Differentiation of Instruction Handbook

Education Department
Briar Cliff University
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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Possible Characteristics (Symptoms) of ADHD

Impulsive

Inattention (Doesn’t maintain attention)

Interrupts

Fidgets (Squirms)

Distracted

Disorganized

Doesn’t listen

Careless mistakes

Daydreams

Loses things

Strategies to Differentiate Instruction (ADHD)
Simplify Directions
Set Behavioral Expectations
Summarize the Activities for the Lesson

Provide Structure (Minimal Rules)
Cues to Stay on Task
Check Performance Periodically
Correct Own Mistakes
Time to Answer
Assessment
Remind Students (To Focus)
Follow up Directions
Smaller Units of Work
Highlight Key Points
More Time to Complete Tests
Assistive Technology (Computers)

Advance Warning That Lesson Will End Soon
Preview Next Lesson
**Language Arts and Reading**
- Silent Reading (Fixed Time Each Day)
- Student Made Storyboards
- Recorded Books
- Word Bank for New Words

**Writing**
- List of Items to Check before Submitting

**Math**
- Mnemonics
- Real-life Examples
- Reread
- Clue Words
- Manipulatives

**Time Management**
- Sequence Long Activities into Short Activities

**Study Skills**
- Checklist


**Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): Autism, Asperger Syndrome, Rett Syndrome**

Education Department, Winter 2008
1. **What are the identifying characteristics of a learner with autism?**
   - It is hard for the person to communicate with others and to relate to the outside world
   - Autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls
   - Students with autism have strong visual skills but they struggle to understand what is being said to them. Therefore they struggle to remember what was said to them. They miss the normal verbal cues that indicate the conversation topic is changing, that alert them to what is important to remember, or jokes that are told. Using visual materials (books, videos, pictures, modeling procedures, word walls, posters of the schedule/rules/steps in a procedure, etc.) will capitalize on their strong visual skills.
   - They tend to have difficulty empathizing with others and expressing feelings.
     - Teach them to associate different facial expressions with emotions.
       - Examples:
         - use a poster that shows different facial expressions for various emotions
         - create cards on which the student has to match facial expressions with emotional words
         - use actual photos to explain nonverbal emotional messages
     - Insistence on sameness; resistance to change
     - Difficulty in expressing needs, using gestures or pointing instead of words
     - Repeating words or phrases in place of normal, responsive language
     - Laughing (and/or crying) for no apparent reason; showing distress for reasons not apparent to others
     - Preference to being alone; aloof manner
     - Tantrums
     - Difficulty in mixing with others
     - Not wanting to cuddle or be cuddled
     - Little or no eye contact
     - Unresponsive to normal teaching methods
     - Sustained odd play
     - Spinning objects
     - Obsessive attachment to objects
     - Apparent oversensitivity or undersensitivity to pain
     - No real fears of danger
     - Noticeable physical overactivity or extreme underactivity
     - Uneven gross/fine motor skills
     - Nonresponsive to verbal cues; acts as if deaf, although hearing tests in normal range
     - Socially inappropriate, repetitive behaviors such as hand-flapping, finger-snapping, rocking, head-banging
Children with autism struggle to understand how to behave socially. They may overreact when someone moves close to them, either socially or by accident. They may have difficulty maintaining eye contact during conversations.

- Remind them if they are too close or too far
- Remind them to look at you when you are talking to them
- Rehearse with them how to act or speak before sending them on an errand or into a small group
- Practice how to act using puppets or peer helpers prior to going into an unstructured social situation such as the lunch room, recess, or the principal’s office

Some children with autism display unique, isolated areas of giftedness, such as being able to count things quickly, use artistic expression, or have special musical ability.

Most children with autism understand words better by using visuals and can communicate by pointing, using pictures, or using sign language.

Children with autism have difficulty with over or under active senses. The fuzz on a peach may be experienced as painful and the smell may make the child gag. Some find normal daily noises painful (Autism Society of America).

