**Considerations**

* Prepositions are elements used to describe the relationship between other words in a sentence. They can be categorized by spatial and temporal terms (Owens, 2014).
* Prepositions introduce a prepositional phrase, which begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun.
* Prepositional phrases modify verbs, nouns/pronouns, or adjectives. A common formula for prepositional phrase production is as follows:
  + Preposition + Modifier (not required) + Noun or Preposition (object of the preposition).
  + Example: **Below the blue water**
    - *below* = preposition
    - *the* and *blue* = modifiers
* *water* = noun (object of the preposition)
* Spatial prepositions refer an object that is related to something else in terms of space or location/position. Temporal prepositions refer to how an object is related to something else in terms of time.
  + Examples of spatial prepositions: above, across, against, along, among, around, at between, behind, below, beneath, beside, by, in, inside, into, near, next to, off, on onto, over, opposite, under, underneath, etc.
  + Examples of temporal prepositions: after, around, as, before, between, by, during, for, past, since, until, with, etc.
* In order to understand the function of prepositions, one must be aware that prepositions may function differently depending on the context of the prepositional phrase. For example, “*On Saturday,* we go to the mall,” versus, “The ball is *on the table.”* The function of *on* in the first sentence is temporal and the function of *on* (in the second example) is spatial.
  + This difference is important to identify because this concept can be confusing for students.
    - Owens (2014) notes that the nine prepositions (*at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to,* and *with)* are responsible for 90 percent of prepositions use; however, these nine prepositions can collectively result in 250 different meanings.
* Research suggests that various types of prepositions can be acquired differently based upon cognitive development of the brain. More specifically, the acquisition of spatial prepositions relates to conceptual development-concepts formed in the basis of children’s experiences in space (Rohlfing, 2005).
  + Therefore, children learn concepts of space through experience. The article further describes that concepts of space are vary by culture; therefore, cultural competence should be taken into consideration.
    - In the English language, putting an object into something else, regardless of space, is categorized using the preposition *in;* however, in the Korean language, different words are used depending *how* the object is *place,* tightly or loosely (Rohlfing, 2005).
* With respect to typical development, toddlers and preschoolers acquire several categories of spatial prepositional concepts in a hierarchical fashion.
  + Toddlers aged 24-months have the ability to respond appropriately to a variety of *vertical* spatial terms (e.g., in, on, on top, up).
  + By age 36-months toddlers have the ability to respond to *horizontal* spatial terms (e.g., front, back, behind).
  + It is around 42-months of age that toddlers are able to respond to *horizontal, side-to-side* spatial terms (e.g., beside, next to, follow, middle) prior to utilizing these terms expressively (Chappell & Bronk, 2016; Owens, 2014).
* In the academic setting, children are expected to comprehend classroom directions, participate in games, and participate in activities.
  + For example, commonly, a teacher’s directions involve preposition use (i.e., “Put the pen *in front of* the paper,” “place the toy *on top of* the box,” “after you write your name *on* the paper, raise your hand

