Object Play Level Progression

When you begin working on your student's play skills, you will need to start at the level at which your student now interacts with objects, and move to more advanced levels one step at a time. The following list is designed to help you understand the progression of play skills and identify easy and difficult play skills for your student. Read the description of each type of play below, and circle either Yes, No, or Sometimes to indicate whether your student engages in this behavior. The Yes items will be maintenance tasks that you can utilize during play to keep student motivation high. The Sometimes items will be acquisition tasks, and you will help your student learn to use these play skills more consistently. You should model play that is one level above your student's current abilities (Yes and Sometimes items) as you take turns during play with your student. Your student may be learning several similar levels of play at one time, but you should generally be sure that your student has mastered each of the previous levels of play before moving on to more advanced skills.

Sensory Exploration			
Uses senses to explore objects Some students begin to play by using their senses. They may put objects in their mouths, sniff objects, visually expect objects, etc. Often at this stage students will perform the same action with all objects or toys, such as banging, shaking, or spinning. Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Repetitive sensory exploration During this stage of play, some students will engage in one form of sensory play ritualistically or repetitively for extended periods of time. Some students will engage in this behavior so much that they do not play any other way very often. Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Object exploration Some students explore object by looking for differences in shape, color, texture, etc. During this stage, they may be turning, pulling, poking, and tearing objects. Students at this stage use one object at a time and change items often. They are not yet putting objects together or understanding cause-and-effect play. Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Early Relational Play			
Cause-and-effect play Students at this stage often begin to combine objects, such as putting objects in a container, pushing buttons, turning handles, opening and shutting, etc. Students at this stage may begin to throw in play (not just to get rid of an object). Students may put some actions together and begin to have some interest in toys such as busy boxes, shape sorters, etc. Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Relational play Students at this stage begin to use toys more functionally—for example, throwing a ball, pushing a toy car, blowing a noisemaker, placing pegs in a hole, etc. During this stage, play becomes more purposeful. Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Symbolic or Pretend Play			
Early pretend play—directed toward self Students begin pretending by doing familiar actions toward themselves. Students may pretend to eat, drink, sleep, comb hair, and talk on the phone as their earliest form of pretend. Students at this stage use realistic objects and may add sound effects (such as lip smacking for eating). Does your student *currently* use this form of play?　　　　Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes

(cont.)

Symbolic or Pretend Play *(cont.)*			
Early pretend play—directed toward others Students then begin to pretend toward other people. Students at this stage may pretend to feed you or a sibling, and perhaps a doll. Feeding and grooming are often seen first. Your student may begin to link actions such as putting a doll in a car at this stage. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Linking early pretend actions Once students have practiced these early pretend actions, they may begin to perform the same action on multiple play partners—for example, feed self, feed mom, feed dad, feed doll; drink from several cups; etc. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Early symbolic object play After using realistic objects in play, students begin to use substitute objects, such as pretending that a block is a cookie or a rope is a hose. Substitute objects often look similar to the real object. Students may also pretend to pour juice or that a toy stove is hot in this stage. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Symbolic sounds and gestures Students may use sound effects such as "vroom" when racing a car or "choo-choo" for a train. They may say "ouch" when a doll falls down or give a voice to a doll. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Linking symbolic actions Once students use a variety of pretend play actions, they begin to link these actions. They might put gas in a car and then drive the car, or brush a doll's teeth and put the doll to bed. Dolls are still passive partners. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Doll as active agent Next, students begin to make the dolls active agents in play. A doll is made to wash itself, walk, or hold a spoon. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Advanced substitute object use Next, we begin to expect students to search for a missing or substitute object to use in pretend play. They may look for an item to be pretend food or a pretend car; they may pretend to wash a car without any water. Substitute objects may not look anything like the real object. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Telling stories with toys As students become good at symbolic play, they begin to act out more complex stories with toys. For example, they may put gas in a car, drive the car, crash the car, fix the car, etc., all as part of one play sequence. They may feed a doll with a bottle, pat it on the back and put it to bed or put pretend toothpaste on a toothbrush, put the cap on the tube, and brush the doll's teeth. Dolls may take multiple roles. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes

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Sociodramatic Play			
Acting things out At the most complex level, students will begin to assign one or multiple roles to themselves or other friends, starting with familiar fantasy themes and moving to fantasy characters and stories they create. This play may be supported by props or simply by language and gesture. This type of play can be very elaborate and can be difficult for students with autism. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Games with Rules			
Simple games Learning games occurs along with object play. Students begin to learn to take turns, and follow directions in the context of games. Chase type games, and simple games of catch are examples of the first forms of game play students typically learn. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Manipulative games There are some simple games with few rules or steps that also have a manipulative component, and these can be excellent first games—for example, a game such as Don't Break the Ice. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Board games As students begin to understand problem solving and rules, they can move to more complicated board games that include academic skills, turn taking, and winning–losing. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Organized sports/playground games Students can play organized large motor games at a variety of levels, from playing handball to an organized game of baseball. Tasks should be broken down into small steps to help determine how much assistance a student will need to participate in this type of game. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	Yes	No	Sometimes
Additional Play Behaviors			

Stereotyped play Some students have advanced play skills, but play only with a particular toy or complete the same action or sequence with every toy they encounter. Does your student *currently* use this form of play? Circle *one*:	If Yes, model new ways to play with that toy or build on your student's favorite action to vary it slightly.		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
Duration of play Some students have a difficult time staying with one toy for extended period of time and may move quickly between available toys. Does your student move frequently (more than once per minute) between toys and activities? Circle *one*:	If Yes, slowly increase the amount of time required with a toy before moving forward.		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
Facilitated play Some students play at higher levels only when a teacher or other adult is helping them play, and do not demonstrate these play skills independently. For the highest levels of play you circled above, does your student only engage in these with your help? Circle *one*:	If Yes, work on spontaneous play and initiation of play activities before moving forward with higher levels of prompted play.		
	Yes	No	Sometimes