Academically, children with autism often have difficulties with:

- Identifying important global concepts
- Processing auditory information (understanding what is said, retaining the information, retrieving the information for use later)
- Generalizing
- Sequencing information or steps in a task
- Transitioning between activities
- Understanding concepts of time and time management
- May be high functioning in some academic areas and low functioning in others

Asperger Syndrome is a higher functioning form of autism.

- These students often have good language and cognitive skills
- They usually want to fit in socially, but don’t know how to do it. This can lead to a poor self-concept and depression.
- Most possess average to above average intelligence
- They may have excellent rote memory skills and therefore can appear to have good language and cognitive skills. However, they have poor comprehension and conversational skills.
- They are often victimized by school bullies because they lack necessary social skills.
2. **Physical Signs and Symptoms** (for references, see p. 35)
   - Weight and height may be abnormal
   - Smaller- or larger-than average head
   - Undeveloped reflexes
   - Delayed development in dominance of hands
   - Senses may be hyposensitive or hypersensitive
   - High pain tolerance
   - Delays in learning motor skills
   - Difficulties walking—walk on toes
   - Lack of a sense of the environment around them—may cause them to be accident prone or run into things regularly

3. **What strategies can be used to differentiate instruction for this particular learning need?**

   Because of the wide variety of characteristics of autism, no single instructional strategy is effective with all children who have autism. However, listed below are strategies that have been shown to help children with autism in an academic setting:

   **Social Stories:** “stories” are created to help a child with autism understand social rules of behavior. These “stories” identify the steps in social situations and the appropriate behaviors. These stories frequently use pictures, photographs, or music. See examples on page 10 and in Appendix A.

   **Getting and staying organized:**
   - Maintain a consistent schedule, classroom rules, and classroom procedures. Children with autism will need a separate schedule and classroom rules for each teacher they have (color coded by teacher). They can not anticipate or understand that different teachers have different expectations. Make sure the schedule identifies the length of each work period to lessen the child’s anxiety. Post the schedule in several places: on the student’s desk, in the front panel of his/her binder, on the wall in front of the child, at the back of the room by the learning centers and/or relaxation area.
     - When there are schedule changes, prepare the child for them as schedule changes increase the child’s level of anxiety, bringing out undesirable behaviors.
     - If the schedule is laminated, use water-soluble markers to show expected changes in the schedule such as an assembly
     - Use sticky notes for unexpected changes in the schedule such as a weather-related early dismissal
   - Color code materials by subject area (red for reading, blue for math, etc.)
     - Color code worksheets and handouts
     - Color code folders to store worksheets/handouts in desk
     - Color code when writing assignments on the board
o Provide a way to organize homework requirements (to keep track of what is due, what is completed) using a homework notebook or daily planner
o Provide a pocket folder labeled to identify those papers that need to be returned to school (permission slips, homework, etc.) and those papers that can be left at home (letters to parents, graded homework, etc.)
o List tasks (using words or pictures) that need to be accomplished during the day so the child can check off the tasks as they are accomplished.
o Require all students to keep school supplies in a pencil bag or a “desk jacket”
  ▪ When a supply runs out, mark it in the homework notebook or daily planner

Other:
• Make requests in a positive way (‘Let’s walk” instead of “Stop running”)
• Recruit peers who are willing to befriend the student.
  o Provide the peers with information on autism and some strategies to use when working with the child.
  o Use more than one peer to avoid overtaxing the peer.
• Focus on preventing problem behavior by creating positive learning environments, rewarding the behaviors you want repeated
• Give the student outlets for energy: the freedom to “rock” during recess, erasing the board, washing desks after a messy activity, running errands to the office or to other teachers, handing out materials, etc.
• Transition times are challenging, especially if there is “free time” between activities. Practice ahead of time with the child to teach him/her what activities are acceptable during these times (practice flash cards, learning centers, educational games, books, etc.) to reduce or eliminate unstructured time. Clearly identify the location of work areas and/or areas where transition activities can be done and the expected behaviors in those areas. Identify where extra supplies can be found.
• Structure the format of worksheets and how they are taught in order to support the child’s need for routine.
  o Highlight the directions.
  o Number the steps for tasks that have more than one step
  o Give the child a physical example (model) of the completed task to help him/her with the transition from one task to another

