



# Components

## CREATE

### GET STUDENT ATTENTION

Get the child's attention before presenting an opportunity or instruction.

### PRESENT A CLEAR OPPORTUNITY

The opportunity must be easy to understand and around the student's developmental level.

### USE VARIED INSTRUCTIONS

Opportunities should vary throughout the activity.

### INCLUDE SOME EASY TASKS

Provide a mixture of easy and difficult tasks to increase motivation.

### USE PREFERRED MATERIALS (AND VARY THEM)

Use a variety of favorite materials and interests in each activity.

### GIVE CHOICES

Give choices between and within activities.

### RESPOND TO THE STUDENT'S INTERESTS

Acknowledge when student interests change and follow their lead when possible.

## PAUSE

## RESPOND

### PROVIDE CONTINGENT REWARDS

Provide immediate and well-timed rewards.

### USE DIRECT REINFORCEMENT

Rewards should be an item or activity that is natural or directly related to the desired behavior.

### REWARD ATTEMPTS

Reward goal-directed attempts, or good trying, throughout the activity.

## TURN

### TURN-TAKE WHEN APPROPRIATE

Sometimes model a skill, facilitate back-and-forth interaction, or encourage turns between students.



# Get Student Attention

Get the child's attention before presenting an opportunity or instruction.

## What does attention look like?

It is important the student is paying attention before you ask him or her to do or say something. When he or she is paying attention, he or she is more likely to understand your instructions and become engaged in the activity.

### GOOD ATTENTION

Children with autism may be paying attention even if they aren't looking at you.



Student is looking toward you or the teaching materials (may be through the corner of the eye).



Student's body is oriented toward you or materials.



Student is reaching for teaching materials or toy.

### POOR ATTENTION

Signs that your student is not paying attention will differ for each student.



Student is engaged in self-stimulatory behavior.



Student is actively engaged with another object.



Teacher has to repeat him/herself before the student responds.

## Having problems gaining the student's attention? Check yourself:

- Are you using the student's favorite materials?
- Would getting physically closer to the student help?
- How can you change your tone of voice or facial expression to show more excitement about the activity?

Once you have the student's attention, you may offer an opportunity to respond, keeping in mind that you may need to try giving the instruction in a different way.

# Give Choices

Give choices between and within activities.

## Why give choices?

Providing choices between and within activities is a simple way to increase motivation and on-task behavior and also to reduce challenging behaviors.

## What kind of choices can I give?

The types of choices you provide will depend on the activity. Sometimes you can give the student lots of control over the choices, and sometimes you will want to give only limited choices. The choice hierarchy to the right shows two types of choices beginning with the most student control at the top and moving toward less student control at the bottom. The more control a student has the more likely he is to be motivated. You can alternate between choice levels as needed to increase motivation.

## Choice Hierarchy

Between activities

Within activities

### BETWEEN ACTIVITIES

In a choice between activities the teacher allows the student to choose from a range of choices determined by the teacher such as, from a variety of goal domains reflected in the student's IEP. This provides a high level of student control. Options are presented in a way that's easy for the student to understand.

#### EXAMPLES:

"Which center do you want to go to first?"



Noticing when a student is done with one activity and offering an option to move on to the next one.

### WITHIN ACTIVITIES

In this level of choice, the teacher can also provide a more limited set of choices, with two or three items or activities available. This is the lowest level of control for the student, but allows you to work on some activities that may be less-preferred but necessary.

#### EXAMPLES:



"Do you want to finish your worksheet on the bean bag chair or at your desk?"

"Would you like to draw with a crayon or marker?"



"Today, should we do subtraction with cars, Goldfish crackers, or dinosaurs?"

\*Remember that the teacher is in charge of what the choices are for each lesson. Students are not allowed to choose dangerous, aggressive or inappropriate activities.



# Include Some Easy Tasks

Provide a mixture of easy and difficult tasks throughout the activity to increase motivation.

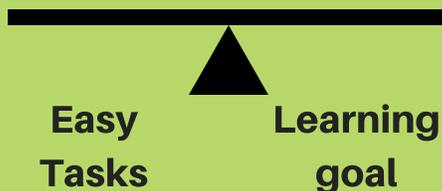
## Using both easy tasks and difficult tasks

When using CPRT, it helps to provide a mixture of both easy and difficult tasks when working with students with autism. This helps students feel more successful and stay motivated to learn.

