# ANSWERING 'WH' QUESTIONS ?

## A 10-STEP ABA PROGRAM

Includes: procedure, steps, graph and visual materials

HOW TO ABA
THE BX RESOURCE

# ABOUT HOW TO ABA

How to ABA provides resources and support to ABA professionals and parents. Applied Behaviour Analysis is an evidence-based approach to increasing functional skills and decreasing harmful behaviours. Shira and Shayna bring a unique style to their programs that is effective and fun. With Shira's background in education and Shayna's programming approach, students have been able to make tremendous gains in their language and functional skills.

We are excited to be bringing our programming to you! Our mission is to support the ABA community by providing programs, community, and support. We know how limited your time is, so you should be doing what you love! Get back to spending time making a difference in people's lives!

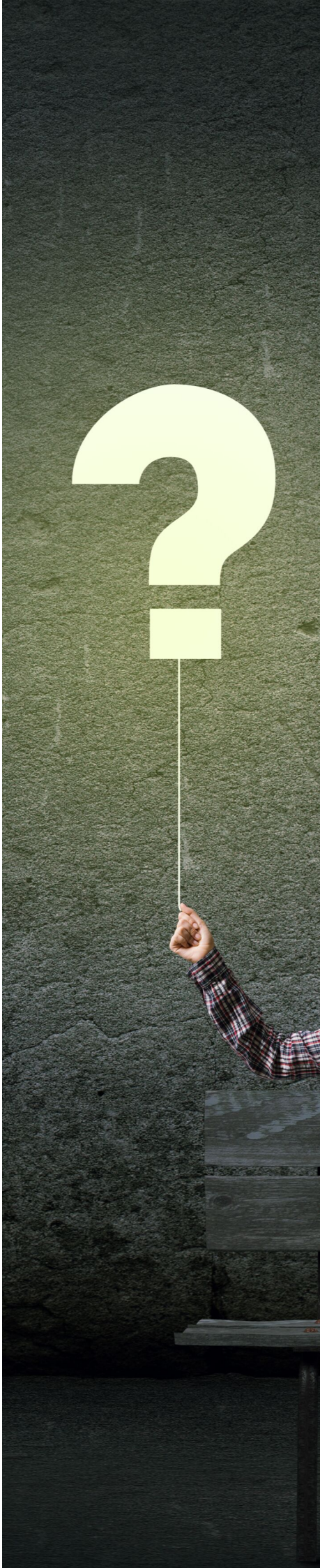
If you found this resource valuable, please let us know! We love to hear your feedback: info@howtoaba.com.

# INTRODUCTION

In our many years of doing ABA instruction and supervision, one of the most common areas of difficulty that we encounter for our students has been “answering wh questions”. Language programs at the beginning or even intermediate level are easier to teach: If I hold up a picture of a cat and ask “What is it?”, the student should say “cat”. Even without the picture, if I ask “What does a cat say”, the student can learn to say “meow” by using prompting and prompt fading strategies. When intraverbal programs reach the level of “answering wh questions”, it gets tricky. How do we teach that the answer to “When do you go to sleep?” is different than “Where do you go to sleep?”. Then, how do we build this into reading and auditory comprehension so that our students are able to read or hear a sentence and be able to answer questions about it (eg: “Who went to the store” vs. “Where did mom go?”)

We developed this program as a tool for teaching children how to answer ‘wh’ questions by taking the student through the operants of language – from matching to expressive labeling, including prompting and prompt fading. One of the strategies we used to make this successful is errorless teaching. Instead of asking a ‘wh’ question, have the student get it wrong, then correct the student, we’ve built an errorless strategy into the teaching procedure.

We’ve seen a lot of success using this method with our students who had difficulty with ‘wh’ questions and are now able to answer novel ‘wh’ questions.



# PRE-REQUISITE SKILLS

The following skills are recommended before beginning to teach a student to answer 'wh' questions:

- Receptive and expressive identification of people and places
  Example: When asked “point to Mom”, the student points to a picture of (or real) Mom
  Example: When shown a picture of the (or brought to the) bathroom and asked “What room is it?”, the student is able to label the room.
- Matching/sorting skills
- Feature, function, class skills

# GOAL

The student will discriminate between “who” “what” and “where” questions and answer the question asked with an appropriate answer with 80-100% accuracy.

# INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

- Lay out text cues/boardmaker symbols of “who”, “what doing”, “where” (in that order) from left to right on the table.
- For “matching teaching step 1”, underneath the each symbol, put one text cue/picture of “person” (who), “action” (what doing), “place” (where).
- For all teaching steps, give the student text cues/pictures/PCS of people, actions, and places.
- For each picture handed to the student, state, “A ___ is a...?”. The student should be expected to fill in the blank with either, “Who”, “What”, or “Where” then place the cue directly underneath either the who, what, or where cue.
- When handing pictures to the student, vary the order of people, actions, and places (e.g., sometimes give the student 2 people/who in a row, then 1 place/where, then 1 people/who, then 3 action/what, etc.).
- After there are at least 1-2 pictures down on each “wh” pile, make up a short sentence using the words on the top of each pile, while pointing to each word as you read it. (e.g., Mom is jumping at school).
- Then ask a “wh” question about the sentence (for steps 3-4, you will have to point to the wh-pcs as you are saying the question, but then fade this out).

# TEACHING PRODCEDURE

Lay out text cues/board maker symbols of “who”, “what doing”, “where” (in that order) from left to right on the table.

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Underneath the each symbol, put one text cue/picture of “person” (who), “action” (what doing), “place” (where).

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Then hold up a picture of a person, action, or place and say, “A ___ is a ...?”

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(Y) = if the student matches to the correct wh-pile
(N) = if the student errors or needs prompting  (Do a transfer trial)

# TEACHING STEPS

(TEACH AHEAD – I.E., YOU CAN TEACH STEPS 1-3, BUT ONLY TAKE DATA ON 1ST STEP UNTIL MASTERY)

1. Match board maker symbols to WHO, WHAT DOING, and WHERE

- Hold up a picture and ask, "A boy is a ..?" – The student should take the picture and match it to the correct pile (e.g., "Who). Also do this for what doing and where.
- Follow up by asking, "Who is it?" "Where are they" etc. while pointing to the symbol (student should answer "boy"). (NO DATA ON THE VERBAL FOLLOW UP)
- **Don't move on until he/she gets 80-100% on the first try with NOVEL text cues

2. Receptively identify the piles of "who", "what doing", "where" (sd: "Find all the who's" "Find what doing" "Find where").

3. After the student has matched at least 1-2 pictures from each category, make up a short sentence using the words on the top of each pile, while pointing to each word as you read it. (e.g., Karen is jumping at school). Then ask "wh" questions about the sentence.

**PROMPTS:**

a. Point to the wh-cue above the correct answer. Leave your finger there until the student answers the question (+) if the student answers the question correctly

b. Encourage the student to point simultaneously with you to the correct wh-cue (e.g., "Point with me"). Remove your finger before the student answers (it is okay for the student to leave his finger there).
(+) if the student answers the question correctly (SOME STUDENTS CAN SKIP THIS STEP)

c. IT holds up the correct wh-cue (There is also a wh-cue above each pile). Student should to point to the correct wh-cue (if necessary) and answer the question.
(+) if the student answers the questioncorrectly

d. No more wh-cues above the pictures – instead, as you are asking the student a question, hand him/her the correct wh-cue and have the student match to the correct pile and answer the question.
(+) if the student answers the question correctly

e. Ask the wh-question and give the student a blank card to place on top of the correct pile to answer the question.

f. Have the student independently answer the question about sentence out in front of him.

# TEACHING STEPS (CONT'D)

4. Write a sentence down on a piece of paper – Ask the student wh-questions related to the written sentence.

5. Say a sentence orally (without text cues) – Then ask the student wh-questions related to the sentence that was just said.

6. Use pictures of scenes (i.e., who is in the picture, where are they, what are they doing, etc.)

7. Generalize to various topics (e.g., what do you do at the store, where do you go shopping, who do you see at the store, etc.)

# MASTERY CRITERIA

80% for two consecutive sessions

# ERROR CORRECTION

Error correction is provided after a student errors or does not respond.