During instruction:
o Seat the student in front to facilitate eye-to-eye contact with you and private, direct questioning from you when needed
o Introduce new activities slowly, with detailed instruction. Provide a great deal of guided practice prior to demanding independent practice.
o Capitalize on the child’s interests when introducing new and/or difficult tasks. For example:
new math concepts and problems can be presented using examples that incorporate the child’s special interest area

- stickers that show pictures of the child’s “special interest” can be used to reward behavior for following directions, completing the task, getting to work in a timely fashion, etc.

- Make sure the child is paying attention before starting
- Keep instruction clear, brief, specific, and consistent
- Positively reinforce appropriate responses
- Clearly identify the purpose of all assignments, presentations, etc. to help the child who has difficulty making inferences. Important content material and reasons for doing things must be explicitly pointed out to the child
  - Provide models and/or examples of the finished product, showing what is expected (for written assignments, projects, worksheets, etc.)
- Use graph paper to help organize math problems for the basic algorithms of addition, subtraction etc.
- Used lined paper for written work
- Provide pencil grippers to help guide students in holding the pencil appropriately
- Modify assignments appropriately: shorten the number of problems to be completed, give the student a copy of the notes/power point handouts, make audiotapes of the reading materials, allow the student to make an audiotape of answers to the test rather than writing out the answers, etc.
- Instead of long written assignments, require a one or two sentence summary (of the book, chapter, unit, etc) to help the child identify material that can be found on assessments.
  - In disciplinary situations, the child can also be asked to write a one or two sentence summary of the social interaction to help you understand the child’s perception of the situation and underlying motives.
- Consistently use auditory signals that alert the student to important information. These should be posted when/where the student should focus attention. Provide the student with a social story, for example: a poster with an ear and the words below to signal the need to listen:
  - “Listen up. This is important.”
  - “You need to know . . . “
  - “Remember . . . “
  - Below the ear and phrases, add the following cue: “When I hear them, I must (picture of a red stop sign) and look at (teacher’s name).
- Use visuals when teaching
  - Laminate daily schedules, procedures, and etiquette (how to participate in class, what activities may be done when assignments are completed, etc.)
• Provide a social story (picture or written description) of procedures and the tasks to be completed such as:
  1. Listen to teacher directions
  2. Work on page 6, problems 1-4
  3. Place finished work in finished folder
  4. Read car magazine when finished
• For assignments or projects that have several steps, provide a written rubric with due dates clearly indicated for each step.
  • Color code the due dates in the child’s daily planner or assignment notebook.
• Modify developmentally appropriate materials to make them age appropriate
• Provide cooperative learning activities directed and facilitated by you:
  1. It is important that the teacher select the participants in the groups to protect the child who lacks social skills. Put this student with peers who are compassionate.
  2. Assign specific roles to the groups, giving the student with autism specific instructions on his/her role. For example:
    • Provide a list of expectations or tasks for each role
    • Provide the child with a “social story” for how to function in each role
    • Example of tasks for the Reporter and what words to use:
      If you don’t hear what was said “Could you say that again please?”
      Write important ideas down “Which one should I write down?”
      Checks with group “Let me see if I have this right.”
• Use graphic organizers during instruction to identify the important concepts and show how they are related.
• Give the student a textbook and/or other reading material in which you have highlighted the key content to be learned. This will help the student focus on the key content and reduce the amount of reading he/she needs to do.
• Allow the student to give you a verbal report instead of having to complete written assignments since he/she often has difficulty writing. Create assessments that contain “fill in the blank” or “multiple choice” questions rather than “essay” and/or “short answers”. Highlight or bold face the important words to help the student recognize what needs to be answered.

