

## Lesson Plan

**Objective:** To teach **choice-making** to preschool students with Down's Syndrome.

### Settings and materials

- Phase I training takes place at a puzzle table, which is generally a quiet place, free from distractions. The activities available are:

Day 1	Car Puzzle	Crayon & Paper	Book (Playing Together)
Day 2	Duck Puzzle	6 Nesting Cups	Book (At Home)
Day 3	Boat Puzzle	6 Lotto Cards	4 Tupperware Shapes & Ball
Day 4	Train Puzzle	Book (My Clothes)	4 Tupperware Shapes & Ball
Day 5	Car Puzzle	6 Nesting Cups	Book (Playing at Home)
Day 6	Crayon & Paper	Rings on a Stick	Posting Box
Day 7	Train Puzzle	Threading 6 Beads	6 Lotto Cards
Day 8	6 Lotto Cards	Book (Bathtime)	Posting Box
Day 9	Duck Puzzle	Scissors and Paper	Threading 6 Beads

- Phase II training takes place in a wider indoor setting where activities have less clearly defined boundaries.
- Phase III training takes place in a wider preschool setting by offering a free choice.

### Content taught

The following behaviors are used as teaching targets for children with Down's Syndrome and a group of children without disabilities who showed similar choice behaviors:

- Scanning alternatives prior to self-selection (rather than selecting the nearest activity).
- Selecting new activities following task completion (rather than repeating the previous activity).
- Completing-activities after being distracted by an adult (rather than leaving them in response to distracting stimuli).
- Completing activities after being distracted by a peer.

## **Teaching procedure**

### **Phase One: Acquisition phase**

1. Training takes place at a puzzle table free from distractions.
2. Sessions last approximately fifteen minutes.
3. The student sits by the teacher and is asked to select and complete three successive activities.
4. All activities have a clear beginning and end.
5. Training continues until criterion standards of performance have been met for each target behavior.
6. If a student reaches the criterion before 9 sessions had elapsed, the 15 minutes training time is used to practice the target skills.
7. Training begins with the teacher describing and modeling the component skills.
8. The student is asked what he/she would like to do and is physically prompted to perform the first target behavior.
9. Social reinforcement for correct responses is given at each step.
10. Physical prompting is reduced and reinforcement given intermittently once the required behavior is established.
11. Training of the first target behavior continues until the student, when presented with three activities and asked what he/she would like to do, points to all the alternatives, selects the desired alternative, pushes away the other alternatives and completes the chosen one, on three successive occasions without prompting.
12. The same training procedure is used to establish the second target behavior.
13. Training continues until the student, when presented with three activities, demonstrates the ability to select an activity other than the nearest one and other than the one just engaged in, on three consecutive occasions.
14. Training of the third target behavior continues until the student demonstrates a return to the current activity, within 5 seconds and on three out of four occasions, following the introduction of an irrelevant object during the course of an activity.
15. The fourth target behavior is taught by arranging matters so that a peer, who is playing nearby, interrupts the student to say that he/she is leaving to play with something else.
16. Training continues until the student has completed a succession of three out of four of the activities, which have been interrupted in this way.

### **Phase Two: An indoor generalization training phase**

1. Once the student has mastered the four target behaviors, a semi-structured indoor choice is provided and the student is required to apply the scanning and perseverance skills to the wider indoor setting where activities have less clearly defined boundaries.
2. This phase begins with the teacher modeling the required skills. For example: The teacher points out three activities next to each other from a position where all could be seen. She then points to the chosen one, walks past the two alternatives, verbally rejecting them, and participated in the chosen activity.
3. Social reinforcement is given for pointing or verbally stating the chosen activity, or walking straight to it when asked, "Show me what you would like to do."
4. Starting the third day, the staff offers the student five semi-structured choices during each of the next 9-12 sessions.

***Phase Three: A school-wide generalization training phase***

1. The scanning and perseverance skills are extended to the wider preschool setting by offering a free choice.
2. If a student fails to make a choice by not verbally stating, pointing, or moving towards the activity or if the student chooses the nearest activity without viewing the alternatives, the teacher reverts to Phase II training.
3. Teacher follows this procedure for 9-12 sessions during which the student is offered five sets of choices each day that the student is present.
4. Teacher ensures that the student participates in the chosen activity and they receive social reinforcement for doing so.

**Method of evaluation**

Record the number of correct responses.

**Lesson plan based on:** Rietveld, C.M. (1983). The training of choice behaviours in Down's Syndrome and nonretarded preschool children. Australia and New Zealand Journal of Developmental Disabilities, *9*, 75-83.