

Increasing Academic Learning and Communication through Rapid Prompting Method (RPM)

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RPM is a method to empower the
learner a **means to express** his -
Learning
Reasoning
Understanding
Communication
By identifying the **open learning
channel** at that instant of learning.

Who is RPM for?

Although it began with non-verbal autistic individuals,

It is for anybody - who has trouble learning using a 'dogmatic' method of education.

- **Autism (verbal and non-verbal)**
- **Down syndrome**
- **ADHD**
- **Angelman Syndrome**
- **Cerebral palsy**

We all begin RPM from different levels:

Students begin with varied levels of -

Previous exposure to learning

Learning channels

Tolerance

Performance /motor ability

Emotions

Parents/ Teachers begin with varied levels of -

Emotions

Tolerance to teach

Beliefs about autism

Previous exposure to knowledge and language:

Autism is not hearing impairment.

It must be an 'understood' fact that students have access to language.

Students hear conversation

Radio/TV announcements

Siblings

Phone

Access to language must not be confused with academic knowledge.

One needs to be 'taught' science, history - otherwise one would not know them.

Learning channels of the students :

Primary learning channels

- Visual
- Auditory

Secondary learning channels

- Tactile
- Kinesthetic

Tolerance of the student:

1. Visual tolerance:

- Will the student look at what the teacher is writing?
- How long will the student hold his/her visual attention towards the letter-board?
- Will the student let the teacher show him/her a word or a diagram from the topic?
- Will the student be preoccupied with a selective visual preference?

Visual tolerance depends on the open visual channel -

Generalized visual channel (good visual tolerance)

Selectively visual channel

Global visual channel

2. Auditory tolerance -

- Will the student listen to the teacher's voice?
- Will the teacher pause more often?
- Will the student be overwhelmed when the teacher is giving new information?
- Information clutter / how much of new information?
- Will the student (verbal/selectively verbal) interrupt the teacher with rote speech?

Auditory tolerance depends upon the auditory learning channel of the student -

Generalized auditory channel (more auditory tolerance)

Selective auditory channel

Global auditory channel

3. Tactile tolerance:

- Will the student hold the pencil to select / point?
- Will the student sit at a chair in front of a table?
- Will the student let the teacher stand to his/her left side and teach?
- Will the student be preoccupied with a selective tactile preference?

Tactile tolerance depends on the open tactile channel -

Generalized tactile channel (good tactile tolerance)
Selectively tactile channel
Global tactile channel

4. Performance tolerance:

- Will the student choose the answer or spell?
- Will the student spell at word level or sentence level?
- Will the student get exhausted after a few minutes or tolerate the session till the end?
- Will the student be preoccupied with selective kinesthetic movements that will interrupt his purposeful activity?

Performance tolerance depends on the open kinesthetic channel -

Generalized kinesthetic channel (good performance tolerance)
Selectively kinesthetic channel
Global kinesthetic channel

5. Time tolerance:

How long will the student engage in learning / performing equation

6. Information tolerance:

How much information will not create a fatigue

Performance / Motor ability of the student

Purposeful movement -

spelling, choosing, writing, reasoning movement

Stimulatory movement -

manifests as a pattern like movement

Obsessive movement -

manifests as a cycle with an emotion attached to it

Instinctual movement -

sudden, impulsive, happens before reasoning triggers

Emotions of the student

Different internal environments:

Anxiety

Stress

Fear

Hostility

Avoidance

Anger

Tiredness

We would **not analyze the reasons** but **recognize** what the internal environment is and work through them.

Working through is the way out.

Parents/ Teachers begin with varied levels of

Emotions -

feelings about autism, developing a new relationship with the student.

Tolerance to teach -

will I be able to maintain myself in the role of a teacher?

Beliefs -

Preconceived ideas about autism.

Verbal student -

- 1) Speech as verbal stim.
- 2) speech as an obsession
- 3) speech as echolalia
- 4) speech limited to rote information
- 5) speech limited to social talking

Beginning with a new student -

1. Start with 5 simple sentences.
2. Identify a question or two from each sentence.
3. Identify the spelling word in each sentence.
4. Move on to the next sentence.
5. Choose a simple topic (do not overwhelm the student in the first session with a complex topic) .

Student performance : choosing/spelling

Choosing is a reasoning skill

State-ask paradigm - teacher stating and asking offering choices.

Student selecting the correct answer from a field of two.

If the teacher sees the student has good motor ability she may introduce spelling skills parallel to choice making.

Choice of the stencil / letter-board will depend on the student's -

- *Motor skills (accuracy of finding letters)*
- *Tolerance (willingness and ambition)*

What if the student is not comfortable to choose?

- Emotionally insecure to choose? Escape?

In that case the teacher would just try the mechanics of spelling. Offering choices can be introduced later.

What not to do during the first session:

1. Choose a lesson with big concepts
2. Forcing choices when the student is resenting
3. Taking away stim objects or asking the student to sit still/ demand visual attention/ stopping the STIMS

As the student gets familiarized with the situation move on to an age appropriate lesson.

Every student has his / her own encoding clock

RPM session goals:

1. Cognitive objectives
2. Skill objectives
3. Tolerance objectives
4. Communication objectives

1. Cognitive objectives:

Teacher uses a **lesson plan** and plans different **sensory activities** to explain the concepts

Sensory activities:

- Writing the key words pairing up with explanation (visual, kinesthetic, auditory)
- showing / drawing diagrams with explanation (visual, auditory)
- making paper models while teaching (kinesthetic, auditory)
- voice modulation (auditory competing with the student's auditory STIMS)

Skill objectives:

Assessing the student's **purposeful motor skills** and then deciding how the **STUDENT RESPONSE** will be:

- a) Will the student **use the full A through Z** stencil / letter-board to spell?
- b) Will the student be more successful spelling on the **3 large lettered stencils** with letters divided into: A through I, J through R and S through Z?
- c) Will the student choose the answer **from two /three written choices** while developing the accuracy on the letter-board?

3. Tolerance objectives:

Visual tolerance - How long will a student tolerate a visual letter-board/ when will he need a visual break?

Tactile tolerance - how long will the student hold the pencil to spell and when will he need a tactile break? Will he tolerate sitting on a chair with a table in front or will he perform better sitting on a couch or a bean bag?

Time tolerance - How long will the student hold his attention? Will he need breaks more often?

Performance tolerance: will the student be able to spell a complete one word/ the whole sentence/ a paragraph?

Information tolerance : Learning non personal information is tiring. So the teacher may try not to fatigue the student. A fatigue can result in low performance tolerance.

4. Communication objectives:

Emerging communication skills - word level

Advanced communication skills - student can discuss a topic

Topics of communication emerges from the lesson taught

(More about it in my book DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION USING RPM)

Adaptations made by teacher:

Visual adaptation

Where to -

- position of the choices
- position of the letter board
- visual stamina of the student

Auditory adaptations:

- Voice of the teacher
- Speed of presentation
- Position of the teacher
- Auditory stamina
- Auditory distractions

Tactile adaptations:

- posture of the student
- position of the student
- tactile sensitivity

Kinesthetic adaptation:

Student kinesthetic goals :

-Spelling

- writing

- drawing

Performance tolerance