

Module: **Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility**

Session 1: Foundations of Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility

**Study Questions and Answers for Recommended Reading H:
Skellenger & Hill**

Skellenger, A.C., & Hill, E.W. (1997). The preschool learner. In B.B. Blasch, W.R. Wiener, & R.L. Welsh (Eds.), *Foundations of orientation and mobility* (2nd ed., pp. 407-438). New York: AFB Press.

1. How is the O&M process for preschoolers different from that for older children and adults?
For preschool children, O&M is focused on developing the skills necessary for independent travel and then incorporating them into the child's overall development. Older children and adults already possess many of these skills; for them, O&M is focused on building upon the skills the individual already has.
2. Briefly describe the roles of the orientation and mobility specialist (OMS) in working with preschoolers and their families.
 - **Support for families and family members: Families of children with visual impairments sometimes exhibit a higher level of stress. The OMS should assist in reducing stress by supporting the family directly by listening to their concerns and being a "shoulder to cry on," and by helping the family locate other forms of support in the community.**
 - **O&M information and collaboration: The OMS assists families by familiarizing them with the O&M process and its impact on children. This can be through books, videos, answering questions, or providing opportunities to meet others with visual impairments. Additionally, the OMS should collaborate with families so they can incorporate O&M activities into their daily routines. The family is generally most familiar with the child and can best meet the child's individual needs. This reinforces the activities and helps children to generalize skills.**
3. List the procedures that may be utilized in the assessment of preschool learners.
 - **Observation**
 - **Parent or teacher report**
 - **Planned inclusion of the parent or teacher in the assessment process**
 - **Development of rapport and shared understanding**

- **Multiple observations and assessment sessions**
 - **Assessment of behaviors other than those related to O&M**
 - **Using play to elicit behaviors**
 - **Individualization of assessment tools**
4. How can the OMS facilitate incidental learning?
Preschoolers must be motivated to direct their own learning and create knowledge themselves. Therefore, the OMS should observe the child during lessons and activities and determine what interests the child. The OMS should then elaborate on the interesting topic by providing support, modeling, and content information to encourage learning.
5. List the principles that should be considered while planning an O&M lesson.
- **Daily scheduling of lessons**
 - **Inclusion of numerous activities**
 - **Use of play in sessions**
 - **Flexible lesson planning**
 - **Inclusion of teaching components**
 - **Inclusion of receptive and expressive learning**
 - **Use of adult attention and behavior strategies to assist motivation**
6. Name the categories of secondary reinforcers and give examples of each.
Secondary reinforcers include natural consequences (e.g., feeling of happiness), social activities (e.g., interacting with peers), privileges and activities (e.g., a trip to the zoo), and tokens (e.g., play money that can be exchanged for toys).
7. What are the two main categories of materials used to support O&M instruction? Give examples of each.
- **Items that enhance learning: toys, blocks, timers, feather dusters, mapboards**
 - **Devices to facilitate and enhance independent movement: long canes, adaptive mobility devices (e.g., Hula Hoops, toy shopping carts, push toys)**
8. Define *concept*, identify what is necessary for the development of a concept, and name the levels of concept formation.
- **A concept is a mental representation, image, or idea of something. Concepts develop as a result of processing, interpreting, and integrating various types of sensory information.**

- **To form concepts, one must be able to perceive and discriminate similarities, because grouping objects with similar properties will help to form concepts.**
- **The three levels of concept development are concrete understanding, functional understanding, and abstract understanding.**

9. What is *body concept* and why is it important?

Body concept is the abstraction in the mind that represents the body through input from the senses. It is important because bodies act both as receptors of learning and as reference points for understanding significant objects in the environment.

10. What should be considered in assessing children's concept development?

It is important to find out if a child functionally understands a concept or can only verbally describe it. Often, children with visual impairments can offer lengthy descriptions of an object, but there is little meaning or understanding behind the words. This is why it is important for adults to accompany verbal descriptions with actual physical experiences.