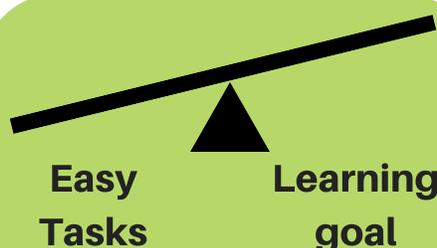
**EASY TASKS** are those that the student has already learned or mastered, and that he can do easily most of the time he is asked.

**DIFFICULT TASKS** are those that the student is learning to do or something he can do sometimes, but not every time he is asked. This may correspond with the IEP goal and can also be referred to as the **learning goal**.

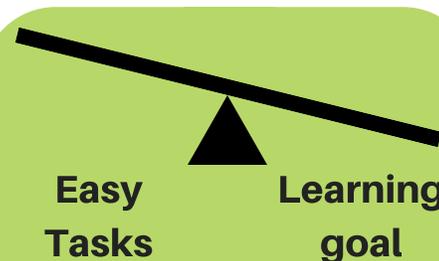
## How many easy tasks should I include?



Begin a lesson by using easy tasks about half the time and then increase or decrease that number based on the child's student's behavior, skill level and engagement during that session.



If the child student is struggling or getting frustrated, you can increase the number of easy tasks.



If the child student is engaged and responding well, you can increase the percentage of difficult tasks.

## How does this help?

### INCREASED MOTIVATION

Motivation is key in CPRT. Having your students do easy tasks that are rewarding will help to maintain enjoyment and motivation. Mixing in skills that need to be learned will help the child make progress.

### INCREASED SPONTANEITY

Mixing easy and difficult tasks helps to increase spontaneity because you can wait for the child student to do the easy task on his own. This will boost his confidence and help him use his skills in new places and over time.

## Examples



**Math**

**Easy** Count sets of objects in quantities of 1-10.

**Learning goal** Count sets of objects in quantities of 11-20.



**Reading**

**Easy** Blend sounds to read words.

**Learning goal** Answer wh- questions



# Present a Clear Opportunity

The opportunity must be easy to understand and around the student's developmental level.

A clear opportunity is...

**UNDERSTANDABLE** It should be clear what you are asking the student to do.

**UNINTERRUPTED** If interrupted, present the opportunity again.

**DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE** Use the student's current language and skill level to determine what opportunities might be understandable.

Examples of developmentally appropriate opportunities for play skills

Skill level	AT developmental level	ABOVE developmental level
Sensory/ Motor	 Model feeling or squishing play-clay.	 Model stacking rings on a peg.
Functional Play	 Model putting balls in tube or completing a puzzle; provide verbal instructions.	 Model feeding a doll; provide verbal instructions, "Feed the baby."
Early Pretend Play	 Model talking on a toy phone; provide verbal instructions, "Talk to Mommy."	 Model pouring juice from an empty pitcher and say, "Baby wants juice too."
Multiple Pretend Play Actions	 Model feeding self, doll, and peer, then driving the car to store to get more snacks.	 Provide blanket, plates, and cups and say, "Let's have a picnic!"
Reciprocal Play	 Provide costumes for role-playing with peers and say, "Let's play superheroes!"	 Provide board games for two players that involve turn taking during free play time

# Provide Contingent Rewards

Provide immediate and well-timed rewards.

Rewards should be...

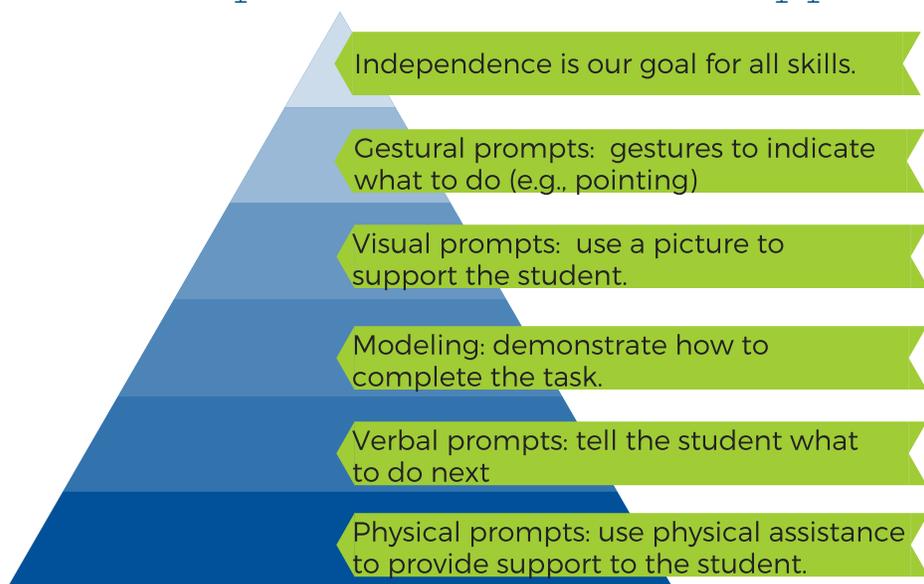
**IMMEDIATE** For a student to understand the feedback it needs to happen right away after he responds.