For example, for the following question:
“Pick a biome and describe its location, geography, climate, plans, and animals. Identify one plant and animal adaptation that help it survive.” Re-write it as follows:

Biome Name: ___________
Where is the biome located? _______________
What kind of geographical features does it have? _______________
What are the average temperatures? _______________
What is the rainfall? _______________
List some plants in your biome. _______________
List some animals in your biome. _______________
List one plant and its adaptation: _______________
How does that adaptation help it survive? _______________
List one animal and its adaptation: _______________
How does that adaptation help it survive? _______________

(Taken from: Autism Society of America)

To help with self-calming:
Behavioral outbursts often come from frustration and anxiety over sensory overload, unscheduled situations, difficulty with communication, and/or social interactions
  o Stay alert for signs of stress and/or increasing levels of anxiety (putting hands over ears, plugging ears, squeezing a body part, rocking, etc.)
    ▪ Provide the child with a weighted object to hold
    ▪ Provide the child with a “self-calming area” (designated chair in a quiet area) where stress release activities or items have been placed (squeeze toys, headphones and music, etc.). Prior to the need for using this “self-calming area”, teach the child to use it.
    ▪ Provide the child with a visual agenda of appropriate classroom behaviors that can be used to calm themselves. When you notice the child’s stress levels rising, point to this visual agenda to remind him/her to “self-calm”.
  o Lower your voice, speak in short phrases, remain calm
  o Allow the student to use headphones to block out irritating sounds.

Examples of social stories: (Taken from: Autism Society of America)
1. An example of following a word cue:
   “When I’m at school, I do schoolwork. Sometimes Mrs. Lane needs to tell me something important. When Mrs. Lane needs to tell me something she will start with the words, ‘Okay class, listen up.’ I will try to stop what I am doing and listen to Mrs. Lane when I hear the words, ‘Okay class, listen up.’ I need to look at Mrs. Lane when I hear these words because I know she is going to tell me something important.”
2. An example for a daily routine for a younger student:
   First, get my homework out of my backpack.
   Second, put my backpack in my cubby.
   Third, put my homework in the finished homework bin.
   Fourth, sit down in my seat.
   Fifth, wait quietly for morning exercises to begin.
3. An example for an older student of how to use the writing process:
   First, I do a web for the content of the paper.
   Second, I do a web search for supporting information.
   Third, I write my notes on the computer.
4. Prior to taking a test or doing some other stressful assignment, create a “social story” that lists a relaxation strategy you have practiced:
   Before I take a test:
   1. I need to take 5 deep breaths (count to 10, get a drink of water, etc.)
   2. Read through the test
   3. I need to do the questions I know first
   4. I need to go back and do the other questions
   5. I need to review my answers
   6. I need to put the test in the teacher’s box
   7. I need to read a book about (my special interest area)

For examples of social stories that include visuals, see Appendix A.

In summary:
- Accentuate the student’s academic skills
- Teach the necessary social skills
- Encourage the student to participate in activities
- Some children with autism will be able to function in a general education classroom and will grow up to lead normal or near-normal lives

References:


Web site: www.autismsource.org

(Ed.), Inclusive education: A case book of readings for prospective and practicing
teachers (Volume 1) (pp. 51-69). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Retrieved March 20, 2008, Web site:


http://www.kidshealth.org/index.html


Web site:  http://www.autism-
society.org/site/DocServer/autismpuzzle.pdf?docID=3821


(5th ed.). Allyn and Bacon

Behavior Disorders
Possible Characteristics (Symptoms) of Behavior Disorders

Lack of empathy towards people
Physical abuse of other students
Lack of remorse
Bullying behavior
Destruction of property

Strategies to Differentiate Instruction (Behavior Disorders)

Praise appropriate behavior
Praise should be more prevalent than punishment
Praise signs of appropriate behavior
Provide encouragement
Use mild forms of punishment when appropriate
Provide time out before the student loses control
Beware of the effects of medication that the student is prescribed
Rules should be applied consistently
Redirect behavior
Display respect
Develop consequences for misbehavior
Provide structured/organized environment
Monitor student behavior
Establish realistic goals for the student
Give simple directions
Model appropriate behavior
Provide expectations for behavior before starting an activity
Provide opportunities for the student to experience success
Don’t argue with student
Reduce distractions
Consult other professionals

Adapted from the following source:

Strategies for teaching students with behavioral disorders. (2007). Retrieved April 2, 2008, from West Virginia University, Department of Education

Web site: http://www.as.wvu.edu/~scidis/behavior.html

Behavior Disorder (Emotional Disturbance)
Emotional disturbance is defined as follows:

“… a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:

(A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

(C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

(D) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

(E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems” (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Section 300.7(c)(4)(i)).

