SEI 2026

Elevate and Educate: Raising the Bar for All Learners


!Welcome to the session

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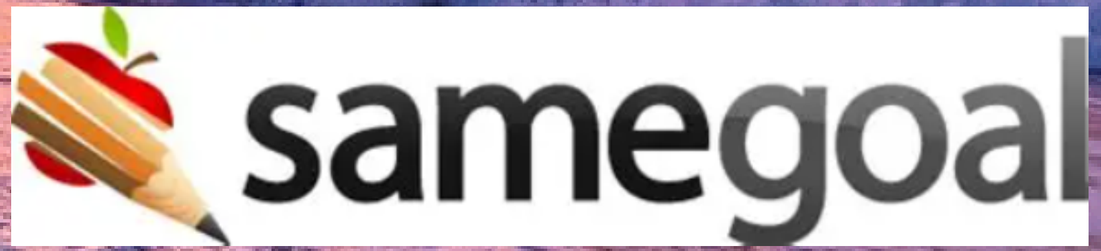

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DATA WITHOUT THE DRAMA: SIMPLE TRACKING FOR COMPLEX NEEDS

PARTICIPANTS WILL:

One

Identify realistic ways to collect data during instruction

Two

Learn simple systems for tracking progress

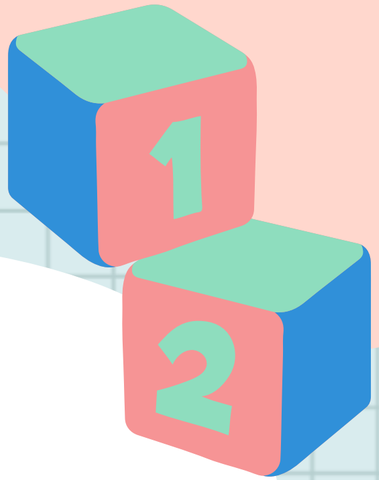
Three

Explore adaptable data tools and templates

Alyssa Aguilar is a Visual Impairment Specialist who loves all things ECC, assistive technology, themed events, and making learning meaningful (and a little chaotic in the best way).
Powered by coffee, color-coded spreadsheets, and a deep love for supporting students and teachers alike.

WHAT MAKES DATA COLLECTION STRESSFUL FOR YOU?

WHY DATA FEELS SO HARD



- Limited instructional time
- Multiple staff collecting data differently
- Students demonstrate skills inconsistently
- Complex communication systems
- Difficulty identifying "what counts" as progress
- Excessive paperwork expectations
- Trying to teach AND document simultaneously

REFRAMING DATA COLLECTION

Data Is:

- ✔ Observing growth
- ✔ Informing instruction
- ✔ Identifying supports
- ✔ Monitoring access
- ✔ Celebrating progress

Data Is NOT:

- ✘ Punishment
- ✘ Endless paperwork
- ✘ Perfection
- ✘ Collecting every single thing

MEANINGFUL DATA

- Connects directly to IEP goals
- Reflects real student performance
- Helps guide instructional decisions
- Is measurable and observable
- Can realistically be collected consistently

Will this information actually help me teach better?

MEANINGFUL DATA

Data Drives:

- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)
- Measurable Annual Goals
- Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)
- Progress Monitoring
- Instructional Decision-Making

Data Should Answer:

- What can the student currently do?
- What barriers impact access?
- What supports are effective?
- Is the student making meaningful progress?

PROGRESS MAY LOOK LIKE:

- Increased attention
- Improved tolerance
- Reduced prompting
- Increased initiation
- More consistent responses
- Better engagement
- Increased independence
- Improved access to materials
- Expanded communication attempts

FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE IS IMPORTANT DATA

- Communication attempts
- Self-advocacy
- Access skills
- Participation
- Sensory regulation
- Mobility
- Engagement
- Daily living skills
- Social interaction

Functional performance data is equally valuable as academic data.