**WELL-TIMED** The timing of the rewards is dependent on whether the skill is an easy task or a learning goal. If an easy task, rewards should be offered every now and then. If a learning goal, rewards should be offered continuously (every opportunity).

## DELIVERED ACCORDING TO THE STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR

Student Response	Appropriate Teacher Feedback
Appropriate Response	Reward and/or specific verbal praise.
Reasonable Attempt	Reward, specific verbal praise.
Inappropriate Response	No reward; Prompt to complete the task, or Present the instruction again.
Incorrect Response	No reward; Feedback that the response was incorrect ("try again"); Prompt to complete the task, or Present the instruction again.

## How to provide additional support



If the student is inappropriate or incorrect, it may be necessary to provide support to help him learn the new skills. The types of prompts you use will depend on the skill the student is learning and how well he understand what you are asking. When providing a prompt, it is important to do it in a way that will increase the student's independence as quickly as possible. It is important that the student does not become reliant on the teacher's assistance. To do so, move up the prompt hierarchy pictured here.

# Respond to Student Interests

Acknowledge when student interests change and follow their lead when possible.

## Why Respond to Student Interests?

In the classroom, the teacher is usually the person in charge of the learning environment. The teacher usually chooses the materials, location, and goals for lessons. In CPRT, we focus on motivating our students to respond to our instructions, making the learning process interactive and engaging. One way to do this is to respond to how the students' interests change throughout a learning activity.

## Examples of responding to changes in student interest

### GOOD RESPONSES



During a writing activity, the teacher gives the student a pencil. The student reaches across the table toward the writing utensils and the teacher responds by offering to choose a different writing material.



During circle, the students count objects. When a student is selected to count straws, he reluctantly comes to the front and begins gazing at the bears. The teacher says, "Oh do you want to count bears instead?" and continues the counting activity with bear manipulatives.

### POOR RESPONSES



During a lesson in which students are sorting words to the appropriate holiday category, a student repeatedly shouts out the word "fruitcake." The teacher responds by saying, "Fruitcake is not one of our words."



During art, the class is gluing die cut birds on construction paper. Despite the teacher offering a choice between two colors, the student pushes the birds away. The teacher persists in offering the two choices.

## How to respond to student interests?

Responding to student interests requires keen observation, as students may express their interests in subtle ways. Be conscious of opportunities in which your students utilize verbal and nonverbal communication to express their change of interest. Then determine if it's possible and appropriate to respond by simply acknowledging, or by incorporating those interests into your lessons. There are some times that would be inappropriate to respond to student interests, such as when it is disruptive to other students' learning.

# Reward Attempts

Reward goal-directed attempts, or good trying, throughout the activity.

## What is an attempt?

An attempt is an answer that seems like a really good try but that isn't fully correct. It serves the same function as the new skill. For example, you may ask the student to write a sentence about his favorite lion toy. He does it but forgets to put a period at the end of the sentence. We can still give him a lion figurine because the student is showing good effort towards the fully correct response.

## Why reward attempts?

Rewarding attempts keeps motivation high and decreases frustration and challenging behaviors. Basically, you are rewarding good trying and shaping behavior that keeps moving closer to the behavior the student is learning. By rewarding good trying, you encourage more trying in the future.

## Example of how to reward attempts

**Goal:** Combine verb and noun

**Present level:** Samir can articulate single words clearly.

ANTECEDENT

BEHAVIOR

CONSEQUENCE



You see Samir reaching for a book and prompt him to say, "Read book."



Samir says, "Ree" while trying to grab the book.