“The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance” (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Section 300.7(c)(4)(ii)).

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**English Language Learners (ELL)**

**Characteristics of English Language Learners**
Stages of Second Language Acquisition

NOTE: All students acquiring English pass through the following stages. The length of time each student spends in each stage will be as varied as the students themselves.

- Preproduction
  - 0-6 months
  - Minimal comprehension
  - Does not verbalize
  - Nods “yes” and “No”
  - Communicates with gestures, actions, and formulaic speech

- Early Production
  - 6-12 months
  - Limited comprehension (can say, “I don’t understand.”)
  - Produces one- or two-word responses
  - Participates using key words and familiar phrases
  - Uses present-tense verbs
  - Can label and categorize information

- Speech Emergence
  - 1-3 years
  - Has good comprehension
  - Can produce simple sentences
  - Makes grammar and pronunciation errors
  - Frequently misunderstands jokes

- Intermediate Fluency
  - 3-5 years
  - Has excellent comprehension
  - Makes few grammatical errors
  - Can produce connected narrative
  - Can write answers to higher-level questions

- Advanced Fluency
  - 5-7 years
  - Has near-native level of speech

Levels of Language Proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Process</th>
<th>Language Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and Synthesis</td>
<td>Semantic Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Functional Meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Underlying Theory Base of Instruction for ELLs

Education Department, Winter 2008
Structured strategies which effectively support the learning of ELLs in the classroom include such vital components as:

- Planning language objectives for lessons in all curricular areas
- Building academic vocabulary development into all lessons
- Building and activating background knowledge
- Providing opportunities for extended academic English instruction
- Integrating vocabulary and concept review throughout lessons
- Providing both modeling and feedback related to language usage in both speech and writing

Strategies are approaches that can be used across curricular areas to support students’ learning. The following premises of effective instruction of ELLs are emphasized. The premises are:

1. Teachers should provide instruction in a way that ensures that students are given comprehensible input (material present in a manner that leads to the student’s understanding of the content, i.e., visual, hands-on learning, simplified language, teacher modeling, colored overhead sheets, power point, etc.).
2. Teachers should provide opportunities to increase verbal interaction in classroom activities.
3. Teachers should provide instruction that contextualizes language as much as possible.
4. Teachers should use teaching strategies and grouping techniques that reduce the anxiety of the students as much as possible.
5. Teachers should provide activities in the classroom that offer opportunities for active involvement of students.

16 Strategies

- Most of the strategies for ELLs involve excellent teaching practices: Hands-on, active learning in a student-centered environment.
Some people speak louder when they meet someone learning English. Use the following suggestions to make your message clearer, not louder.

