EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE LIBRARY

Using Prompts to Support Student Independence

Explore six types of prompting, choose support intentionally, and use the lesson examples to plan meaningful participation.

Verbal Prompts

Use spoken words, a question, or part of a phrase to cue a response.

Example: “Yesterday I earned…” helps the student begin a response.

Gestural Prompts

Use a point, motion, or other gesture to provide a cue.

Example: Point toward the student’s My Income Goals sheet after asking about yesterday’s dollars.

Visual Prompts

Use a picture, symbol, written cue, or other visual to support a response.

Example: Show the Image Exchange Card of a computer network.

Modeling Prompts

Demonstrate the target action or response for the student to imitate.

Example: Give a thumbs up when the lesson video says “internet.”

Positional Prompts

Arrange materials so their position cues a particular response.

Example: Place the target picture closer than the other choices.

Physical Prompts

Use direct physical assistance to help a learner perform an action.

Example: Guide a student’s hand toward an Image Exchange Card during instruction.

Prompt types are not a fixed hierarchy. Choose and sequence supports for the individual learner, task, and instructional plan.

USE SUPPORT WITH PURPOSE

Plan for independence.

Give students time to respond, make assistance intentional, and plan how prompts will change as skills develop.

Least-to-most prompting



Begin with an opportunity to respond, then add the planned assistance if needed. Document the support that led to the response.

Within a response opportunity: pause before adding help.

Most-to-least prompting



Begin with the planned level of help, then systematically reduce assistance as the learner demonstrates the skill.

Across practice opportunities: fade help over time.

The bars show the amount of assistance, not a fixed order of prompt types.

Allow response time

Present the direction or question, then pause. Allow time that reflects the learner's processing and communication needs.

Combine prompts intentionally

For example, point to the address bar while saying, "Click on the address bar." Note combined support when collecting assessment data.

Keep access supports available

A communication device or adapted material may remain available. Distinguish these supports from added cues that direct a response.

What did the student do independently?

Record the task, student response, and added cues. These illustrative entries show different opportunities, not actual student records.

STUDENT RESPONSE	ADDED SUPPORT
Selected the matching image	Independent - no added cue
Selected the matching image	Gestural - pointed to Word Wall
Repeated the definition	Model + verbal - definition supplied

PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Warm Up

"For a Participation Dollar, how many dollars did you earn yesterday?"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "Yesterday I earned…" or "Look at your My Income Goals sheet from yesterday."

Gestural Prompt

The teacher points or motions toward the student's My Income Goals sheet showing their earnings from the previous day.

Visual Prompt

The teacher shows the student Image Exchange Cards of numbers that can be used to respond to the question.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher models the process of finding the correct answer: "Let's see, I'm looking at your My Income Goals sheet, which shows that you earned $14 yesterday. So, how many dollars did you earn yesterday?"

Positional Prompt

The teacher gives the student an array of number Image Exchange Cards, placing the correct response closer to the student and the incorrect responses farther away.

Physical Prompt

The teacher guides the student's hand toward the correct Image Exchange Card to respond to the question.

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Classroom footage may feature a different activity from the written scenario.

PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Lesson Video

"When you hear the word "internet," give me a thumbs up and I'll add Participation Dollars."

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "I heard the video say 'internet,' give a thumbs up!"

Gestural Prompt

The teacher makes a motion to cue students that the key word was said, such as cupping their hand around their ear, signaling that the word was said and students should respond.

Visual Prompt

The teacher shows students a visual of a thumbs up as a reminder of the expectation.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher acts out the target behavior by giving a thumbs up each time the video says the word "internet."

Positional Prompt

The teacher uses the visual of the thumbs up and moves it closer or shows it to a student when the video says the word "internet."

Physical Prompt

The teacher taps a student's hand as a cue to give a thumbs up, or uses their hands to shape the student's hand into a thumbs up.

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PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Informal Assessment

"For a Participation Dollar, what did the video say the internet is?"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "The video said the internet is a computer network that..."

Gestural Prompt

The teacher points toward the definition and picture of the internet posted on the classroom Word Wall.