OBSERVABLE VS. SUBJECTIVE DATA

Subjective:

- "He seemed happier"
- "She did better today"
- "He was engaged"

Observable Data:

- "Smiled during 3 activities"
- "Completed task with 2 prompts"
- "Maintained attention for 4 minutes"

THE BEST DATA SYSTEMS ARE:

- Quick
- Repeatable
- Visual
- Easy for multiple staff to use
- Embedded into routines

If it takes too long, it probably won't happen consistently.

ALIGNING DATA TO IEP GOALS

Strong Progress Monitoring:

- Matches the goal exactly
- Measures observable skills
- Tracks progress consistently
- Reflects the student's individualized access needs

Goal:

Student will independently request preferred items using symbols.

Data To Collect:

- Number of independent requests
- Prompt level required
- Communication mode used

TYPES OF SIMPLE DATA COLLECTION

- Frequency counts
- Duration tracking
- Prompt levels
- Checklists
- Anecdotal notes
- Task analysis
- Participation tracking
- Rating scales
- Work samples/photos/videos

FREQUENCY DATA

Measures:

- "How often does the behavior/skill occur?"

Examples:

- Number of communication attempts
- Number of independent reaches
- Number of successful choices made

Easy Tools:

- Tally marks
- Click counters
- Sticky notes

FREQUENCY DATA

Data Collection: Frequency Recording

Frequency recording is a way to measure the number of times a behavior occurs within a given period and is best for behaviors with a distinct beginning and end.

Target Behavior (measurable and observable): Number of times I hit snooze

Date	Time	Setting/ Activity	Length of Observation	Tally	Total
5/1	6:00 AM	hitting snooze	30 minutes	11111111111111111	17
5/2	6:00 AM	hitting snooze	30 minutes	111111111111111	15
5/3	6:00 AM	hitting snooze	30 minutes	11111111111111	14

DURATION DATA

Measures:

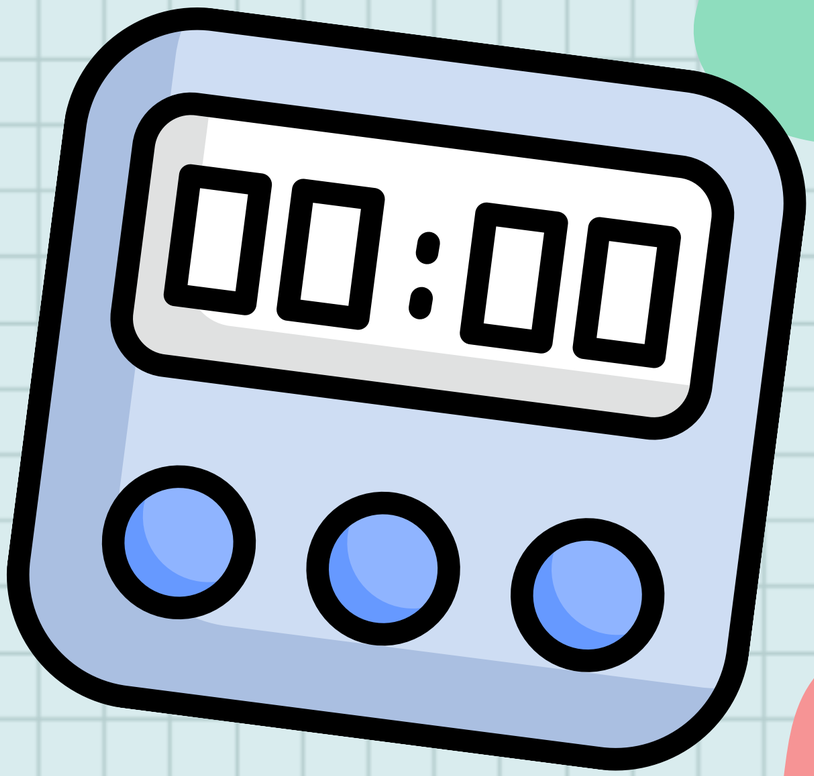
"How long does the student engage?"