Student errors/does not respond:

1. Provide error correction from most to least:

*Hierarchy for language programs (from most to least):*

- Full text cue
- Partial text cue
- Full verbal cue
- Partial verbal cue (i.e., first word of a sentence)
- Phonemic cue (i.e., first sound of the word)

*For other programs:*

- Hand over hand (avoid verbal cues)
- Partial physical cue
- Model
- Full text cue
- Partial text cue
- Gesture cue (i.e., point to item student should be attending to)

2. Mark this trial as incorrect

*Transfer Trial:*

3. Re-present SD
4. Prompt student through trial to ensure correct response (see hierarchy above)
5. IT differentially reinforces correct behaviour (i.e., social praise, but no token)
6. DO NOT TAKE DATA ON THIS TRIAL

*Expanded trial*

7. Present 2-3 trials of high probability demands.

*New trial*

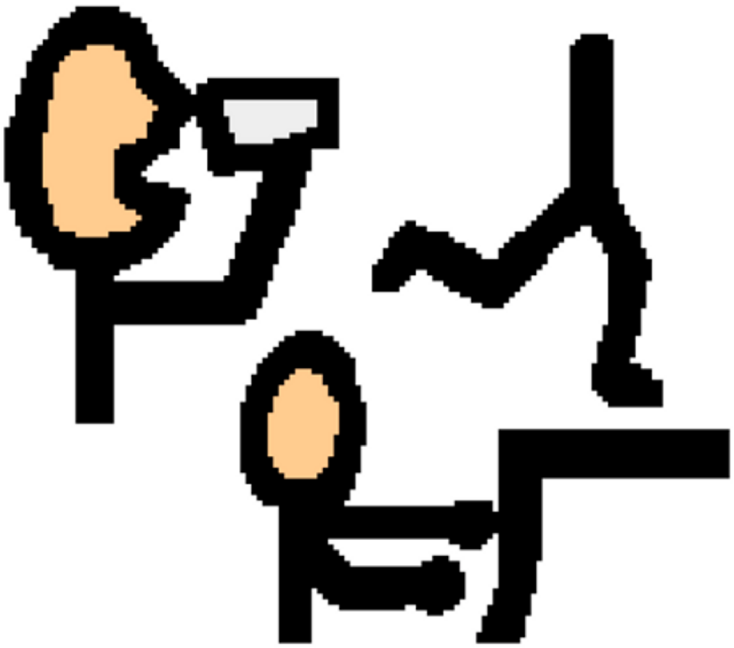
8. Re-present the item of difficulty.
9. Get ready to prompt if necessary (see hierarchy above). (i.e., predict the error)
10. If student responds correctly without prompting, reinforce with a social praise and a token.
11. If the student errors, proceed through error correction procedure again, or leave it and review it later in the session to avoid negative behaviour.
12. Do error correction procedure a maximum of 3 times per item to avoid negative behaviour.

# GRAPH

Mastery criteria: 80% for two consecutive sessions

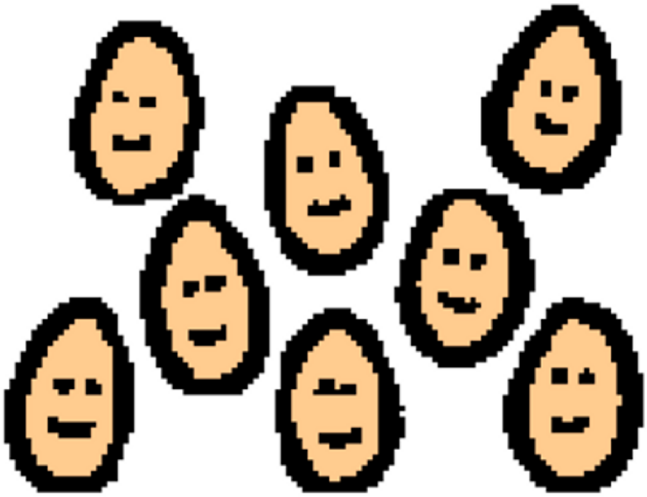
| Date/IT: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentage | 100 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 90 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 80 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 70 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 60 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 30 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 20 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teaching Step: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trial 1 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 2 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 3 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 4 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 5 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 6 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 7 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 8 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 9 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| Trial 10 | | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |

