



Language Development

Practical kit for teaching
VB-MAPP skills to **autistic**
children

AbaTools

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Language Development

- Criterion 11:** Building Plurals and Possessive Expressions
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- Criterion 13:** Structuring Noun Phrases with Modifiers

Criterion 11 – Building Plurals and Possessive Expressions

Mastery Criterion	The learner demonstrates the ability to produce correct plural forms and use grammatical structures that express possession across a variety of communicative contexts.
Program Goal	Expand the learner's ability to correctly use plural and possessive forms, promoting greater linguistic autonomy in social interactions, daily conversations, and academic activities.
Prerequisite Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic vocabulary in singular form.• Ability to identify and label common objects.• Sufficient verbal repertoire to produce simple sentences.
Discriminative Stimulus (SD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For plurals: "What do we say when there's more than one?" / "What happens when we have many ___?"• For possession: "Whose object is this?" / "Who does this belong to?"
Target Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accurately naming the plural form of presented nouns.• Correctly expressing possession using appropriate grammatical structures (mine, his, hers, ours, etc.).

Teaching Procedure for Plurals and Possessives

Teaching Procedure

- Introduce 3–4 words at a time, presenting images or objects in both singular and plural form.
- Encourage naming in plural, promoting full-sentence use ("Here are two red hats").
- Alternate questions to ensure generalization ("Do you see one or many?").
- For possession, present materials belonging to different people (e.g., a peer's water bottle, a therapist's backpack) and ask the learner to identify the owner.
- Vary possessive pronouns in multiple contexts (mine, yours, his, hers, ours).
- Incorporate natural opportunities (group games, classroom routines, siblings sharing objects).

Teaching Examples for Plurals and Possessives

1 Plural Examples

- Book → Books
- Window → Windows
- Fork → Forks
- Watch → Watches
- Hat → Hats
- Computer → Computers
- Flower → Flowers
- Sheep → Sheep (highlighting exceptions)

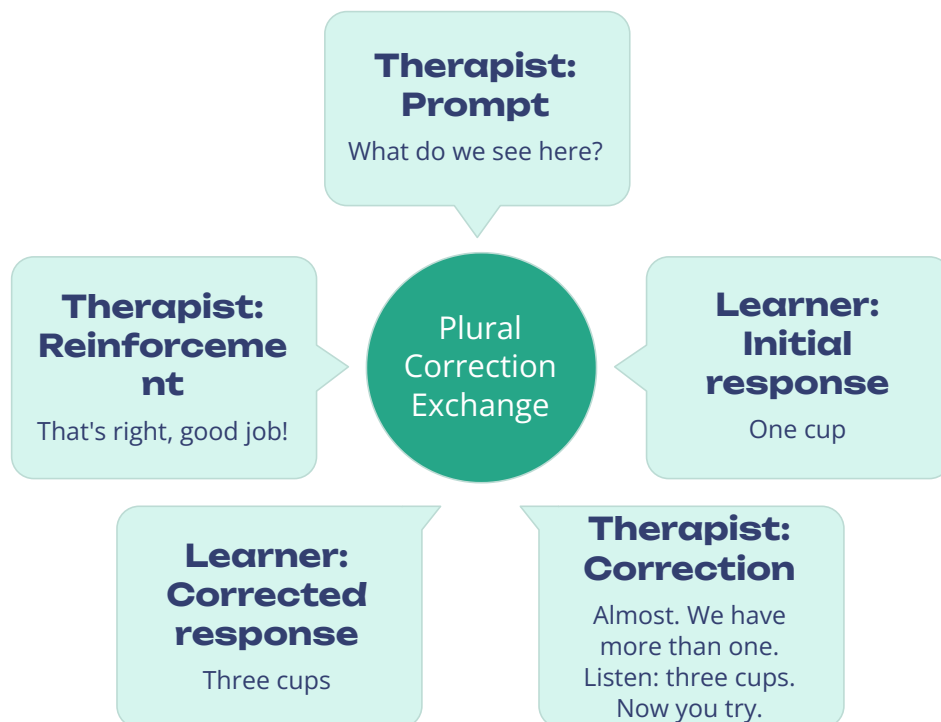
2 Possession Examples

- "The lab coat belongs to the doctor / It's his."
- "The water bottle belongs to the therapist / It's hers."
- "The racket belongs to the group / It's ours."
- "The toy is with the peer / It's his."
- "The bag belongs to Mom / It's hers."

Strategies for Teaching Plurals and Possessives

Alternative Teaching Variations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incidental teaching: During group activities, ask about shared materials ("Whose scissors are these?").• Role-play: Place objects in different backpacks and ask the learner to determine who they belong to.
Prompting Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full verbal model with visual aids (side-by-side images).• Partial verbal model (only beginning of pluralized word).• Gradual fading until independent responses.
Error Correction Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-present the stimulus with correct model.• Temporarily reduce item quantity to decrease difficulty.• Reintroduce with new examples to prevent error repetition.
Maintenance and Generalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage spontaneous use in daily conversations ("There are two cats in the yard").• Apply in natural contexts: school, home, clinic.• Create real ownership situations ("Is this water bottle yours or your friend's?").
Reinforcement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differential reinforcement for spontaneous and accurate responses.• Use varied reinforcers: access to materials, social praise, or choice of activity.

Error Example and Correction for Plurals



- 📌 **General Notes:** If the learner shows frustration during error correction, alternate reinforcers or insert brief breaks to maintain motivation. It is also helpful to vary examples to avoid predictable repetitions.