Examples:

- Time attending to task
- Time tolerating glasses/hearing aids
- Time participating in group activity

Simple Tools:

- Phone timer
- Visual timer
- Stopwatch apps



DURATION DATA

Data Collection: Duration Recording

Duration recording documents how long a student engages in a specified behavior. This type of data collection is appropriate for behaviors that have a distinct beginning and ending.

Target Behavior (measurable and observable): How long laundry stays in the dryer before folding

Date	Setting/ Activity	Start Time	End Time	Total Minutes	Notes
5/1	At home - laundry	2:00 PM	6:00 PM		Distracted with new netflix show
5/8	At home - laundry			90 minutes	New show!!! But also set a reminder for laundry every hour....

PROMPT LEVEL DATA

Prompt Level	Example
Independent	Student completes alone
Verbal Prompt	"Try again."
Gesture Prompt	Pointing
Model	Demonstration
Partial Physical	Light touch guidance
Full Physical	Hand-under-hand

PROMPT LEVEL - EXAMPLES

- CO-WORKER SENDS "YOU GOING?" REMINDER TEXT → VERBAL
- STARBUCKS APP NOTIFICATION → VERBAL
- SOMEONE POINTING AT THE EXIT → GESTURE
- WATCHING A COOKING TUTORIAL → MODEL
- GPS SAYING "TURN LEFT NOW" → VERBAL
- MOM PHYSICALLY HANDING YOU YOUR FORGOTTEN KEYS → PARTIAL PHYSICAL

PARTICIPATION DATA

Especially Helpful For:

- Students with significant disabilities
- Deafblind students
- Students with emerging communication

Examples:

- Participated
- Refused
- Tolerated
- Explored
- Initiated
- Attended visually/tactually

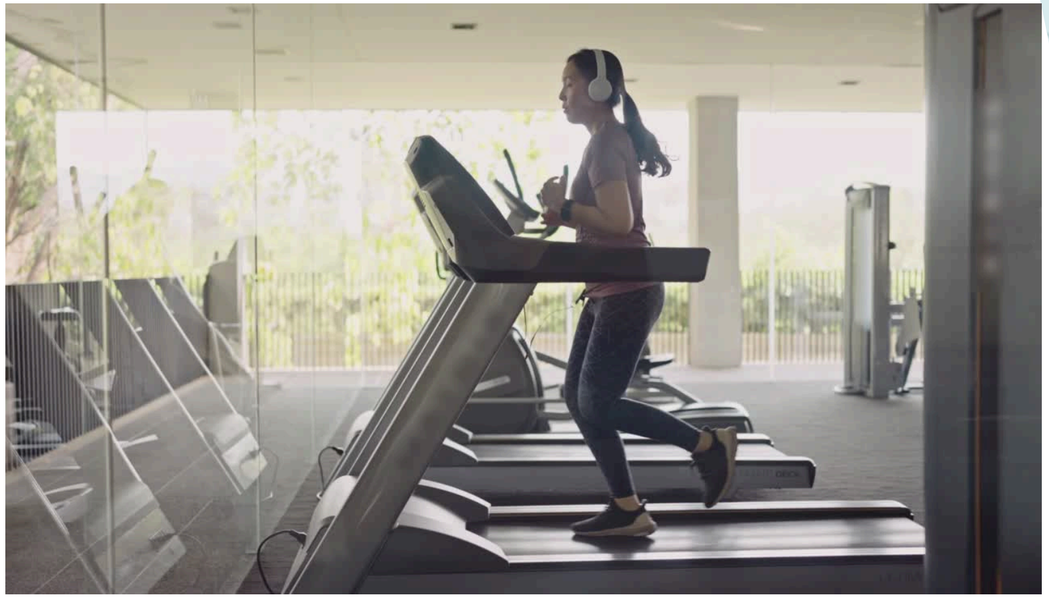
PARTICIPATION DATA

EXAMPLES

Rating	Description
0	Refused
1	Participated with full support
2	Participated with prompts
3	Participated independently