1. Select materials relevant to students’ experiences and backgrounds
2. Encourage students to summarize passages using familiar words after reading or listening
3. Keep a balance between expository (informational) and narrative (stories) materials
4. Call on non-volunteers to answer in class while helping the students to elaborate as they respond, using modeling and guided practice
5. When you read aloud, talk slowly to give students time to process what you said
6. When reading a long selection in a text, ask questions periodically rather than just at the end
7. Have students write about the text they are reading or listening to improve their comprehension skills
8. Using Language Purposefully to Make Meaning
   a. Provide opportunities for students to work together in mixed groups.
   b. Students discuss assignments while working together.
   c. Give clear purpose of assignments beforehand.
   d. Emphasize the context of written materials.
   e. Encourage students to read at their reading level (not their oral proficiency level).
   f. Teach comprehension strategies.
9. Supporting Communication in Your Classroom
   a. Encourage joint or cooperative student responses during instruction.
   b. Speak clearly, provide plenty of wait time, and give clear directions.
   c. Pause while reading and use exaggerated information to make a point.
   d. Encourage students to substitute their native language for unknown English words (orally or in writings).
   e. Clearly state classroom rules and expectations for success and participation.
   f. Classroom patterns and routine structures are predictable.
   g. Let students know that you think they are able to do well.
   h. Use visual approaches to instruction (e.g., tables, chairs, demonstrations)
10. Supporting Instruction in Your Classroom
    a. Activate/build what students know on the topics they are learning.
    b. Activate/build students’ knowledge about textbooks.
    c. Use elements of the minority culture to widen students’ perspective.
    d. Show interest in and respect for diverse cultures.
    e. Be aware of prerequisite concepts needed for learning.
    f. Present concepts in different ways.
    g. Use oral reading.
    h. Students should have a chance to discuss and elaborate new word meanings.
    i. Avoid idioms and other figurative language during teaching.
11. Preview and review material using graphic organizers
    a. Clustering chart
b. Comparison/contrast chart
c. Concept map
d. Cycle map
e. Venn diagram
f. Story map or story board
g. Problem – solution chart
h. Semantic map
i. Time sequence chart or timeline
j. Cause – effect chart

12. Include instructional simulations of real-life experiences and role playing
13. Use student logs and journals

14. Support instruction with technology and audiovisual materials such as posters, films, DVDs

15. Design cooperative learning and collaborative projects
   a. Allows for repetition of key words and phrases
   b. Requires functional, context-relevant speech
   c. Are rich with feedback from peers
   d. Can reduce student anxiety

16. Use maps, charts, props, concrete materials, visuals, and posters

17. Dramatize content with gestures and facial expressions

18. Label objects in the room in all languages present

19. Provide notes (outline, power point slides) to students for review later

20. Teach students a variety of note-taking formats

21. Encourage choral readings and partner reading

22. Use reciprocal teaching techniques
   a. The summarizer summarizes what has been read with the help of the other students or the teacher, if need be.
   b. The questioner asks questions to help the group members better understand the passage.
   c. The clarifier clarifies or asks others in the group to better explain what they mean.
   d. The predictor leads the group in a discussion about what may happen next.

23. Keep class routines consistent

24. Give clear directions; review and summarize often

25. Define new words and avoid using slang and idioms

References


Gifted and Talented
Definition of Gifted and Talented

“Demonstrated ability far above average in one or several areas including overall intellectual ability, leadership, specific academic subjects, creativity, athletics, or the visual or performing arts” (Friend & Bursuck, 2009, p. 526).

Possible Characteristics of Gifted and Talented

High motivation (Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2009, p. 209)
Enjoy challenges (Maker, 1993, p. 71)
Persistence/focus (Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2009, p. 209)
High ability (Friend & Bursuck, 2009)
Grasp concepts quickly ((Heward, 2009, p. 528)
Creative (Heward, 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009)

Strategies to Differentiate Instruction (Gifted and Talented)

“One problem with enrichment programs for the gifted and talented is simply stated: Most of the activities that are suggested for gifted and talented students would benefit all students” (Slavin, 2009, p. 379).

Curriculum Compacting (Willard-Holt, 2003, pp. 72 - 75)
Enrichment (Slavin, 2009, p. 379)
Acceleration (Slavin, 2009, p. 379
Flexible grouping (Willard-Holt, 2003, p. 73)
Tiered lessons (Heward, 2009, p. 513)
Higher order questions (Heward, 2009, p. 529)
References


Talented and Gifted

Characteristics of talented and gifted learners

- **Academic/Learning Characteristics**
  - Ability to reason and think abstractly
  - Acquires information easily
  - Enjoys learning
  - Highly inquisitive
  - Demonstrates interest in a variety of areas/activities
  - Generalizes knowledge to novel settings
  - Intellectually curious
  - Highly motivated, persistent learner
  - Sees relationships among seemingly unrelated items, facts, and ideas
  - Early reader
  - Exhibits sustained attention and concentration
  - Excellent memory
  - Highly verbal
  - Generates elaborate and possibly nontraditional responses to questions
  - Good problem-solving skills
  - Conceptualizes and synthesizes information quickly

