

Task Analysis

An effective task analysis is critical for teaching students with disabilities all of the discrete steps required to complete tasks that are often viewed as simple tasks.

Objective: Apply task analysis to the development of instructional practice. You will learn to identify and practice how to analyze and break down a task or skill that will be taught to students with disabilities.

Definitions:

- Task Analysis – Detailed analysis of a task and how it is accomplished, both mentally and physically. The task is broken into smaller component steps. Task frequency, skill level required, and complexity should all be identified.
- Target Skill- Specific skills that are identified for the student to learn.
- Communication- Requires a sender, a receiver, and a message. Communication can be given in numerous forms including: written, verbal, sign, Braille, pictures, non-verbal, and any other form that communicates a message.

What is task analysis?

- After identifying the skill that will be taught, complete the skill yourself or observe someone completing it.
- Observe and write down every step, no matter how small and simple the step may appear.
- After the task analysis is complete, attempt the skill using ONLY the steps written from the analysis. Determine if the task could be completed with only the steps written. If not, repeat the process again until all steps are written and identified in order to finish the task.

We often overlook the smallest steps in everything we do. If we tell our student to put on his coat, we need to think about all the steps. Where is his coat? Does he know? Can he take it off the hook? Can he put his arms in it? Does he need it on the ground to flip on? Can he button or zip?

- Once the steps are complete, modify the steps for each specific student and their individual needs and the essential skills needed.
 - Essential skills:
 - Scanning
 - Object identification
 - Object function
 - Position in space
 - Arm extension
 - Grasping
 - Eye-hand coordination
 - Directionality
 - Flexing joint
 - Releasing an object
 - _____
 - _____

Any questions before we move on?

Example with Guided Practice:

Now, if you don't mind I would like to have 2 volunteers to help participate in a task analysis.

Eat Pudding from a pudding cup

<i>Step</i>	<i>Incomplete Analysis</i>	<i>Step</i>	<i>Complete Analysis</i>
1	Hold pudding in hand.	1	Holds pudding in one hand.
2	Take off lid.	2	Uses other hand to open pudding. • Thumb and index finger on little part of lid.
3	Put lid in trash.	3	Lick lid.
4	Take spoon and scoop pudding.	4	Place lid on table
5	Bring pudding to mouth.	5	Picks up spoon in one hand. • Holding spoon with the handle.
6	Eat pudding.	6	Holds pudding in the other hand.
7	Throw away trash.	7	Dips spoon into pudding cup with ladle side up .
8		8	Scoops pudding into spoon.
9		9	Keeps ladle side of spoon up and brings to mouth.
10		10	Opens mouth.
		11	Insert spoon into mouth and close lips over spoon.
		12	Pull spoon out of mouth with lips closed.
		13	Repeat steps 5-12.

This is an example of knowing the student and their skills. Does the student know what "up" means?

Does this step and essential skill need to be taught?

Practice in Groups:

Break into groups of 3-4 people. Take the same task and modify for a specific student. Student in wheelchair, Student with limited fine motor skills, Student with no mobility in arms.

There may be differences in the task analysis and they may be the same. Having a different perspective with the help of others can help provide a more clear and accurate task analysis.

Individual Practice:

- Identify a skill that you would teach to your students and perform a task analysis. Examples of task analysis could be: painting a picture, writing a name, greeting a friend, sharing a toy, brushing teeth, washing hands etc. Remember to include details about the students' physical and cognitive abilities along with the complexity of each step with modifications and accommodations that can be used.