

What Is It?

High-probability requests (HPR) is a strategy where the teacher delivers a series of simple, short, easy requests immediately before a request that the student typically does not follow.

When to Use It

- High-probability requests is most effective for behavior that is maintained by escape from a task or demand.
- HPR should be implemented using requests that are performed quickly and can be reinforced with items that are brief (e.g., social praise, small edible, token) rather than an activity (e.g., listening to music).
- HPR is effective in a variety of activities such as transitions, academic activities, and following directions.

Steps to Implementation / How to Do It: Seating Arrangements

After identifying a task or activity the student is trying to escape:

	1. Identify the low-probability requests. The task demands the student typically responds to with challenging behavior are considered the low-probability requests. Low-probability requests are requests the student is capable of performing independently but only completes the request less than 40% of the time.
	2. Identify several (5-7) high-probability requests. These are brief requests the student typically will complete independently (i.e. put your worksheet on your desk, open your book) at least 80% of the time.
	3. Deliver three to five high-probability requests and immediately provide reinforcement after the student completes each request (i.e., give praise). Each request should be delivered rapidly (i.e. within 5 seconds of the student's response to the previous request).
	4. Deliver the low-probability request immediately following the series of high-probability requests.
	5. Provide reinforcement when the student completes the low-probability request. Select a reinforcer for the student that is specific and brief, such as praise or a token.

Example

Marcus typically refuses to come to the carpet during group instruction when he is asked to join the group. The intervention team conducts a functional behavior assessment identifying that this behavior is maintained by escaping group instruction. The teacher and team decide to try HPR to increase his successful transitioning to group instruction. The team brainstorms a set of high-probability requests that Marcus is likely to comply.

Before group instruction his teacher, Mrs. Jones, delivers the 3 high-probability requests. She begins with, "Marcus, put your pencil on your desk". When Marcus complies with this request, Mrs. Jones says, "Nice job." She immediately delivers the next HPR, "Marcus, what's the word of the week?" Marcus looks on the board and says, "friendship." Mrs. Jones immediately provides praise by saying "Way to go!" She immediately delivers the third HPR, "Give me five". When Marcus gives her a high-five, Mrs. Jones says, "Awesome, giving me five." Mrs. Jones immediately delivers the low-probability requests and asks Marcus to "Sit on the carpet" for group instruction. As soon as Marcus sits on the carpet, Mrs. Jones says, "Great job sitting on the carpet with your classmates."

The next time Mrs. Jones uses this intervention with Marcus she makes sure to use different high-probability requests or change the order of the high-probability requests that he's likely to perform. Each time she uses this strategy, she changes the order and the requests that she delivers.

How to Increase Effectiveness

- Deliver each request within 5 seconds of the student's response to the previous high probability request.
- Generate a large set of high-probability requests. Vary the order and requests used if this intervention is frequently used in the classroom.
- Verbal praise or some other reinforcer that you could deliver quickly should be given immediately following the completion of each high-probability request.
- Deliver the low-probability requests within 5-10 seconds of the delivery of the reinforcer for completion of the last high-probability request.

Resources

Chambers, C. R. (2006). High-probability request strategies: Practical guidelines. *Young Exceptional Children*, 9, 20-28.

Wehby, J. H. & Hollahan, M. S. (2000). Effects of high-probability requests on the latency to initiate academic tasks. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 33, 259-262.