- **Social and Emotional Characteristics**
  - Works well independently
  - May act impulsively, might be considered hyperactive
  - Self-confident
  - Exhibits qualities of leadership
  - Relates well to older classmates, teachers, and adults
  - Sensitive and empathetic
  - Intrinsically motivated
  - Risk taker
  - Critical of self, strives for perfection
  - Concern for social issues
  - Low social self-concept
  - Easily bored
  - Dislike of routine, rules, and regulations
  - Mature

- **Visual/Performing Arts**
  - Outstanding in sense of spatial relationships
  - Unusual ability for expressing self, feelings, moods, etc. through art, dance, drama, music
  - Good motor coordination
  - Exhibits creative expression
  - Desire with producing “own product” (not content with mere copying)
  - Observant
• Leadership
  o Assumes responsibility
  o High expectations for self and others
  o Fluent, concise self-expression
  o Foresees consequences and implications of decisions
  o Good judgment in decision making
  o Likes structure
  o Well-liked by peers
  o Self-confident
  o Organized

• Creative Thinking
  o Independent thinker
  o Exhibits original thinking in oral and written expression
  o Comes up with several solutions to a given problem
  o Possesses a sense of humor
  o Creates and invents
  o Challenged by creative tasks
  o Improvises often
  o Does not mind being different from the crowd

• General Intellectual Ability
  o Formulates abstractions
  o Process information in complex ways
  o Observant
  o Excited about new ideas
  o Enjoys hypothesizing
  o Learns rapidly
  o Uses a large vocabulary
  o Inquisitive
  o Self-starter

• Problem Solver
  o Enjoys the challenge of complexity
  o Persists until a problem is solved in a satisfactory way
  o Capable of creating a new or more clearer definition of an existing problem
  o Able to devise new and more efficient or effective methods
  o Able to reach solutions that may be different from the usual, but are recognized as being more effective, than previous solutions
Strategies

1. Curriculum Compacting
   a. Time spent on academic subjects is telescoped or reduced to allow students to make continuous progress
   b. Teachers determine goals and objectives of the unit of study
   c. Teachers assess what students already know prior to teaching the unit of study
   d. Eliminate instruction on goals and objectives met – students pursue special interests, work with a mentor, or study the same topic at a more advanced level.

2. Projects that require Higher-Level Thinking and Problem Solving

3. Flexible grouping
   a. Group by interests, needs and abilities
   b. Use pre-assessment in order to determine groupings
   c. Interest inventories can serve as information for possible groupings

4. Cluster Grouping
   a. Placing five or more students who have similar needs and abilities with one teacher
   b. This arrangement promotes challenging cognitive and positive social-emotional development for students.
   c. For teachers, the cluster grouping provides a group to plan for rather than single students sprinkled among several teachers

5. Tiered Assignments
   a. Tiered activities are a series of related tasks of varying complexity.
   b. All of these activities relate to essential understanding and key skills that students need to acquire.
   c. Teachers assign the activities as alternative ways of reaching the same goals taking into account individual student needs.

6. Problem-based Learning
   a. Students are presented with authentic, real-world situations (having multiple solutions) and are asked to solve the problem
   b. Teachers function as facilitators and tutors

7. Acceleration
   a. Accelerate the pace of learning, not giving more work to keep TAG students busy
   b. Work must be linked to increasingly more complex content and challenging learning experiences
8. Enrichment
   
a. Provide students with information, materials, and assignments that enable them to elaborate on concepts being presented as part of the regular curriculum
b. Usually requires high levels of thinking

9. Independent Study Projects
   
a. Independent Study is a research project where students learn how to develop the skills for independent learning.
b. The degree of help and structure will vary between students and depend on their ability to manage ideas, time and productivity.

