

Task Analysis & Chaining Tip Sheet

What is it?

- Chaining is a way of teaching a task that is actually made up of smaller tasks. Tasks like making your bed or brushing your teeth are good examples of this. In order to make your bed, you have to follow many steps.
- Chaining is like using a recipe in order to complete a multi-step task.
- A task analysis can take the form of a visual using pictures and words. It could also be a chart that guides the adult to teach the most needed skills. A task analysis could also be in video form, like in video modeling.

Why should I use it?

- Often times, a person with autism can be overwhelmed with a multi-step task. Teaching it bit by bit, step by step, reduces frustration and increases comprehension.
- Preparing a task analysis and using chaining to teach also means that the student achieves mastery faster!

When should I use it?

- You can create a task analysis for any multi-step task. Activities of daily living are good examples of this. Things like teeth brushing, getting dressed, pouring cereal, or bathing are all skills that can be taught using a task analysis.

Where can I use it?

- A task analysis needs to be utilized in the setting where the task would normally be carried out. For example, if the person was learning how to brush their teeth, the task analysis would be utilized at the sink and with all the necessary supplies present.

How do I teach it?

- Forward chaining: the teacher focuses instruction on only the first step of the task. The student is given a reinforcer after they successfully, independently complete the first step. After the student is able to complete the first step independently for several times in a row, the teacher provides instruction on the second step in the task. This continues until the student is able to complete the entire multi-step task independently.
- In backward chaining, the teacher completes all the task for the student, up until the last step. The teacher focuses instruction on the last step. When the student is able to complete that step independently, the student is given a reinforcer. After the student is able to complete the last step independently for several times in a row, the teacher provides instruction on the second to last step in the task. This continues until the student is able to complete the entire multi-step task independently.
- During total task chaining, the teacher presents each task in sequences and instructs the learner to complete all of them. Least to most prompting is provided for the tasks that are difficult for the learner. The reinforcement is provided at the end after the whole task is complete.

Here is a nice video that depicts forward and backward chaining:

<https://www.reliaslearning.com/resource/chaining-and-task-analysis>