action



what

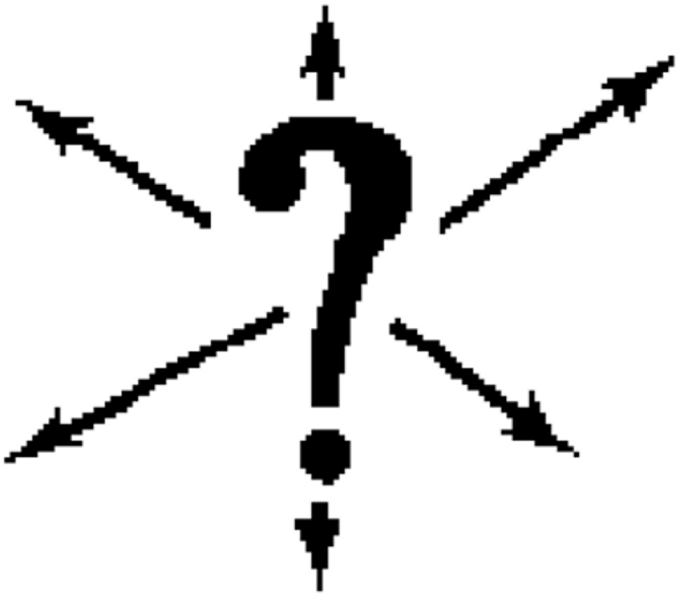
people



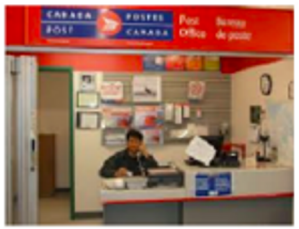
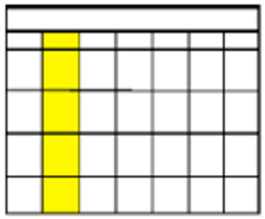
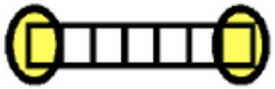
who

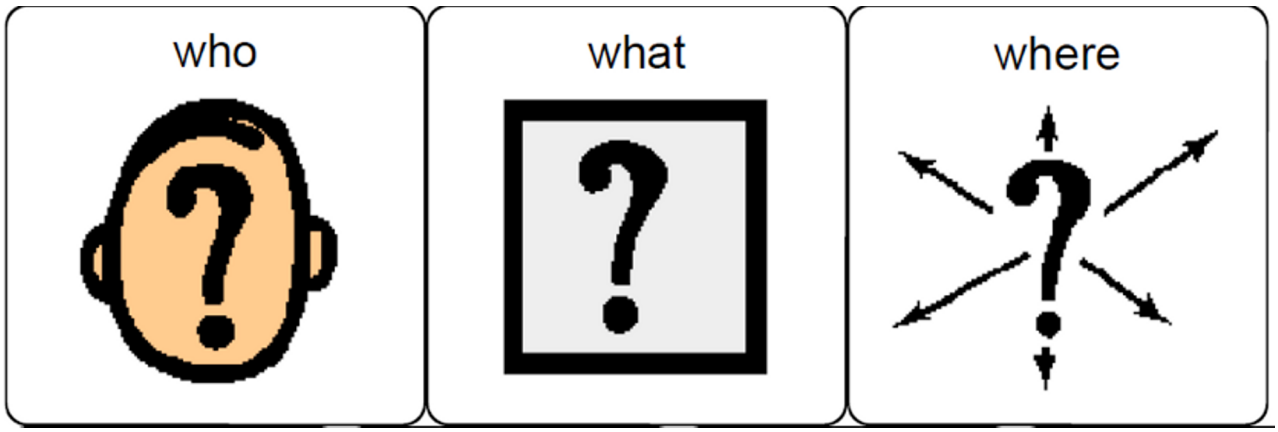
place

where



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| who | what doing | where | when | why |
| mom | dad | sister | brother | baby |
| doctor | firefighter | cashier | mail carrier | dentist |
| jumping | dancing | clapping | waving | driving |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| fire station | home | Shopper's Drug Mart | Post Office  | store |
| Walmart | Tim Horton's | grocery store | walking | playing |
| morning | afternoon | night | summer | winter |
| fall | spring | Monday  | on the weekend  | sleeping |


who
what
where

boy
girl
man
woman
baby
singing
eating
running
sleeping
playing
watching tv
home
school
School
pool
park
library