



## 25 Ways to Create Learning Opportunities with Incidental Teaching

The trick to creating these opportunities is to hit a balance between pushing the student out of her comfort zone to create a little tension and reach but not so much that it causes either frustration or the student gets discouraged and shuts down or gives up.

### To elicit requests for desired items or activities

#### **Put desired items:**

- Up on shelves where students can't reach them
- In closed containers that students can't open
- Tape containers (like food bags or containers) closed

#### **Stop an ongoing activity:**

- Stop a swing from swinging and hold until the student requests
- Pause a CD or music player mid song
- Stop a child bouncing on an exercise ball if you are holding on to him

### To elicit requests for help or needed materials

- Leave items out of the materials for completing a task, like a pencil to do a worksheet
- Leave out a piece of a puzzle (if the student needs things completed)
- Leave out a piece of file folder game
- Tape the scissors shut for a cutting task
- Provide a pencil with a broken tip
- Provide a pen or marker that is out of ink
- Take a piece out of a game or toy
- Hide a piece of a game you are playing behind your back

### **Labeling Items / Actions**

- Hold back items in a series until the student names them. For instance naming animals together and stopping to see if the student will name the next one. This can be done for any types of items using pictures or objects.
- If the student chooses a book, read a page and have them name the pictures.
- If the student has figurines she likes, have her name items (could be the name of the item or just an element like a shoe) as she puts them away or puts them in a container
- Label actions in a game of charades in which the adult acts out an action and the child names it
- Follow the child to what he wants to play with and narrate what he is doing and block his access to the activity until he models your language

## **Commenting / Completing**

- Sing a song and leave out a word
- Read a familiar story that the child wants and stop before a familiar refrain or leave out a word (e.g., Brown bear, brown bear, what do you \_\_\_\_\_?) and see if the child fills it in
- Leave out choices of books with repetitive phrases like the Eric Carle books and stop before you get to that phrase to see if a student fills it in
- Load your song board at morning meeting with familiar songs and stop singing for familiar choruses. Something like Itsy Bitsy Spider for younger students and All About That Bass for older kids.

## **Adjectives**

- When a child really wants specific items, have a variety on hand of different colors or sizes. Then have them request the items by specifying the color (e.g., I want yellow Starburst)
- Put a desired item in colored containers, different shaped containers or different size containers and require the student to request them by the characteristic.

You can also fold academics into interactions based on the student's choice of activities. If there is more than one piece of materials, have him/her count them. Put words on common items like building blocks and have them read it to get the next block for their structure.