ATTEMPT  
REWARDED

Samir says, "Ree buh," and you give him the book as a reward for good trying.

ATTEMPT NOT  
REWARDED

You say, "You can say 'read.' Try again." Samir begins to engage in self-injurious behavior.

# Take Turns

Sometimes model a skill, facilitate back-and-forth interaction or encourage a turn with a classmate.

## Why take turns?

Taking turns helps build skills, gives you a chance to model new skills, and gives the teacher control of the activity so a new learning opportunity can be presented. Be sure the student is paying attention when turns are taken so he can see or hear the skill being demonstrated.

Try to take turns playfully and naturally, model at the student's developmental level, and include peers whenever you can. If turn taking is hard for a student, keep your turns short to build tolerance to turn-taking.

## Examples of turn taking across domains

Turns in play allow teachers or peers to model new, appropriate ways to play.

EXAMPLES:

- rolling a car down a ramp instead of looking at wheels
- feeding a bear
- having a figurine ride a train, stop to fill up the tank with water, drive to the next town for lunch



**Play skills**

Taking turns can help students develop language.

EXAMPLE:

During a coloring activity, you can work on commenting by taking a turn and modeling how to comment on your own actions.



**Language skills**

Take the opportunity to facilitate turns between students.

EXAMPLE:

In a math activity, students can take turns picking equations to solve on the board in front of the whole group. By facilitating this type of turn, students model for peers the steps to solve the equation.



**Academic skills**

Take the opportunity to facilitate turns between students.

EXAMPLES:

- a simple exchange of materials
- trading toys
- taking turns in a simple game
- playing different roles in a pretend or sociodramatic play scheme



**Social skills**

# Use Direct Reinforcement

Rewards should be an item or activity that is natural or directly related to the desired behavior.

## What makes a reward ‘natural’?



Related to the activity or student's response.



Readily available in the natural environment such that students will be rewarded similarly for using the newly learned skill in different environments and with different people.

## How do natural rewards help?

Because natural rewards are available in the natural environment, they help students learn to use skills in lot of places, and with other materials and people.

## Examples of natural rewards for two goals

### Counting

#### Preferred Material



Disney princesses

### Prepositions



Garages

#### Lesson idea

Using printed pictures of Disney princesses, place the desired quantity of pictures in front of the student and ask him or her to count them.

Ask the student to park cars in, on, next to, between, etc. toy garages.

#### Natural Reward



Reward the student with a princess sticker for each correct response.



Allow the student to play with the cars and garages following correct responding.

## Having difficulty finding a natural reward?

If having difficulty finding a natural reward for your activity, consider **backward planning**. Rather than first thinking about how the lesson will be taught, reverse your thinking by brainstorming effective reinforcers first.

What reinforcers can I use?

How can I use those reinforcers as materials during my lesson?

Write or brainstorm a lesson plan



# Use Preferred Materials

Use a variety of preferred materials and interests in each activity.

## Why use a variety of preferred materials?

When you include items and activities the child enjoys into a task, he will be more likely to pay attention and be motivated to learn. Also, using many examples to represent the same concept helps children with autism understand concepts more clearly and broadly.

## How do I incorporate preferred materials?

Pictured below are three ways to include preferred materials in a teaching activity. From top to bottom, this chart describes different types of materials from the most to least motivating to a child. Individually preferred materials are usually most motivating, but they may be difficult to use at all times. Using play-based materials or enhanced academic materials can also keep motivation high in situations when individual preferences cannot be used.

## Materials Hierarchy

Individual preferred materials

Play-based materials

Enhanced academic materials



### INDIVIDUAL PREFERRED MATERIALS

Individual preferred materials are toys or activities the child loves. If these items can be appropriate to the goal or activity, incorporate these individual preferred materials into the lesson. For example, during a writing assignment, a student who expresses interest in a particular movie may remain on task and write longer sentences when the writing prompt relates the preferred movie.



### PLAY- BASED MATERIALS

Play-based materials are usual games, toys and activities that most children enjoy, and that are more fun than the typical learning material for that goal.

For example, if teaching a student to identify shapes, you can use finger painting. Finger painting may not be an individual preferred material, but it is more fun than learning to identify shapes from flashcards.



### ENHANCED ACADEMIC MATERIALS

In some cases, it may not be appropriate to use preferred materials or play-based materials.

Think about how you can enhance academic materials to make them more interesting. For example, rather than repeatedly writing the letter A on a worksheet, perhaps the child can write animals that start with the letter A.