Visual Prompt

The teacher shows students the Image Exchange Card that shows the computer network.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher demonstrates saying the full definition, asking students to repeat it: "The internet is a computer network that connects people across the world."

Positional Prompt

The teacher displays the Image Exchange Cards that correspond with the Informal Assessment in an array on a student's desk, placing the correct answer card closer to the student and the incorrect answers farther away.

Physical Prompt

The teacher uses hand-over-hand assistance to guide a student to tap the correct answer card.

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PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Guided Activity

"For a Participation Dollar, who would like to lead our team in completing this activity? Then: How can you get feedback from the team?"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "To get feedback from the team, ask your classmates if they agree or disagree with your selection."

Gestural Prompt

The teacher points toward the whole class as a reminder to the student who is leading that they should be looking toward their peers, not their teacher.

Visual Prompt

The teacher creates a tally chart for students to keep track of how many students voted for each answer choice.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher demonstrates how to raise their hand when they agree with an answer by raising their hand as well.

Positional Prompt

The teacher provides Yes and No cards to a student to indicate whether they agree with the leading student's answer choice. The teacher positions the correct card closer to the student.

Physical Prompt

The teacher taps a student's hand to cue them to raise their hand or give a thumbs up in agreement with the leading student.

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PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Exit Ticket · Part 1

"I'm setting a timer for 10 minutes. If you complete this job assignment in 10 minutes, you will earn 2 Participation Dollars!"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "We have 3 minutes left. Make sure you're completing your work so you can earn Participation Dollars!"

Gestural Prompt

The teacher points or motions toward a visual timer as a cue to students to check how much time they have left.

Visual Prompt

The teacher displays a visual timer that shows how much time is left before the deadline.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher models the process of finding an appropriate response to the Exit Ticket question: "I can find the definition of the internet by looking at the Word Wall. I see that it says the internet is a computer network that connects people across the world. That's what you can write on your Exit Ticket."

Positional Prompt

The teacher gives the student an array of visuals from earlier in the lesson to refer to while completing their Exit Ticket. The teacher can put a picture of the internet closer to the student and distractor cards farther away.

Physical Prompt

The teacher uses hand-over-hand assistance to help the student use a writing utensil to complete their Exit Ticket.

WATCH A CLASSROOM EXAMPLE >

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PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Exit Ticket · Part 2

"For a Participation Dollar, who would like to come up and present their job assignment?"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher reminds the student who is presenting, "Remember to look at your classmates and use a loud presenter voice."

Visual Prompt

The teacher shows the student presenting-expectations visuals, such as eye contact and voice volume.

Positional Prompt

The teacher limits the student's visual field while presenting by showing just part of their Exit Ticket at once, such as folding the vocabulary block so only the examples are shown.

Gestural Prompt

The teacher makes a motion to remind the student to speak loudly, such as tapping their ear to indicate that it is difficult to hear the presenter.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher demonstrates reading a sentence to the class and cues the student to repeat the sentence aloud.

Physical Prompt

The teacher moves a student's hand to touch each word as the teacher reads it aloud.

WATCH A CLASSROOM EXAMPLE >

Classroom footage may feature a different activity from the written scenario.

PROMPTING IN THE DIGITABILITY LESSON PLAN

Wrap Up

"For a Participation Dollar, what will you do with your earnings?"

Verbal Prompt

The teacher says, "With my earnings I will…" or "Will you make a purchase, pay a bill, or save your money?"

Visual Prompt

The teacher shows students Image Exchange Cards of the options for what to do with their earnings.

Positional Prompt

The teacher gives the student an array of number Image Exchange Cards, placing one option closer to the student and the others farther away.

Gestural Prompt

The teacher displays an array of Image Exchange Cards and motions toward one card to cue the student to pick that one.

Modeling Prompt

The teacher demonstrates how to pick up an Image Exchange Card and hand it to a communication partner.

Physical Prompt

The teacher guides the student's hand toward the Image Exchange Cards to select one to respond to the question.

WATCH A CLASSROOM EXAMPLE >

Classroom footage may feature a different activity from the written scenario.

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