>3</b>				
<b>Total #</b>				
<b>Total %</b>				

Key: PC = prompted correct; PE = prompted error; NR = no response

The team member makes instructional changes using the following decision rules.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

2. Team members select a new controlling prompt if the learner makes errors on 25% of the trials over the course of three consecutive instructional sessions.

Each instructional session includes a certain number of trials. In the sample data sheet in Table 5, the instructional activity contains three trials. Two more instructional activities need to be completed before making any changes to instruction.

3. Team members select a different reinforcer if no responses occur on 25% of the trials over the course of three consecutive instructional sessions.
4. If a learner begins to make errors when using a previously mastered discrete skill (e.g., raising hand, pointing to letters), team members make modifications to the initial cue (e.g., using two different types of cues instead of one).

*EXAMPLE:* A young child with ASD, Nate, has been working on requesting more by saying, “More, please.” Marissa, Nate’s teacher, has been implementing instructional activities within classroom activities to work on this skill using simultaneous prompting. A planned instructional activity for this skill is snack time. Nate had been consistently requesting more snack by saying, “More, please;” however, for the past two days, he has been grabbing the snack bag on Marissa’s lap without asking. Marissa reviewed the instructional data from the past several days and determined that the initial cue might need to be changed because Nate is consistently using “more” correctly, but only when she prompts him by saying, “What do you want?” while holding up the bag. The new initial cue will be for Marissa to hold up the bag in front of Nate when she notices that he is almost finished with what is on his plate. She hopes that this will be enough of a signal to Nate to use the target skill.

### *B. Probe Data*

Probe data are used to evaluate how learners are acquiring target skills. This is accomplished by implementing sessions without using prompts.

1. Team members implement at least one probe session daily.

The probe sessions allow team members to evaluate learners’ acquisition of skills. When no prompt is provided, team members determine whether or not the learner is able to use the target skill correctly without the controlling prompt.

2. Team members identify how many trials will be implemented during the probe session (at least two trials on each behavior per probe session).

At least two trials on each behavior should be implemented during each probe session.

3. Team members present the cue, but not the controlling prompt, during the probe session.

*EXAMPLE:* Using the previous example, Marissa, Nate’s teacher, collects probe data by sitting with Nate during free play to determine how well he can ask for “more” without prompts. At a table in the writing center, she conducts a familiar instructional activity without using prompts. She presents Nate with one of his favorite toys, Legos. She places two Legos on the table and waits for him to put them together. The remaining Legos are on her lap in a box that she

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

previously selected as the cue. When Nate finishes putting the two Legos together, he grabs for the box without asking. Marissa does not prompt him to use the skill and records on her data sheet that Nate's response was an *Error*. Marissa then puts the Legos back in the box and places two more Legos on the table in front of Nate. She completes five trials to collect sufficient probe data.

The following table provides a sample data sheet that can be used during probe sessions.

Table 6. Sample Data Sheet for Simultaneous Prompting Probe Sessions

Trial	Stimulus	C	E	NR
1				
2				
3				
Total #				
Total %				

Key: C = correct; E = error; NR = no response

The team member makes instructional decisions using the following decision rules.

4. Team members select a different prompting procedure (e.g., graduated guidance, least-to-most) to use if the following occurs:
  - a. learner errors occur on 25% of trials over the course of five consecutive probe sessions *and*
  - b. instructional data indicate 100% correct responses.
5. Team members select a different reinforcer if no responses occur on 25% of the trials over the course of three consecutive probe sessions.
6. If a learner omits a step from a chained task, team members modify that step to make it more apparent to the learner with ASD (e.g., using more than one cue rather than one).

*EXAMPLE:* A target skill for Molly, a middle school student with ASD, is to wash her hands sufficiently before going to lunch. To accomplish this, Molly must check her schedule, walk to the bathroom, turn on the water, get soap, rub her hands together 10 times, get a paper towel, throw the paper towel in the trash can, and check her schedule again. For the past several days, Molly has been washing her hands without soap. The soap is located in a soap dispenser on the wall to the right of the sink. Molly's teacher, Tate, has decided that this may not be an obvious location for Molly. He has decided to get a soap pump that can be placed right behind the warm water handle. His hope is that the soap pump will be more obvious to Molly, thus limiting the need for any additional prompting for this step to be completed successfully.