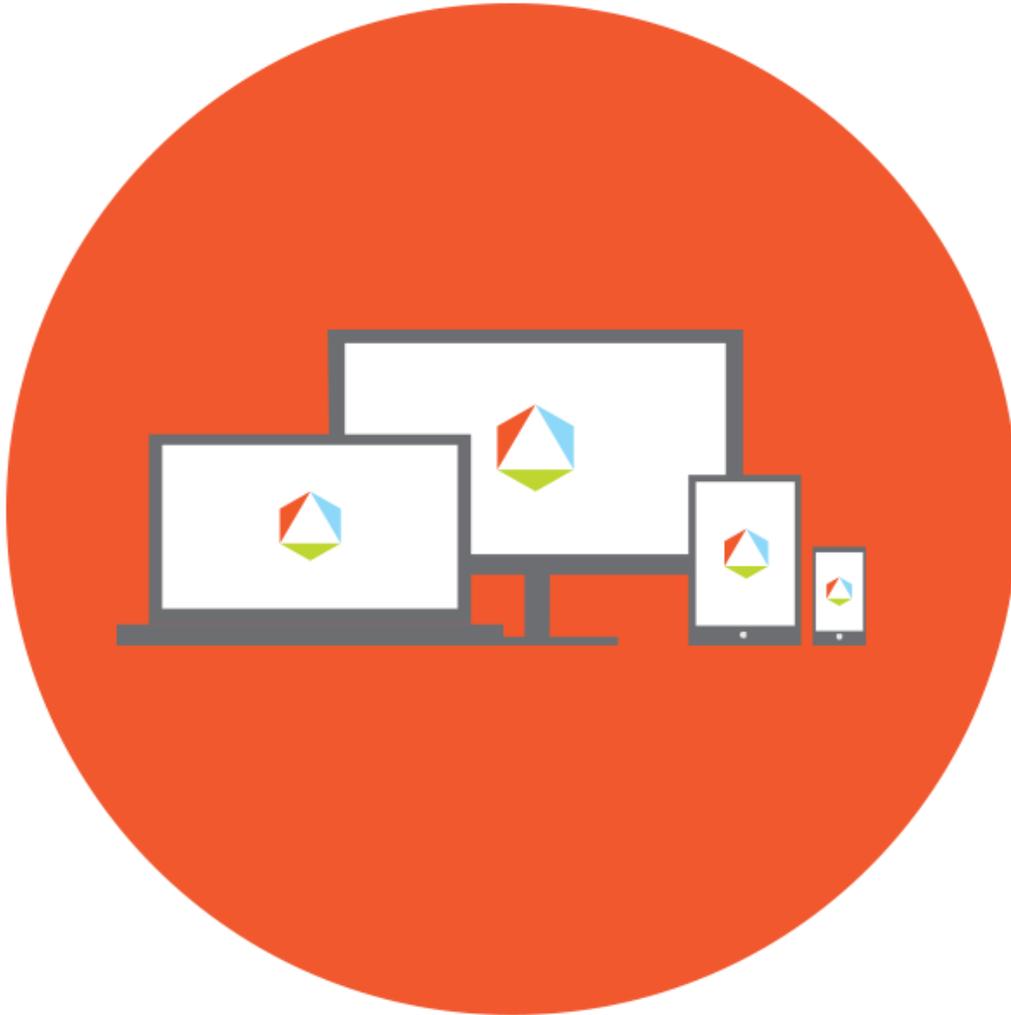




FIRSTPATH
AUTISM



Lesson Guide

1. Reinforcer Assessment

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Overview

Teaches:	This exercise teaches the child to select items or activities that will effectively reinforce the child's behavior and responses while learning.
Before beginning:	Specific prerequisites do not exist for this lesson, as it relies on the basic instinct to pursue items and activities that appeal to the individual.
Why it's important:	Proper motivation must exist for effective learning to occur. The teacher must have knowledge of items/activities that are likely to reinforce the child's behavior, so that desirable responses can be strengthened and their frequency increased.
Materials needed:	MANY items/activities that are known or expected to be highly preferred by the child. It is recommended that the teacher have at least 8-10 options available. Try to include different categories of rewards such as toys, edible items, and activity choices like a small slide, beanbags, or a Sit-N-Spin.
Generalization activities:	<p>This basic exercise can later be expanded into a token system, where a pre-established number of tokens are collected and exchanged for a larger reward (e.g., 10 tallies=trip to frozen yogurt shop; 20 tokens=10 minutes break time; 25 pennies=opportunity to buy a gumball out of the machine, etc.).</p> <p>Later, this same general idea can be generalized into functional activities like earning money for completing chores, or earning incentives for good grades/behavior at school.</p>



Steps

Prepare

1. Sit facing the child, in a quiet place free of distractions.
2. Have several rewards and highly preferred items ready and available.
3. Data collection typically not necessary for this lesson, other than noting the child's preference.
4. Make sure the child is ready to attend, ideally looking at teacher and not engaging in any other activities.

Teach

1. Place the items/activities within the child's reach and allow free access.
2. If needed, tell the child to "Go ahead" so he knows it is okay to select something.
3. Observe what the child selects.
4. Allow him to engage with the chosen item/activity for a short amount of time (e.g., 10-20 **seconds**). **The idea** here is to allow a "small taste" but not allow the child to become satiated on his choice—we want to leave him "wanting more".

NOTE: If the chosen item is an edible, allow he/she to consume 1 bite (if it is a larger edible item, make sure it is divided into small bites in advance. For this reason, small edibles like raisins, Cheerios, popcorn, etc. are ideal as they do not need to be divided into small bites.)

5. Tell the child, "My turn", and remove the item (if applicable).
6. Repeat exercise starting at Step 1, making note of his selection.
7. Continue this process until the child has selected one of the items/activities at least 3 times, or otherwise demonstrated a clear preference for one of the items.
8. The child's demonstrated preference will be the item used as a reward for correct responses for the lesson immediately following.
9. At this point, the child should be ready to "Earn & Learn"!
10. The teacher should make certain to clearly and simply communicate what is expected of the child, in order to earn the chosen reward.

Examples include:



- "First ___(activity/response)___, then ___(reward)___"
- "When you do a good job, you get ___(reward)___"
- "Let's work to earn___(reward)___"