

Deconstructing IEP Activity

Purpose: The below IEP format provides classroom staff and families with information on *what* to teach, *where* to teach, and *how* to teach young children with significant disabilities in inclusive classrooms. In addition, teachers sometimes “inherit” IEPs from other teachers or from other educational staff who develop IEPs. As such teachers sometimes “deconstruct” the IEP in order to make sense of what they need to teach, where they need to teach it, and how they need to teach it. The steps for “deconstructing” an IEP objective are relatively easy and are listed below. Following the steps are examples from “real” IEPs that have been deconstructed.

- **Step 1:** Determine the critical skill of the objective.
Critical skills are defined as behaviors that are required for participation in activities. They are not activities, nor are they materials. Critical skills can be embedded into a variety of daily activities.
- **Step 2:** Rewrite the objective so it is measurable and meaningful.
Occasionally, objectives are written too narrowly which precludes the teacher from teaching across activities (e.g., “child will use a pincer grasp to pick up raisins”). In this step, the teacher writes the objective in a broad way, not specifying specific materials, or situations under which the skill will be taught. For example, Child will grasp objects/materials using his thumb and forefinger. Further, there are times when objectives do not contain antecedents, measurable behaviors, and criteria that will allow teams to monitor a child's performance.
- **Step 3:** Identify **sample** activities in which the skill can be taught.
This provides the context for teaching the critical skill. The activities listed are not meant to be an exhaustive list of every opportunity for teaching the skills. Rather they are intended to be examples that sample a variety of environments and activities.
- **Step 4:** Identify adaptations for teaching the skills.
This is the “specially designed instruction” component of the IEP. Teachers should identify instruction adaptations, environmental adaptations, materials, technology, etc. that are needed for teaching a specific skill.

For each of the “problematic” objectives below, identify the critical skill (there may be more than one) associated with the objective. Next, write a measurable and meaningful objective designed to help a child acquire, strengthen, or maintain the critical skills. Then, identify at least three daily activities in which you and other team members might address the critical skill. Lastly, brainstorm adaptations that may be necessary for a child with more significant delays/disabilities.

Example #1:

The student will answer yes/no questions about what he wants to eat/drink at meal time 80% of the time.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Example #2:

The student will cut out a square and circle by staying on the outline shape independently 2 out of 3 tries.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Example #3:

Given a 5-10 interlocking puzzle of a familiar objects and a teacher model of task completion, the student will complete the puzzle independently within 2 minutes on 9/10 occasions.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Example #4:

Child will be involved in group activities by participating in circle and small group activities.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Example #5:

The student will string 51” beads.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Example #6:

The student will demonstrate progress toward gross motor skills by walking forward, backward, and sideways on a standard balance beam.

Problem:

Alternate:

- **Critical skill(s):**

- **Measurable objective:**

- **Sample activities:**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.