Lesson Guide

49. Block Imitation

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# Block Imitation

## Overview

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Teaches:</th>
<th>Overlapping the domains of both visual performance skills and object imitation skills, Block Imitation teaches the child to look at a block structure built by the teacher and use his own blocks to replicate the teacher’s structure.</th>
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<td>Before beginning:</td>
<td>It will help better ensure the child’s success if s/he can already complete more basic visual and fine motor skills such as Shape Sorters, Matching, and Puzzles. In addition, some basic Object Imitation Skills should be mastered. Block Imitation will combine and utilize the skills previously developed in each of these lessons.</td>
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| Why it’s important: | Block Imitation builds essential skills that include:  
• Generalization of basic matching abilities,  
• Development of visual discrimination abilities,  
• Development of fine motor skills,  
• The ability to use another person’s model as a guide to complete a task,  
• The ability to modify behavior to model another person’s behavior,  
• The ability to complete a multiple-step task in a sequenced order  
• Development of emerging building/construction skills that can be later generalized into play opportunities |
| Materials needed: | Two identical sets of sturdy blocks (e.g., wooden) of different sizes and colors. (Initially, Lego-style interlocking blocks should NOT be used, as they pose an additional degree of motor difficulty.) |
| Generalization activities: | Play opportunities, both interactive and independent; Lego-style building (offers generalization and expansion of Block Imitation skills); incorporating building structures into play with other toys; e.g., building a garage for cars, building a house for dolls, building a fort for Army men, etc. |
Steps

Prepare
1. Sit facing the child, in a quiet place free of distractions.
2. Ensure that a reinforcer assessment has been recently conducted, and that there are at least a few potential reinforcers available to motivate the child to earn & learn!
3. Have data collection ready.
4. Have lesson materials prepared and available.
5. Make sure the child is ready to attend, ideally looking at teacher and not engaging in any other activities.

Teach
1. Content
2. Content
3. Ask the child to “Build this”
4. Begin slowly stacking the blocks, one at a time, into target structure.
5. Pause 2-3 seconds between each block to allow child time to process and respond.
6. When teacher finishes the model structure, wait an additional 3-5 seconds to allow child to process and/or catch up and/or complete his construction. The teacher may wait longer than this if she can see that the child is actively, though slowly, working on the building process.
7. Once child’s structure is complete, provide feedback and deliver reinforcement (if applicable)
   - **Correct response**: social praise and deliver reinforcer
   - **Incorrect or No response**: corrective feedback, model or prompt of correct response. (Error correction for this lesson will look very similar to that of a Task Analysis / chaining skill, where the teacher will remove only the incorrect blocks (and those following it that depend on it), and have the child repeat construction correctly, following teacher’s model.)
8. Write down data for completed structure as a whole (e.g., NOT for each individual block).
LESSON: BLOCK IMITATION SKILLS

EXAMPLES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: “Build this” (while stacking 3 blocks slowly, pausing 2 seconds between each block) Child: (Builds structure using same 3 blocks and in same orientation as Teacher modeled) Teacher: “Horray! Great building like me!” (and delivers reinforcer; records data)</td>
<td>Teacher: “Build this” (while stacking 3 blocks slowly, pausing 2 seconds between each block) Child: (Builds first 2 blocks correctly, then makes error on 3rd block) Teacher: “Oops! Let’s try the last block again…” (removes incorrect block from child’s structure, points to or repeats construction of that block on the model structure, and prompts child to finish with correct block) “Better!” (does not deliver reinforcer; records data; re-starts trial)</td>
<td>Teacher: “Build this” (while stacking 3 blocks slowly, pausing 2 seconds between each block) Child: (No response) Teacher: “Uh-oh. We are building with blocks. Let’s try again.” (does not deliver reinforcer; records data; starts new trial)</td>
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TYPICAL ORDER OF LEARNING TARGETS:

**PLEASE NOTE that it is important to have a small variety of structures (represented below by “A”, “B”, “C”) for each stage/quantity of blocks, in order to avoid accidental “mis-training” of the child whereby s/he assumes that a “2-block” structure must be built in the exact same way, with the exact same 2 blocks, every time. Therefore, the teacher should develop and teach at least 3 different 2-block structures (“A”, “B”, and “C”) to promote flexibility in the child and help ensure that the child is attending to the teacher’s actions each time, rather than simply memorizing a structure. Also, it may be helpful for the teacher’s own organization to draw a small representation of each structure next to each target on the sheet.**

1. 2-block structure “A”
2. 2-block structure “B”
3. 2-block structure “C”
4. 3-block structure “A”
5. 3-block structure “B”
6. 3-block structure “C”
7. 4-block structure “A”
8. 4-block structure “B”
9. 4-block structure “C”
10. 5-block structure “A”
11. 5-block structure “B”
12. 5-block structure “C”
13. 6-block structure “A”
14. 6-block structure “B”
15. 6-block structure “C”