Level	Description
Full Participation	Engaged throughout
Partial Participation	Intermittently engaged
Minimal Participation	Rare engagement
No Participation	Refused/disengaged

PARTICIPATION DATA



FULL PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPATION DATA

PARTIAL PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPATION DATA

NO PARTICIPATION

TASK ANALYSIS DATA

Break Skills Into Small Steps

Example: Washing Hands

1. Turn on water
2. Wet hands
3. Pump soap
4. Rub hands
5. Rinse
6. Dry hands

https://goblin.tools/ToDo

TASK ANALYSIS DATA

Task Analysis Form

Enter task and the student instructions in the table. Add and delete rows as needed.

Steps	**Support Code** I-independent, V-verbal direction, G-gesture assist, M-adult model, P-physical assist
Open Netflix.	
Spend 45 minutes scrolling.	
Reject every option.	
Rewatch comfort show instead.	
Fall asleep.	

THE "ONE GOAL AT A TIME" RULE

Focus on:

- 1-2 priority goals
- One target behavior
- One clear indicator

Avoid:

Tracking EVERYTHING

EMBEDDING DATA INTO DAILY ROUTINES

Data Collection Opportunities:

- Arrival
- Feeding/snack
- Circle time
- Transitions
- Therapy
- Vocational tasks
- Leisure activities
- Toileting/hygiene routines

REALISTIC TEAM COLLABORATION

- Teachers
- Paras
- Therapists
- O&M Specialists
- Related Service Providers

Systems must be simple and consistent.

QUICK STAFF TRAINING TIPS

Teach Staff:

- What to look for
- What "counts"
- How to document quickly
- When to record data

Helpful Supports:

- Visual examples
- Simple rubrics
- One-page cheat sheets

LOW-TECH DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

- Sticky notes
- Clipboard forms
- Binder tabs
- Laminated checklists
- Dry erase markers
- Color-coded folders

DIGITAL TOOLS

- Google Forms
- Google Sheets
- Excel
- Data apps
- Voice notes
- QR code forms

USING PHOTOS & VIDEOS AS DATA

Visual Documentation Can Show:

- Positioning
- Engagement
- Skill progression
- Device use
- Communication attempts

Important Reminder: Follow district confidentiality policies.

DATA FOR STUDENTS WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS

- Visual attention
- Auditory response
- Tactile exploration
- Device tolerance
- Positioning effectiveness
- Environmental access
- Communication access

WHEN PROGRESS IS SLOW

Slow progress ≠ no progress

Look for:

- Increased consistency
- Reduced support needs
- Increased tolerance
- Emerging responses
- Generalization

AVOIDING DATA BURNOUT

Give Yourself Permission To:

- Simplify
- Prioritize
- Adjust systems
- Use professional judgment
- Collect less, but better, data

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

Goal:

Student will make a choice between 2 items.

Complicated System:

12 page data binder

Simplified System:

- Tally marks
- Note prompt level
- Quick note

SAMPLE DATA TEMPLATES

"What is this data telling me?"

MAKING DATA USEFUL

Use Data To:

- Adjust supports
- Change instructional strategies
- Increase access
- Celebrate growth
- Communicate with families
- Guide IEP decisions

PROGRESS MONITORING & INSTRUCTIONAL DECISIONS

Progress Monitoring Should Help Answer:

- Is the student progressing?
- Is the current SDI effective?
- Are accommodations sufficient?
- Does instruction need adjustment?
- Are supports increasing independence?

Data Should Inform:

- Instructional changes
- Goal revisions
- Support adjustments
- Service recommendations

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Data does not need to be perfect
- Small progress matters
- Simplicity increases consistency
- Meaningful data supports meaningful instruction
- Your system should work FOR you

THANK YOU!