

# A Teacher's Toolbox of Knowledge: System of Least Prompts (SLP) Instructional Procedure

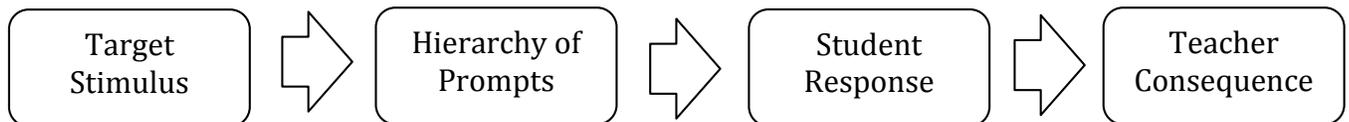
Ann Katherine Griffen ([annkatherine.griffen@uky.edu](mailto:annkatherine.griffen@uky.edu)) and  
Melinda Jones Ault ([melinda.ault@uky.edu](mailto:melinda.ault@uky.edu))

University of Kentucky

Robert C. Pennington ([robert.pennington@louisville.edu](mailto:robert.pennington@louisville.edu))  
University of Louisville

## WHAT IS SLP?

- SLP is a systematic response prompting strategy that involves teacher selection and use of a hierarchy of prompts from those that provide the least to the most amount of assistance.
- Research data suggest that SLP has been effective for teaching a wide range of skills across the lifespan of students with a variety of disabilities including individuals with mild-severe intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, learning disabilities, and those without disabilities.
- The schematic below shows the trial sequence for SLP



## SLP GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Prompts**- teacher behaviors presented to increase the probability of correct responding (assistance provided by the teacher).
- **Hierarchy of prompts**- a group of prompts arranged in some order of amounts of assistance. In SLP, the prompts are ordered from those that provide the least amount of assistance to those that provide the most amount of assistance.
- **Controlling prompts**- teacher behaviors that, when used, will ensure that the student performs the target behavior. This will be the last prompt in the hierarchy.
- **Discrete skill**- a single behavior having a distinct beginning and ending.
- **Chained skill**- a number of discrete behaviors sequenced together to form a more complex skill.
- **Examples of prompts**- gesture, verbal, model, partial physical guidance, full physical guidance, audio, video, picture.

## HOW TO

1. Identify the target behavior to teach.
2. Task analyze the behavior (if a chained skill).

3. For both chained and discrete skills, select the specific prompts and order the prompts in a hierarchy from the least to the most amount of assistance provided to the student.
4. Conduct a trial by giving the student 3-5 seconds to respond independently.
5. Provide the consequences for responding:
  - For corrects (+) Teacher provides reinforcer.
  - For incorrects (-) Teacher says, “Wait”, provides the next prompt level, and gives 3-5 seconds for student to respond.
  - For no responses (0) Teacher provides the next prompt level, and gives 3-5 seconds for student to respond.
  - Remember, within trial the student moves through the hierarchy of prompts until he/she responds correctly, or the teacher provides the controlling prompt (the last prompt in the hierarchy).
6. Repeat until all steps in the task are completed.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Determine the prompt hierarchy based on the individual learning needs and characteristics of the student.
- Create a data sheet and collect ongoing student performance data.
- Graph the student data, adapting and modifying instruction if adequate progress is not being made.

## RESOURCES

- Ault, M. J., & Griffen, A. K. (in press). Teaching with system of least prompts: An easy method for monitoring progress. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*.
- Collins, B. C. (2012). *Systematic instruction for students with moderate and severe disabilities*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Mims, P. J., Hudson, M. E., & Browder, D. M. (2012). Using read-alouds of grade-level biographies and system prompting to promote comprehension for students with moderate and severe developmental disabilities. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 27, 67-80.
- The AIM project, Autism Internet Modules*, Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) in partnership with the Autism Society of America (ASA), the Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders Network, the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Toronto's Geneva Centre for Autism:  
[http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/user\\_mod.php](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/user_mod.php)
- Response Prompting*. Modules Addressing Special Education and Teacher Education (MAST): <http://mast.ecu.edu/modules/ps/concept/>

# DATA SHEET EXAMPLES

## Example 1

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Session \_\_\_\_\_ Start/Stop/Total time \_\_\_\_\_

Task \_\_\_\_\_

Task Analysis/ Trial	Independent	Verbal	Model	Physical
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
Correct	n=	n=	n=	n=
	%	%	%	%
Incorrect	n=	n=	n=	n=
	%	%	%	%
No response	n=	n=	n=	n=
	%	%	%	%

Key: + = correct, - = incorrect, 0 = no response

Comments:

## Example 2

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Session \_\_\_\_\_ Start/Stop/Total time \_\_\_\_\_

Task \_\_\_\_\_

Task Analysis/ Trial	Date:				
	Session				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
# independent					
# verbal					
# gesture					
# physical					

Key: I = independent, V = verbal, G = gesture, P = physical

Comments: