

**Book 6:  
Lessons for the Full A-Z  
Letterboard—One Word**

## **Introduction**

This book of lessons plans will help you move the student to generating one-word open-ended responses. First, the student will spell words that are known but you didn't say. (For example, "tell me what has a trunk and leaves.") Then the student will spell words that are fill in the blank or word association. These have more variety in what they can respond with. (For example, "Give me a word that goes with 'vegetable.'") The teacher will give clues and later choices if the student isn't able to accurately aim or come up with a word.

I hope this book is useful in helping you and your child develop your skills.

Sincerely,

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## Tips and Tricks

--See Book 5 section on tips and tricks.

--When working on words you didn't say, if the student gets stuck, give hints. You might tell them the first letter or how many letters.

--When having the student work on generating their own word to either fill in the blank or give a word that connects with a word, if the student struggles, you might give them clues to get them to think of a word. For example, if the student is supposed to give a word that goes with 'grass' and the student is struggling, you might say, "I am thinking of the color of the grass."

--Don't spend a lot of time on having the student create their own words. If they are struggling for a long while, it can discourage them. So, go ahead and default to choices if they are struggling.

--Remember to build confidence. As these responses are "safe," if the student starts out strong and then struggles, and you think you know the word, you may give a suggestion like "I think you are looking for a vowel up at the top next." However, it is critical that you don't "force the word" or the student feel "pressure" to spell a particular word. An example of this: "Give me a word that goes with 'sky.'" The student spells C-L, then hesitates. (Student is likely spelling 'cloud.')

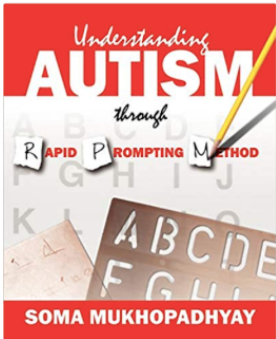
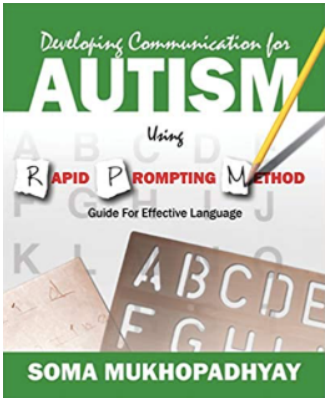
"I think you are looking for an O" or "I think your letter is on the right side." If the student doesn't follow, back off. You can give clues for a word like "I am thinking of something puffy and white in the sky" or default to options if the student doesn't spell a word. "Do you want to spell CLOUD or CLEAR to go with sky?" **Critical** to remember: You don't know what a student is going to spell. While you will be able to often predict and as you get more fluent, it will be natural to predict, you do not know what the student is going to spell. Sometimes they will spell the word you think and sometimes the student won't. Be open to the possibilities as the student may connect different words than you to the word 'sky,' for example. Like maybe the student remembers a ball that was thrown up towards the sky on a clear blue day. The student may spell BALL. Be open to their alternate sensory experience and what the student prioritizes to connect with a given word. You can learn about a student this way.

--If the student seems to be randomly touching letters or seems to be intentionally pointing, then hits random or extra letters in a word you may need to stop, (take the pencil) and write the letter(s) the student spells when they hesitate or seem to be slowing down. Then reset the board center to the choosing hand (and hand the pencil if using one) and the student touches the next letter. Then stop, write and reset the student again. As the student is more

fluid, you can have the student touch a couple letters in the word before stopping and writing, then resetting. Eventually the student will not need this.

--Verbal prompts are more important than gestural prompts. Gestural prompts should be paired with verbal prompts. Eventually all verbal prompts become non-directional and gesture prompts fade. As you go into open communication, you should be fading the gestural prompts and verbal prompts should be largely be non-directional instead encouraging the student to initiate movement. For an example of non-directional prompts: “and,” “next, then,” “reach out,” “touch it,” “keep going.” Additionally, you would not say letter sounds or names before the student touches the letter as the student should be coming up with his or her own word.

To understand how to teach and the theory behind how you are teaching, read one or both of the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theory: Chapter 1-8</li><li>• Open learning channels: Chapter 10 &amp; 11</li><li>• How to begin: Chapter 12, Chapter 14</li><li>• <b>Open-Ended Communication: Chapter 15</b></li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theory and understanding: Chapter 1 and 2</li><li>• <b>Developing Accuracy in Spelling on a Full Stencil Board for Successful Communication: Chapter 5</b></li><li>• <b>Successful Communication in an RPM Session: Chapter 8</b></li></ul>

## LESSON 1: PENTAGRAM

\*Remember to verbally spell out and write out the underlined keywords as you teach.

\*Hold up the relevant stencil or letterboard centered to the student's choosing hand.

\*Check the position of the stencil or letterboard so that the student can comfortably point to any letter on the stencil—make sure not too high, too low, too close or too far from the student. Look at how the student's fingers, hand, and arm are moving.

\*Gesture (point towards) in the general direction of the first letter of each word when saying each option, if needed.

**MATERIALS:** picture of a pentagram

**TEACH:** This is a PENTAGRAM, pentagram. (*Show a picture of the pentagram*)

**SPELL:** Let's warm up and spell PENTAGRAM.

**EXPAND:** You would call this a (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell 'star' if the student doesn't go on or near the 'S,' tell the student it starts with a 'S' and is a four-letter word. If the student still doesn't touch the 'S,' give options.*)?

*"It is a star."*

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**TEACH:** The pentagram is a F-I-V-E, five-pointed star.

**ASK:** How many points are on this star? (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell 'five' if the student doesn't go on or near the 'F' give a gesture to the 'F'. If the student still doesn't touch the 'F,' give options.*)?

*"Yes, it has five points."*

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TEACH: The ancient G-R-E-E-K-S, Greeks loved the pentagram.

ASK: Who loved the pentagram? The ancient (GREEKS. or ASIANS)?

*“Yes, the ancient Greeks.”*

EXPAND: Do you enjoy the pentagram? (AGREE or DISAGREE)?

*Comment on the student’s response.*

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TEACH: It is cool because you can draw a star within a star in the C-E-N-T-E-R, center. (*Draw a star another five-pointed star in the center of the star.*)

ASK: So, you can draw a five-pointed star in the (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell ‘center’ if the student doesn’t go on or near the ‘C’ give a gesture to the ‘C’. If the student still doesn’t touch the ‘C’, give options.*)?

*“Yes, the center of the pentagram.”*

EXPAND: And as you can see, you can draw another one within that one. Technically, the stars can go on (ONE MORE TIME or FOREVER.)?

*“In theory they go on and on forever.”*

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TEACH: The G-O-L-D-E-N, golden R-A-T-I-O, ratio appears in the pentagram many times.

SPELL: Let’s spell GOLDEN RATIO.

*“Yeah, later on we will talk about what the golden ratio is.”*

## LESSON 20: BABY DEVELOPMENT

\*Remember to verbally spell out and write out the underlined keywords as you teach.

\*Hold up the relevant stencil or letterboard centered to the student's choosing hand.

\*Check the position of the stencil or letterboard so that the student can comfortably point to any letter on the stencil—make sure not too high, too low, too close or too far from the student. Look at how the student's fingers, hand, and arm are moving.

\*Gesture (point towards) in the general direction of the first letter of each word when saying each option, if needed.

**MATERIALS:** picture of 1 month old smiling, picture of 3-month old trying to roll over, very short video clip of 6 month old babbling, picture of 10-month old walking

**TEACH:** Babies start to S-M-I-L-E, smile at about 1-month old. (*Show 1 month old smiling.*)

**ASK:** So, at one month, a baby begins to (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell 'smile.' If the student doesn't go on or near the 'S' give a gesture to the 'S'. If the student still doesn't touch the 'S', give options.*)?

*"They begin to smile at 4-6 weeks old."*

**EXPAND:** Tell me an emotion that you associate with smiling? (*Hold up the letterboard for the student to spell an emotion to go with smiling. Give options if needed.*)?

*Comment on the student's response.*

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**TEACH:** Around 3-months, the baby tries to R-O-L-L, roll over. (*Show picture of a baby trying to roll over.*)

SPELL: Let's spell ROLL OVER.

EXPAND: When you think of 'rolling over,' what do you think of...give me a word? (*Hold up the letterboard for the student to come up with a word that goes with 'roll over.' Give options if needed.*)

*Comment on the student's response.*

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TEACH: B-A-B-B-L-I-N-G, babbling starts around 6-months old. (*Show very short clip of baby babbling.*)

ASK: At 6-months old, a baby starts to (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell 'babble.' If the student doesn't go on or near the 'B' give a gesture to the 'B'. If the student still doesn't touch the 'B', give options.*)?

*"Yes, they start to babble."*

EXPAND: 'Babble' goes with the word, (*Hold up the letterboard for the student to spell a word that goes with 'babbling.' Give options if needed.*)?

*Comment on the student's response.*

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TEACH: Sitting up S-I-T-T-I-N-G up starts at about 9-months old.

SPELL: Let's spell SITTING UP since it starts at 9-months old.

*"Yes, they start to shuffle and crawl too."*

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TEACH: At 10-months, they start to W-A-L-K, walk. (*Show baby walking picture.*)

ASK: Someone might ask you what happens at 10-months old, you'll tell them (*Hold the letterboard up for the student to spell 'walk.' If the student doesn't go*



*on or near the 'W' give a gesture to the 'W'. If the student still doesn't touch the 'W', give options.)?*

*"Yes, between 10 and 18-months old."*

EXPAND: When babies walk, I think they are ...give me a word. (*Hold up the letterboard for the student to fill in the blank. Give options as needed.*)?

*Comment on the student's response.*

*Congratulations!*  
*You have completed Book 6*

**Note:** Completion of this book doesn't mean a student (or teacher) has "mastered" spelling out one-word open communication. For some, the next book—book 7—is the place to go. Others may need to work more on fluency with teach and ask. Others may need to work with stencils or letterboards with less letters for a time. Some will need to troubleshoot or figure out a more effective tool (maybe changing from stencil or letterboard, for example) or technique to use (For example, adjusting the board to be in the student's performance field, speed of delivery, way options are delivered, etc.).