

TAGteach - What's the Point?

What is the point? With TAGteach™ (Teaching with Acoustical Guidance), it's a 'tag' point. A tag point is a response, action, or position that when accomplished is marked (tagged) with short sharp sound from a clicker, finger snap, smart phone app or other stimuli. The sound is a signal that has one meaning; success. The sound has no other meaning in everyday life. The sound marks the exact moment the tag point is executed and gives immediate and clear feedback to the learner. The tag becomes a positive reinforcer through pairing with tangible rewards (a sticker for example) or as a result of good feelings of success.

Younger learners trade their tags in for beads, stickers or other prizes. Older learners and higher level athletes often do not require a tangible primary reinforcer, since they are reinforced just by receiving the immediate and clear feedback from the tag.

Clear and Simple:

Clarity and simplicity are key aspects of TAGteach. A tag point is defined so that the teacher can easily judge whether the tag point is achieved and can mark it with a tag. For example, a teacher might say to a learner who is being taught to draw the letter O, "The directions are to place your pencil tip at the place where the top of the letter will be." The tag point is "tip at top". Once this has been done correctly several times the teacher can move on. "The directions are to move the pencil tip to the left to start the letter." The tag point is "tip to the left". If there is any difficulty and the learner does not succeed after three tries, the teacher will break the skill down into smaller parts and go back to a previous point of success. With some learners it may be necessary to place a dot at the place where the letter should start, or to trace letters or to use other prompts to help the learner succeed at first. These prompts can be gradually faded out as the learner improves.

Tag Point Criteria:

A tag point must satisfy the following criteria (WOOF):

What you want (phrase in the positive)

One thing (the word "and" will never appear in a tag point)

Observable/Measurable (you must be able to judge the completion clearly)

Five words or less

Ignore Errors and Try Again

There is no scolding or negativity associated with TAGteach. If the learner hears the tag she knows that the tag point was achieved. If she doesn't hear the tag she knows to try again. There is no "better, but..." in TAGteach. If the tag point is "point toes during the handstand" and the learner points her toes, but her legs were apart, the learner receives the tag and the teacher does not say "That was better, but next time try to keep your legs together." Instead, the teacher awards the tag for pointed toes and after a few repetitions says to the learner, "The tag point is legs together in the handstand." The learner may forget to point her toes while thinking about keeping her legs straight. In this case the pointed toes tag point can be revisited a few times and eventually the learner will achieve a toe point with straight legs without ever being told that something was wrong. The learner learns to self-assess and think for herself without relying on corrections from the teacher.

Now let's practice with the WOOF goal planner:



An example:

The Goal Behaviour: Rolling a ball
The Steps Involved: Looks at ball ←
 Moves hand towards ball (when I offer the ball)
 Touches ball with hand (when I offer the ball)
 Touches the ball in hand (when I roll the ball to him)
 Pushes the ball with hand

The tag point is: Turn head toward ball

W O O F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Date: 2021/01/01
 Length of session: 5 mins

|||

Trial 2 - # Correct

Date: 2021/01/01
 Length of session: 3 mins

||| ||

Trial 3 - # Correct

Date: 2021/01/02
 Length of session: 2 mins

||| |||

WOOF Planning Instructions:

1. Identify the larger goal (swing a golf club, learn Spanish, play the piano)
2. Identify a few of the key steps involved in getting started
3. Make a list of the key steps
4. Choose one to work on (the easiest, the first or last in a series or the most important)
5. Start with something that for sure the learner will be able to do the first time
6. Focus on one specific aspect and apply the WOOF criteria
7. Write the specific behavior goal beside the words: The tag point is...
8. Modify this until you can check off all 4 WOOF boxes

Teaching Session Instructions:

1. Say to the learner: "The tag point is"... followed by the WOOF goal
2. Tag (reinforce) when the learner gets it right
3. Repeat 10 times (or 5 if your learner dislikes too much repetition)
4. If the learner fails 3 times in a row, make an easier WOOF goal
5. Keep track of the time for each 10-trial session and write this on the sheet
6. Record a tally mark on the sheet for each correct response
7. Do three 10-trial sessions, then take a break
8. When the learner gets 8/10 correct 3 sessions in a row, move to the next WOOF goal
9. Involve the learner in the WOOF planning whenever possible

Tag Point Planning and Tracking Sheet:

The goal behavior:

Steps involved:

The tag point is:

W

O

O

F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Trial 2 - # Correct

Trial 3 - # Correct

Trial 4 - # Correct

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Length of session:

Length of session:

Length of session:

Length of session:

The goal behavior:

Steps involved:

The tag point is:

W

O

O

F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Trial 2 - # Correct

Trial 3 - # Correct

Trial 4 - # Correct

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Length of session:

Length of session:

Length of session:

Length of session:

[Click here for an ink-saver version.](#)

Want to learn more?!

Through a series of videos and practical exercises, our mini course will give you everything you need to get started with TAGteach right away!

TAKE ME TO THE MINI COURSE