



Writing Behavioral Objectives

Step 1: Choose Target Behavior

Begin with your IFSP goals. Look at each goal and ask yourself, what is the target behavior? If the child meets this goal what behavior would you see? The behavior that you choose should be something that can be observed and measured.

Step 2: What happens before

What happens right before the behavior? What will happen in the environment to let the child know that this behavior should happen? The child will do this behavior in response to what?

Step 3: Action

Describe the behavior you expect to see. This should be the same as Step 1.

Action Words:

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Say
- ✓ Reach
- ✓ Repeat
- ✓ Imitate

Non-Action Words:

- ✗ Understand
- ✗ Know
- ✗ Learn

Step 4: How often?

How often would you want to see this action? How many times is the child expected to carry out this action in an hour or a day? When you make decisions about this, we should remember to think about choosing a frequency or duration that is developmentally appropriate.

Examples:

- 5+ times per hour
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- For 5+ minutes
- 8+ times a day

Step 5: With whom and where?

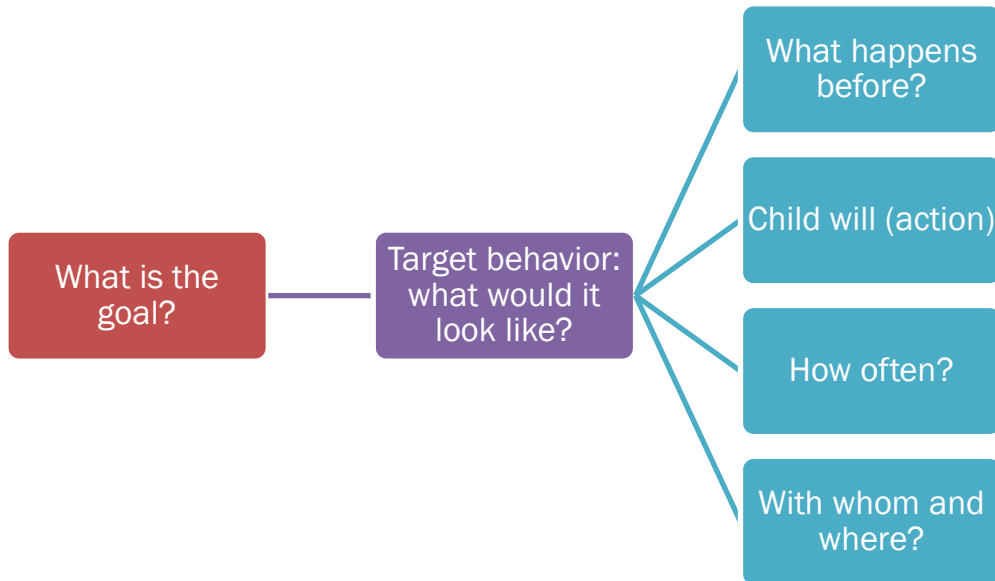
It's important to say when we expect to see the skill. We want to see the skill with different people and in different routines and settings. That's how we will know if it is truly mastered.

Examples:

- During play with toys
- At mealtime
- During baths
- With teacher and mom
- With dad and grandma



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Practice writing an objective in this table:

Objective __	
<i>Final goal</i>	
<i>What happens before</i>	
<i>What child will do</i>	
<i>How often</i>	
<i>With whom & where</i>	

Or use this for practice:

Objective: When (*what happens before*) _____ the child will (*action*) _____, (*how often*) _____ with (whom) _____ in the following places/people _____ (where).



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Step 6: Identify current level

Now it's time to think about what the child does currently. Does the child already do the skill, but only with help? Do they only do it occasionally, or only in one context? Or can they do an earlier, but related skill?

Step 7: Choose 2 steps before the final goal

What are the baby steps that you think the child will be able to do on the way to the final goal? Maybe the child will do the behavior for a shorter amount of time or less often than the final goal? Or maybe at first, the child will only do the behavior with help or prompting? Maybe, at first, the child will only do the behavior half of the time, but for the final goal, you expect them to do something most of the time?

Ways to create BEFORE steps:

- Shorter duration
- Less often
- More help
- During fewer routines
- More often
- Are there earlier but related skills?

Step 8: Choose 2 steps after the final goal

What are the baby steps that you think the child will be able to do after the final goal? Maybe the child will do the behavior more frequently or for longer duration? Maybe they will combine the behavior with others to produce a more advanced skill?

Ways to create AFTER steps:

- Longer/shorter duration
- More/less often
- During less/more routines
- Are there later but related skills?



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Practice writing teaching steps for your practice objective using this table:

Steps		
<i>Current level</i>	1	
<i>2 steps before</i>	2	
<i>1 step before</i>	3	
<i>Final objective</i>	4	
<i>1 step beyond</i>	5	
<i>2 steps beyond</i>	6	

Example

IFSP Goal: Child will use language to communicate

Behavior: Says 10 words independently

Baseline behavior (or Current Level): Child will spontaneously produce sounds when an adult caregiver interacts with him most of the time during meals

2 steps before: Child will imitate one-word approximations when modeled by a caregiver 5+ times per day

1 step before: Child will say 5+ words independently when interacting with caregivers

Final Behavior: Child will spontaneously say at least 10 words when interacting with both caregivers during meals, bathtime, and when playing with toys

1 step beyond: Child will spontaneously say at least 15 words per day when interacting with caregivers

2 steps beyond: Child will spontaneously say at least 20 words per day when interacting with caregivers during meals, bathtime, and when playing with toys