

Games: Helping Us Practice (Handout)

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Why games?

What stuck with you from Session 1, and what ideas might you add?

Games for Repetition & Building Skills

First, it's important to find a useful segment to repeat. This decision is best led by the teacher—whether or not the parent is a musician—but parents can also help. Generally speaking, if your child can play a segment correctly three out of five times, that makes that segment a good candidate for repetition. If not, reduce the size of the segment or slow it down. Our goal is to find the optimal middle ground between too difficult and too easy.

Before you play each game, clarifying rules can minimize debates. Even after a clear explanation of the rules, some kids will question them—not in an effort to undermine you, but to understand them.

For each accurate repetition...

(Usually, having the adult “make the fold or checkmark or place the sticker” etc. during the repetitions may help minimize distractions. At other times, “folding and checking” may serve as a brain break for the child.)

1. Make a fold in an origami animal. Benefits: the child will have something to play with when they are done.
2. Make a checkmark or put a sticker on a practice chart.
3. Draw an animal: with each repetition, add a detail.
4. Using a bead counter, move beads from one side to another.
5. Mark your turn on Tic-Tac-Toe.
6. Build something with legos such as a house or tower.
7. Fill in a coloring page. Make sure the page is small enough so you don't spend too much time coloring.

8. Make a cut in a folded paper to create a snowflake. This can also be done during the entire practice session or lesson, so that the paper is unfolded at the end to reveal a snowflake.
9. Rescue a collection of things like jewels or animals from a wizard. Use a hat to put the items inside and the child can “rescue” each item as they play a correct repetition.
10. Use an abacus to track the number of repetitions.
11. Clip something on the teacher or parent such as clothespins or binder clips.
Variation: have the adult wear sunglasses, feathered boa, scarf, or hat.
12. Read a page from a book. Someone who is five needs to repeat something five times to earn one page.
13. A toy car drives five “stops” on a table or the piano and then turns around and drives back. The car will back up every time the goal is not reached.
14. The child guesses a letter in the game of Hangman.
15. A piece of pasta goes in a jar. When the jar is filled up, the family has a family dinner to celebrate.
16. Earn a piece of M&M’s (or other candy). The child gets to eat them at the end of the lesson/practice session. Variation: the teacher/parent eats one of the M&M’s if the repetition is not up to par and the child only gets what’s left.
17. Using the sensory fidget popping toy, the child gets to pop one.
18. A small animal can “jump” over a rock obstacle course.
19. Using the Shoots & Ladders game, each dice roll is a chunk of items repeated before the game piece is moved.
20. Add a monkey from the Barrel of Monkeys game with the goal of reaching the floor or an object in the room.
21. Add a link to a paper chain.
22. Add a paperclip to make a long chain.

Games for Organizing Practice

Download: [Game Board](#), [Coloring Page](#), [Practice Cards](#)

1. Assign each task a number between 1 & 6 and roll a die to pick the order as you practice.
2. Write each task on a slip of paper and draw them out one by one. Parent and child can do this together before practice begins.
3. Use the decide now app to add text to a spinning wheel and spin to decide what to practice next.
4. Musical obstacle course: Write tasks on slips of paper or 3x5 cards and spread them out around the practice room. Your child walks from one card to another and completes

the next task. Alternatively, if your child is not mobile (pianist for example) you can move from card to card.

5. I pick, you pick. Roll a die. Even numbers and the student picks the next task, odd numbers and the parent or caregiver picks.

6. Write each task on a slip of paper and put inside plastic eggs to find around the room and open up one by one.

7. Download a blank gameboard template online and fill in the boxes with your practice tasks. Students can use a game spinner or dice to move a game piece around the board and complete the task they land on.