

## The 8 Steps of Prompting (Least to Most)



### **1. Select the target skill**

When selecting the target skill, make sure the skill is defined in measurable terms. One way to determine if the skill is identified in a measurable way is to ask yourself, “Can I see the skill happening? Does the skill have an obvious start and stop component?”



### **2. Identify the naturally occurring situations or events that require the spontaneous use of the skill**

This step refers to the situations that should naturally prompt the individual to use the desired skill. It is important to identify these target situations because the goal is for the learner to identify the situations as the prompt or cue to use the skill, rather than relying on an external prompt or cue from the teacher.



### **3. Identify the general instructional cues or task directions**

It is important to remember that a prompt is any type of cue given to a learner AFTER the general instruction has been delivered. The general instruction is simply any type of communication used to request the use of the target skill. In some situations, the general instruction will be the situation that should result in the use of the desired skill; however, other times, the naturally occurring event may be the natural cue to initiate the target skill or behavior.



### **4. Determine the prompting hierarchy levels**

When using least to most prompting, the least assistive prompt is used first and the assistance for each preceding prompt slightly increases. For example, if the teacher has delivered the general instruction of “get out your ipads” to start the daily lesson, the teacher using least-to-most prompting may implement the following prompting sequence:

1. Gestural prompt (pointing to the ipad)
2. Visual prompt (holding up the ipad)
3. Model Prompt (the teacher provides a demonstration)



## ***5. Establish the mastery criterion***

It is important that you establish a criteria for mastery to guide the data collection step of this implementation guide. For example, you may be able to say the learner has mastered a skill if the learner has exhibited the skill three consecutive times when presented with the naturally occurring event or general instruction.

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## ***6. Identify how you will reinforce the skill***

In order to increase the likelihood of the learner to use the desired skill, decide on how you reinforce the skill. This can be done by giving specific praise to the learner such as, “great job writing down your homework, or by implementing some other type of token/reward system.

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## ***7. Implementing the Least to Most prompting***

- The naturally occurring event (bell that signals the end of class) or general instruction is delivered (“Begin your test”).
- Provide a sufficient amount of ‘wait time’ to give the learner a chance to use the skill without prompting. The wait time should match the learner’s cognitive and processing skill. Some learners may require 3-5 seconds, while others may require 8-10 seconds
- If the learner **uses** the skill within the predetermined “wait time”, deliver the reinforcement type established in step 5.
- If the learner **does not** use the skill within the predetermined “wait time”, deliver the first prompt from the prompting hierarchy established in step 4.
  - If the learner exhibits the target skill after the first prompt, provide the reinforcement type established in step 5.
  - If the learner **does not** exhibit the target skill after the first prompt is given, deliver the second prompt from the prompting hierarchy.
  - If the learner has still not exhibited the target skill, deliver the third/final prompt from the hierarchy.
- It is extremely important to still provide reinforcement to the learner for using the skill even if the learner requires the most assistive prompt from the prompting hierarchy.

## ***8. Data Collection & Progress Monitoring***



# VOISS Implementation Guide

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Collect data that specifically targets at which step of the prompting implementation the learner is using the skill. If you notice the learner is continuing to only use the skill after the most assistive prompt is used, you may consider using different types of prompts in your hierarchy, or you may need to reevaluate the type of reinforcement you are using. For example, if you are using specific praise to reinforce the use of the skill and you are noticing this type of reinforcement is not increasing the use of the skill, you may need to implement some type of reward system for using the skill.



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