



Using Differential Reinforcement to Teach Short Response Latency and Task Completion

What is the evidence base?

- This is a promising practice for **students with disabilities** based on one methodologically sound single-case study across one participant.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The best place to find out how to implement using differential reinforcement to teach response latency and task completion to teach response latency and task completion is through the following research to practice lesson plan starters:

- [Using Differential Reinforcement to Teach Short Response Latency and Task Completion \(Donohue, Casey, Bicard, & Bicard, 2012\)](#)

With who was it implemented?

- Students with
 - Co-morbid Profound Autism and limited verbal skills (1 study, n = 1)
- Age = 17 years old
- Males (n=1)
- Ethnicity - not reported

What is the practice?

Response latency has been defined as the elapsed time from the onset of a stimulus (e.g., task direction, cue) to the initiation of a response (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). Cooper et al. also defined differential reinforcement as reinforcing only the targeted appropriate behavior (e.g., short response times when presented with a direction or cue), applying extinction to all other responses.

In the study used to establish the evidence base for using differential reinforcement to teach short response latency and task completion included:

- Using differential reinforcement to teach shortend response latency (e.g., decreasing response times from 7 seconds to less than 3 seconds after prompts were issued) and task completion to a 17 year old male with profound autism and limited communication skills. (Donohue, Casey, Bicard, & Bicard, 2012).

Where has it been implemented?

- Autism day treatment center (1 study)

How does this practice relate to the Common Career Technical Core?

- Career Ready Practices addressed: www.careertech.org/CCTC
 - Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee
 - Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence

References used to establish this evidence base:

Donohue, M. M., Casey, L. B., Bicard, D. F., & Bicard, S. E. (2012). Effects of differential reinforcement of short latencies on response latency, task completion, and accuracy of an adolescent with autism. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 47, 97-108. Retrieved from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23880565>

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