

Working With Learning Disabilities

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SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

- Student is easily frustrated with normal classroom assignments.
- May have difficulty finishing assignments.
- May have problems following directions and instructions.
- Performance is inconsistent
- May be fidgety or restless

Specific Learning Disabled (continued)

- Has difficulty making connections between similar concepts – ex: $6 \times 3 = 18$ but is unable to solve $3 \times 6 =$
- Has difficulty comparing, classifying, or sorting according to given criteria.
- Has difficulty managing their time. No concept of time.
- Has difficulty thinking in a logical manner.

Specific Learning Disability

- A student may have a learning disability in one specific area or in several areas.
- The criteria to be identified as Specific Learning Disabled varies from state to state.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

IDEA defines a Specific Learning Disability as a deficit or disorder in the following areas:

- Oral expression (Expressive Language)
- Listening comprehension (Receptive Language)
- Basic writing mechanics (Written Expression)
- Reading decoding (Basic Reading)
- Reading comprehension
- Math Calculations
- Math Reasoning (Problem Solving/Applied Problems)

Specific Learning Disabled (continued)

- May process information slowly.
- May have limited vocabulary.
- May have difficulty recalling information.
- May have difficulty comprehending given information or concepts.
- Requires repeated clarification.
- Lacks detail in their written products.
- Lacks knowledge of language mechanics.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Utilizing varied instruction and activities to teaching concepts based on the needs of students.

What, How, Why

What does the teacher need to differentiate?

How will the teacher differentiate?

Why will the teacher differentiate?

“The Differentiated Classroom” Carol Ann Tomlinson

WHAT, HOW, WHY

What – The content

The environment

How – The process – activities, strategies

Why – The product – assessment

Working with the LD Student

Be highly structured and predictable.
Always: explain the purpose of the lesson;
break down tasks into small, sequential
parts; present directions one step at a time,
using both oral and written directions. (This
does not mean fragmenting the subject but
teaching the subject in small segments.)

(<http://www.swadulsted.com/workshops/ld/esl-ld.html>)

Working with the LD Student

Include opportunities to use several senses and learning strategies. Always: provide auditory, visual, and concrete cues; use physical demonstration of abstract concepts, such as left/right; use color for visual impact; encourage the student to repeat verbal information; act out action verbs

(<http://www.swadulthood.com/workshops/ld/esl-ld.html>)

Working with the LD Student

Simplify language but not content; emphasize content words and make concepts accessible through the use of pictures, charts, maps, time lines, and diagrams. Always: use visual aids such as overhead projectors, films, videos, slides, chalkboards, flip charts, computer graphics, or illustrations; use games, songs, rhymes to help students listen to sounds.

<http://www.swadulsted.com/workshops/ld/esl-ld.html>

Working with LD Students

Provide constant structure and multi-sensory review. Always: preview and review major points, both orally and visually; ask the student to state in his/her own words what has been presented; make frequent eye contact to maintain attention and encourage participation

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Working with the LD Student

Reinforce main ideas and concepts through rephrasing rather than through verbatim repetition. Always: provide intensive instruction until the materials is mastered; allow ample time for learning a task (a student with a learning disability will take longer to master new material; provide instruction to help transfer of learning from one task and setting to another; set up small discussion groups to allow time for each student to talk and use the language they have already developed

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