## How do I vary my materials?

Use at least two different types of materials to teach the same concept. Think about how you might teach the concept of addition. Using jacks, balls, dice, pictures, crayons, and numerals to teach addition can help extend the child's idea of what addition means. The same is true when teaching new words, phrases and play activities.



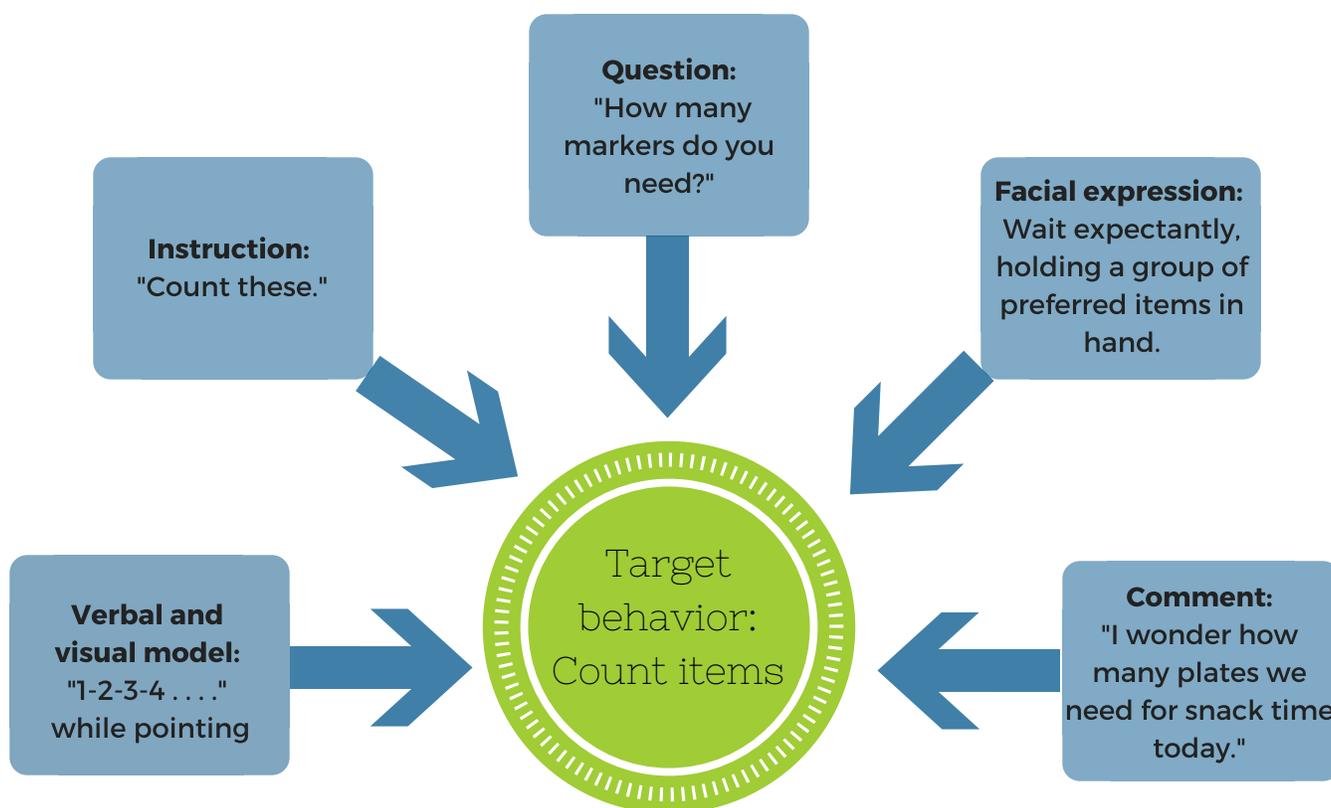
# Use Varied Instructions

Opportunities should vary throughout the activity.

## Why vary the instructions?

Varying, or changing, the way you give instructions will help students learn to respond appropriately with different teachers or when opportunities are given to them in new ways.

## Example of how to vary instructions



## Tips for varying instructions

When thinking about varying instructions, it may be helpful to think about various ways the skill may be presented in a classroom and across real life situations. For the purpose of generalization, or using skills in lots of places with lots of people, we want to expose students with autism to these many ways of asking for the same behavior to be performed.