**Methods**

* Intervention regarding prepositions can be provided in the form of either direct instruction or a prototype approach.
  + A study conducted among a population of individuals with intellectual disability found that following *direct instruction* of prepositional use, the participants learned, maintained, and generalized preposition use (Hicks, Rivera, & Wood, 2015).
  + The *prototype approach* was studied with children learning English as a second language. The *prototype approach* is an approach that teaches prepositions in a *semantically based manner* by way of multiple meanings.
    - This form of instruction teaches that spatial prepositions have multiple meanings, and one is thought to be more dominating than the others (Lorincz & Gordon, 2012).
* Learners are then taught to compare and contrast spatial prepositions in order to help them comprehend the differences or similarities in meaning and relationship.
* A study conducted by Lam (2009), cited in Lorincz & Gordon (2012), discovered that a semantically based prototype approach, to teach spatial prepositions to English Language Learners (ELLs), improved overall knowledge and retention of spatial prepositions.
  + A second study conducted by Song & Sardegna (2014) also investigated the acquisition of spatial prepositions in ELLs. This study concluded that enhancing semantic knowledge through extensive reading instruction could incidentally improve the acquisition of spatial concepts in Korean speaking high-school students.
* Training of spatial prepositions in pairs of polarity has been an effective strategy to reinforce learning (Chappell & Bronk, 1976). Polarity pairs, otherwise known as opposite pairs, are helpful to teach concepts of a less concrete nature to children.
  + Concepts closer in semantic meaning are more challenging for children to understand because they are found difficult due to their abstract nature (Lorincz & Gordon, 2012). For these reasons, it is recommended that spatial concepts be taught in pairs of opposites (e.g., on/under, above/below, in front/behind).
* Arntsen (2016) provided the following eight-step method to teach prepositions and prepositional phrases:
  + **Step One:** review vocabulary that will be used in the lesson (i.e., book, desk, chair).
  + **Step Two:** introduce the pronunciation of the preposition. To encompass a multi-modal approach, the SLP will write the target words, state the word aloud, and ask the client to repeat the word(s).
  + **Step Three:** introduce the prepositional meaning. The SLP will provide a variety of examples and highlight pairs of prepositions (i.e., in vs. out, in front vs. behind).
  + **Step Four:** the client will practice previously learned prepositions, in a creative manner, developed by the SLP.
  + **Step Five:** the SLP will use prepositions in question-and-answer form by asking the client where the object is and asking them to respond using the correct preposition.
  + **Step Six:** using a peer-directed model, the SLP will host another practice round for the clients, if applicable. In a group, the clients will discuss with one another where various objects are located using the target prepositions.
  + **Step Seven:** depending on the client’s age, he/she will write sentences using the target prepositions.
  + **Step Eight**: the client will review the written sentences by reading them out loud to the SLP and/or peers in the group.

Resources

**Books**

* *Around the House the Fox Chased the Mouse*, written by Rick Walton. This book is great for children in kindergarten- 3rd grade.

This book is available on Amazon, here’s the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Around-House-Chased-Mouse-Prepositional/dp/1423600061/ref=sr_1_3?crid=3A6I83FUDGCCT&keywords=around+the+house+the+fox+chased+the+mouse&qid=1556732689&s=books&sprefix=around+the+hour%2Cstripbooks%2C163&sr=1-3-catcorr>

* *Under Over By the Clover,* What is a Preposition? Author Brian Cleary wrote this book with second, third, and fourth graders in mind.

This book is available on Amazon, here’s the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Under-Over-Clover-Preposition-Categorical/dp/1575052016/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1O7UNXMI78M6I&keywords=under+over+by+the+clover&qid=1556732664&s=books&sprefix=under+over+by%2Caps%2C155&sr=1-1>

* *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*, written by Helen Oxenbury. This book is great for preschoolers, kindergarteners, and first graders.

This book is available on Amazon, here’s the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Were-Going-Bear-Michael-Rosen/dp/0689504764/ref=sr_1_1?crid=VGPLOSBCRKW&keywords=we%27re+going+on+a+bear+hunt&qid=1556732710&s=books&sprefix=we%27re+goi%2Cstripbooks%2C163&sr=1-1>

* *Joey and Jet*, written by James Yang. This book is geared for children in preschool – first grade.

This book is available on Amazon, here’s the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Joey-Jet-Adventures-Atheneum-Hardcover/dp/0689869266/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=joey+and+jet&qid=1556732730&s=books&sr=1-1-catcorr>

* *Along a Long Road*, written by Frank Viva. We recommend this book for preschool- first grade audiences.

This book is available on Amazon, here’s the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Along-Long-Road-Frank-Viva/dp/0316129259/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=along+a+road&qid=1556732757&s=books&sr=1-3>

