

## Following Directions Quick Guide

Below, you will find information and activities for the Following Directions Construct Progression. See the [NC Construct Progressions and Situations Book](#) for additional information and full references.

### Why focus on following directions?

*Observing the ways students respond to oral directions and providing scaffolding with visual cues helps students recognize when they do not understand and gain access to the information they need to learn. **For example, is the child not yet following directions due to a misunderstanding of the math concept or a need for a visual cue to follow the oral three-step directions?** Observing for and identifying these areas of development helps teachers to best meet students' needs.*

**Following Directions:** Children understand how to respond to directions, requests, and commands in a variety of settings (one-on-one with an adult, one-on-one with a peer, small group setting, large group setting).

A. Responds with silence.	B. Responds non-verbally to simple requests in a variety of ways (nod- ding, pointing, gesturing, facial expressions, eye pointing, sign language).		C. Indicates when something is not understood by making gestures or asking “what?”	D. When given visual cues, accurately follows an oral one-step direction that includes positional words: 1) on, off, in, out, under 2) in front of, behind, on top of, bottom, before, after 3) next to, between, above, below	E. Without visual cues, accurately follows oral one-step directions that include positional words: 1) on, off, in, out, under 2) in front of, behind, on top of, bottom, before, after 3) next to, between, above, below
F. Asks simple questions to clarify directions, requests, and commands.	G. With visual cues (if needed), follows two-step directions.	H. Without visual cues, accurately follows two-step directions.	I. With visual cues (if needed), accurately follows three- to four-step directions at one time, and carries out the tasks over time.	J. Without visual cues, accurately follows three- to four-step directions at one time and carries out the task over time.	K. With visual cues (if needed), accurately follows multi-step directions (more than four).

### **Scaffolding Receptive Language Development During *Following Directions* Using Visual Cues**

- Give children clear instructions using gestures (pointing, motioning, etc.) that help them move from one-step directions to more complex sequences.
- Use props, pictures, demonstrations, and modeling to help children understand instructions, especially children who are just beginning to learn English and children with disabilities who have limited language skills.
- Engage children in a variety of instructional settings (small groups and one-on-one) to monitor their understanding and apply a scaffold (visual cue) in-the-moment to support learning.

### **Observing *Following Directions* During Daily Routines**

During part of a daily routine, the teacher asks children to follow a one-step direction in order to prepare for book reading with a partner. The teacher has previously assigned partners and asks children to meet with their partners to begin the book sharing activity. The teacher says, "Please sit next to your book reading partner." As the children transition to meeting with their partners, the teacher observes the children, watching to see which children remember the direction, which children quickly complete the direction without redirection, and which children need support in completing the direction.

#### **Suggested probes:**

Repeat the direction by saying, "Sit next to your book reading partner."

Repeat the direction, point to a visual cue (picture), and say, "Sit next to your book reading partner."

### **Observing *Following Directions* During Object Counting: "Grab A Handful"**

*"Grab a Handful" can be found on page 13 of the NC Constructs Progressions and Situations Book.*

During part of the preparation for the learning opportunity for object counting, children are asked to grab a handful of counting objects out of one of the prepared containers, count to determine how many they have in their hand, and say out loud the number of objects counted. Students repeat this task several times, using a variety of materials. This occurs in a whole group, small group, or a center or station.

Using prepared visual displays with pictures that depict the step-by-step directions, the teacher points to the display (as needed) while stating the three-step directions:

1. Grab a handful of objects to count
2. Count how many you have
3. Say out loud the number you have counted

As the children engage in this learning opportunity, the teacher observes the children, watching to see which children revisit the visual display to help remember the directions, which children quickly complete the three directions without redirection, and which children complete some or part of the directions and need support in completing the full directions.

#### **Suggested Probes:**

If a child has not yet completed the directions, repeat the three-step directions while pointing to the visual display. Point to each visual and say,

- "Grab a handful of objects to count. Count how many you have and say out loud the number you have."
- If a child has not yet completed the directions, chunk the directions into smaller steps and say, "Grab a handful of objects to count." Then, after the child has completed this step say, "count how many you have and say it out loud."
- If a child has not yet completed the directions, point to each visual and separate the directions to create two-step directions and say, "Grab a handful of objects to count and count how many you have" or "Count how many you have and say it out loud."