Criterion 12 – Verb Conjugation in Different Tenses

Mastery Criterion	The learner demonstrates the ability to conjugate verbs in both past and future tenses, applying these forms accurately in diverse communicative contexts.
Program Goal	Promote temporal understanding and the ability to narrate past experiences and anticipate future actions, supporting clearer communication in both social and academic contexts.
Prerequisite Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to produce simple present-tense sentences.• Minimum repertoire of basic verbs.• Sufficient shared attention to follow short verbal instructions.
Discriminative Stimulus (SD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "What did you do yesterday morning with this object?"• "What will happen tomorrow?"• "How would you say this if it already happened?"• "If it's in the future, how would the sentence sound?"
Target Behavior	Produce correct verb conjugations in different tenses, alternating between past and future contexts.

Teaching Procedure for Verb Conjugation

Teaching Procedure

- Present a verb in its base form and contextualize it with a real or pictured scenario.
- Prompt past tense forms ("What did you do yesterday morning?") or future tense forms ("What will happen tomorrow?").
- Alternate tenses within the same activity to strengthen discrimination.
- Vary contexts: short stories, role-play, describing images, or recounting real events of the day.
- Reinforce correct responses with immediate social feedback or access to preferred activity.

Verb Conjugation Examples

Base Form Verbs

Paint, Swim, Run, Open, Build,
Write, Play, Sleep

Past Tense

Painted, Swam, Ran, Opened,
Built, Wrote, Played, Slept

Future Tense

Will paint, Will swim, Will run,
Will open, Will build, Will write,
Will play, Will sleep

Alternative Teaching Variations


- **Incidental teaching:** After lunch, ask "What did you eat?" and then "What will you eat later?"
- **Comic strip activity:** Show a sequence of pictures and ask the learner to describe the scene in past tense and then predict what will happen next.

Error Correction for Verb Conjugation

Prompting Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full verbal model ("Yesterday you ___ the door: opened").• Partial verbal model ("Yesterday you ope..." → learner completes).• Gradual fading until independent responses.
Error Correction Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide immediate feedback and correct model.• Reintroduce the same verb in a different context to ensure variety.• Temporarily reduce the verb list if difficulty persists.

Maintenance and Reinforcement for Verb Conjugation

Maintenance and Generalization Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage spontaneous use in daily conversations ("Yesterday I played at the park", "Tomorrow I will travel").• Expand into social interactions: prompt the learner to ask peers what they already did or what they will do.• Embed into group games that involve turn-taking and narrating actions.
Reinforcement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differential reinforcement for quick and accurate responses (within ~4 seconds).• Multiple reinforcers: praise, small choices, access to preferred materials.

 **General Notes:** It is important to intersperse regular and irregular verbs, avoiding over-reliance on predictable patterns. It is also recommended to vary environments (classroom, playground, home) to strengthen generalization.

Criterion 13 – Structuring Noun Phrases with Modifiers

Mastery Criterion	The learner produces noun phrases of at least four words that include two or more different modifiers (e.g., adjective + noun, adjective + preposition), demonstrating functional use of descriptive elements.
Program Goal	Develop a more advanced linguistic repertoire, fostering precise descriptions, personal narratives, and social interactions with greater richness of detail.
Prerequisite Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior knowledge of basic adjectives (e.g., big, small, pretty).• Familiarity with simple prepositions (on, in, next to).• Initial use of personal and possessive pronouns (my, your, he, she).
Discriminative Stimulus (SD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Say something about this object using two different words to describe it."• "Where is your colorful material?"• "Who is this friendly person in the photo?"• "Tell me a sentence with at least four words that describes the scene well."
Target Behavior	<p>Produce sentences containing at least two appropriate modifiers, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "My blue backpack is on the floor."• "The small cat stayed inside the box."

Teaching Procedure for Noun Phrases with Modifiers



Teaching Procedure

- Select modifiers the learner already masters.
- Present varied visual stimuli (pictures, objects, role-played situations) to evoke descriptions.
- Provide initial full models with two or more modifiers, then fade to independent production.
- Encourage spontaneous construction with open-ended questions ("Describe what you see in this picture").
- Value creativity, accepting varied responses as long as required modifiers are included.

Pronoun + Adjective

- "My heavy book fell off the desk."
- "My black cat is sleeping."
- "Our funny friend just arrived."

Adjective + Preposition

- "The red domino is behind the chair."
- "The big backpack is inside the car."
- "The blue pen is on the table."

Pronoun + Preposition

- "My cube is in the yard."
- "His shoe is inside the box."
- "Her coat stayed in the living room."

Strategies for Teaching Noun Phrases with Modifiers

Alternative Teaching Variations

- **Play-based activity:** Use cards with pronouns, adjectives, and objects; the learner combines three cards to create a new sentence.
- **Collaborative story:** Each participant adds a sentence with two modifiers to continue the narrative.
- **Practical routine:** During snack time, ask the learner to describe items ("My cold juice is on the table").

Prompting Strategies

- Full model: therapist provides the complete sentence.
- Partial model: therapist provides only one modifier and asks learner to complete.
- Gradual fading until independent responses.

Error Correction Procedures

- If the phrase is incomplete, reinforce what was correct and prompt for the missing modifier.
- Reintroduce with simpler prompts and gradually increase complexity.

Maintenance and Generalization

- Encourage use during play and games ("My tall tower fell down").
- Stimulate in natural contexts: school, playground, home.
- Vary stimuli to avoid stereotyped responses.

Reinforcement Plan

- Differential reinforcement for complete and creative sentences.
- Alternate between social reinforcers (praise, attention) and tangible reinforcers (choice of preferred activity or object).



General Notes: As the learner progresses, introduce less common modifiers (e.g., "transparent," "inside the green backpack," "your old toy") to enrich vocabulary and prevent reliance on predictable structures.