**Games and activities**

* Use of manipulatives to demonstrate the location of the objects in a concrete manner is the most concrete and successful strategy to teach prepositions. Recommended manipulatives are listed below:
  + stuffed animals
  + toy cars
  + dolls
  + blocks
  + toys/objects with moveable parts
* SLPs can also use individual *objects* to demonstrate the placement of the manipulatives aforementioned, such as: “The doll is sitting on the couch!” Additional examples of suggested objects are as follows:
* a box
* a playhouse/ dollhouse
* toy ships, vehicles, etc.
* furniture
* a scenic, 3-D diagram
* The SLP can encourage the client to use their body, when facilitating prepositional learning. For instance:
* A game of Simon says using target words: “Simon says put your hand *above* your head”.
* Obstacle Courses: “first jump *over* the cones, crawl *under* the bars, run *between* the hoops”.
* Card Games: The client will draw a card from the deck that has a direction to follow that includes a preposition. The client will then complete the task described on the card.
* The following chart describes a list of computer-based programs and applications deemed successful in the instruction of prepositions. Along with the description, the price is also indicated. The following chart is not an exhaustive list of all usable applications, but acts as a brief reference and resource:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Price | Targeted Age Group | Description |
| Prepositions! By Laureate | $59.00 | Pre-K to 8th grade for students with ASD, intellectual and developmental disabilities, language-learning disorders, low vision, hearing impairments, and English-language learners (Pre-k through 6th grade) | - Computer based software  - Trains 10 prepositions and begins with initial assessment to determine student’s current knowledge or prepositions, trains the student (i.e., select the correct picture out of 2-3 choices), monitors child’s progress and adjusts the instructional support as needed; built in data collection reports. |
| Speech with Milo: Prepositions  -Doonan Speech Therapy | $2.99 | Toddlers, preschoolers, and children with language delays | - 23 location prepositions; short animations demonstrating the prepositions; provides the target word and the opportunity to use it in a sentence. |
| Preposition Remix  -Smarty Ears | $9.99 | Ages 5 & under | - Gives audio and written prompts and a replay button is provided (“touch the turtle in front of the rabbit”)  - Images are displayed on the screen, one of them being the target position; user is to select correct answer; data tracking is included. |
| Preposition Builder  -Mobile Education Store LLC | $7.99 | N/A | - Uses cartoon pictures to show a sentence; the child must choose the correct preposition and drag it into the sentence. |
| Learn Prepositions  -Dipikaben Shah | Free | N/A | - Drag and drop correct prepositional words to earn points. |
| Grammar Quiz Prepositions  -The Rocket Studio | Free | Elementary K-5 | - Answer a variety of fill-in-the-blank sentences with the correct preposition (quiz-like format).  - Ability to review all attempted questions and review the ones where only mistakes were made |
| Prepositions Journey  -Virtual Speech Center Inc . | $9.99 | N/A, but early/common prepositions used | -Three different animals in three different, colorful settings.  - Expressive and receptive tasks both included. |
| My First Prepositions  -Visual Edvantage | $1.99 | Elementary aged children | - Read and listen to a question, then drag an animal to the correct position. |

**Websites**

* The following links are YouTube videos designed to target prepositional learning. These links are kid-friendly, however, there are a variety of videos designated for older populations. Entering the keyword *preposition* intoYouTube elicits many functional and appropriate videos related to prepositional phrases.
  + *Preposition: The Bazillions* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byszemY8Pl8>
  + *Where is it? Maple Leaf Learning* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8F0NYBBKczM>
  + *The Preposition: Scratch Game* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyMrLQ4ZI-4>
  + *The Prepositions Song 2: Scratch Garden* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PZS5g4pSjY>
  + *English Grammar: Learn Prepositions* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiqBGZTZP6Q>
  + *Learn Grade 1: English Grammar: Prepositions* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKbH1cndmjo>
  + *Position Words: “Prepositions” for Kids: Grade 1: Periwinkle* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VK-kXkXTBc>
* Please visit our Pinterest page for additional resources and activities: <https://www.pinterest.com/sugarlanguage/auxiliary-be/>
  + Pinterest *Q&A*:
    - *What is Pinterest?* Pinterest is a social media platform that serves as an electronic bulletin board. Many SLPs use it as a way to electronically “bookmark” (i.e., save) activities for future sessions.
    - *How much does it cost?* It’s free! However, you must create an account in order to access the SUGAR Language boards or use the website in general.
    - *How do I use it?* Please check-out the following link for an in-depth explanation of all things Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/sugarlanguage/prepositions-intervention-sb/>

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