

# Incidental Teaching

## Goals

- Learn the definition of incidental teaching (IT) and the benefits of incidental teaching
- Identify the steps of IT and methods in which incidental teaching can be initiated
- Identify differences between incidental teaching and discrete trial training

Incidental teaching is \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ as a teaching technique whereby the child initiates the teaching interaction to expand his or her language skills.

When a child expresses interest in an item or activity, staff can elicit more language from the child by responding to the child's initiation.

## Benefits of Incidental Teaching

- Increases the use of spontaneous language in \_\_\_\_\_ settings
- Promotes generalization and maintenance of acquired \_\_\_\_\_ skills
- Facilitates the acquisition of language that is contextual across a variety of stimulus conditions (i.e. during play, during a routine, or about an object the child is engaged with, etc).

## Four Main Steps

1. Child initiates an opportunity by showing interest in an object or activity
  - Could be vocal: asking for something or asking for help
  - Could be non-vocal: pointing, reaching, showing interest in an item
2. Teacher prompts an elaboration
  - Ask a question, i.e. "what color is this (item)?"
  - Prompt the related language, i.e. "say, I need help"
3. Child responds
4. Teacher provides praise + access to the item or activity

## How do we start?

### Two ways to use incidental teaching

1. Capturing opportunities
2. Contriving opportunities

Be very observant and \_\_\_\_\_ a naturally occurring opportunity or notice opportunities to set the environment up to create or \_\_\_\_\_ an opportunity for incidental teaching.

### Capturing Opportunities:

- Observe and identify natural situations or opportunities in the environment that expand on a child's interest
  - Child reaches for or wants a specific toy/item/activity
  - Child needs help with clothing or an item
- Block access and provide a \_\_\_\_\_ prompt "say, can I have it please?"
- Child engages in response
- Provide praise and the toy/item/activity

# Incidental Teaching

(continued)

## Contrived Opportunities:

- The teacher arranges the environment in a way that encourages the child to initiate a response
- Examples:
  - Staff can place preferred items out of reach
  - Staff can put a favorite toy or food in a clear container visible to the child
  - When playing together, staff could suddenly stop the activity

*Contrived or Captured? Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.*

- Child looks curiously at toy in your hand under the table \_\_\_\_\_  
Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child is reaching for some blocks \_\_\_\_\_  
Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child cannot get his milk carton open \_\_\_\_\_  
Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child asks to borrow your item\_ Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child sees favorite toy out of reach \_\_\_\_\_  
Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child sees cookies in clear container \_\_\_\_\_  
Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child is missing a puzzle piece\_\_ Prompt \_\_\_\_\_
- Child and staff are playing a game and teacher suddenly stops\_\_ Prompt \_\_\_\_\_

## Prompt Fading:

- The goal is always independence
- When the child learns the skill \_\_\_\_\_ your prompts, providing less and less until the child independently responds
- After the child independently responds, expand for more complex \_\_\_\_\_
  - Example: child sees cookies, independently says "Help me, please"
    - Teacher prompts child to say, "It is stuck. Help me, please"
    - Child responds
    - Provide item and praise

## Behavior Specific Praise:

- Behavior specific praise is praise that includes restating the child's correct response.
- Examples:
  - "Good! I like how you said, 'help me.'"
  - "You are right! You said. 'it is blue.'"
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

# Incidental Teaching

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How do you know if incidental teaching is working?

- Collect data; continuous assessment of skills
- Graph data; graphic representation makes it easy to observe if a skill is increasing
- Analyze data; is there an increase in language? Is there more complex language?

## Incidental teaching vs. Discrete Trial Training

- Incidental teaching and discrete trial training are \_\_\_\_\_ teaching methods.

### Differences

DTT	Incidental Teaching
Teacher led	Student initiated
SD/instruction delivered (ask a question, give a direction)	Naturally occurring opportunity
Structured environment	Natural environment
Reinforcement is prearranged/may be unrelated to response	Reinforcement is always the actual activity/ item being requested