10. Buddy-Studies
    
a. Two or three students to work together on a project.
b. Students share the research and analysis/organization of information but each student must complete an individual product to demonstrate learning that has taken place and be accountable for their own planning, time management and individual accomplishment

11. Learning Contracts
    
a. A learning contract is a written agreement between teacher and student that will result in students working independently.
b. The contract helps students to set daily and weekly work goals and develop management skills. It also helps the teacher to keep track of each student’s progress.
c. The actual assignments will vary according to specific student needs.

References


    http://members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/differentiatingstrategies.html
Learning Disabilities: Signs, Symptoms, and Strategies

With 4 to 6 percent of all students classified as having specific learning disabilities (SLD) in our nation’s public schools, every teacher can expect to find students with learning disabilities in the classroom. Success for these students requires a focus on individual achievement, individual progress, and individual learning. Despite obstacles, recent research tells us that we can teach these students how to learn.

The term “Learning Disabilities is an “umbrella” term describing a number of other, more specific learning disabilities. A learning disability is a neurological disorder that affects one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. The disability may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations.

Every individual with a learning disability is unique and shows a different combination and degree of difficulties. A common characteristic among people with learning disabilities is uneven areas of ability, “a weakness within a sea of strengths.” For instance, a child with dyslexia who struggles with reading, writing and spelling may be very capable in math and science.

Learning disabilities should not be confused with learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps; of mental retardation; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantages.

Generally speaking, people with learning disabilities are of average or above average intelligence. There often appears to be a gap between the individual’s potential and actual achievement. This is why learning disabilities are referred to as “hidden disabilities:” the person looks perfectly “normal” and seems to be a very bright and intelligent person, yet may be unable to demonstrate the skill level expected from someone of a similar age.

A learning disability cannot be cured or fixed; it is a lifelong challenge. However, with appropriate support and intervention, people with learning disabilities can achieve success in school, at work, in relationships, and in the community.

Specific Learning Disabilities:

Dyslexia
A language and reading disability

Dyscalculia
Problems with arithmetic and math concepts

Dysgraphia
A writing disorder resulting in illegibility

Dyspraxia (Sensory Integration Disorder)
Problems with motor coordination

Central Auditory Processing Disorder
Difficulty processing and remembering language-related tasks

Non-Verbal Learning Disorders
Trouble with nonverbal cues, e.g., body language; poor coordination, clumsy

Visual Perceptual/Visual Motor Deficit
Reverses letters; cannot copy accurately; eyes hurt and itch; loses place; struggles with cutting
Language Disorders (Aphasia/Dysphasia)
Trouble understanding spoken language; poor reading comprehension

Dyslexia (Language and reading disability)

Signs and Symptoms
Reads slowly and painfully
Experiences decoding errors, especially with the order of letters
Shows wide disparity between listening comprehension and reading comprehension of some text
Has trouble with spelling
May have difficulty with handwriting
Exhibits difficulty recalling known words
Has difficulty with written language
May experience difficulty with math computations
Decoding real words is better than nonsense words
Substitutes one small sight word for another: a, I, he, the, there, was

Strategies
Provide a quiet area for activities like reading, answering comprehension questions
Use books on tape
Use books with large print and big spaces between lines
Provide a copy of lecture notes
Don’t count spelling on history, science or other similar tests
Allow alternative forms for book reports
Allow the use of a laptop or other computer for in-class essays
Use multi-sensory teaching methods
Teach students to use logic rather than rote memory
Present material in small units
**Dyscalculia (Mathematical disability)**

**Signs and Symptoms**
Shows difficulty understanding concepts of place value, and quantity, number lines, positive and negative value, carrying and borrowing
Has difficulty understanding and doing word problems
Has difficulty sequencing information or events
Exhibits difficulty using steps involved in math operations
Shows difficulty understanding fractions
Is challenged making change and handling money
Displays difficulty recognizing patterns when adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing
Has difficulty putting language to math processes
Has difficulty understanding concepts related to time such as days, weeks, months, seasons, quarters, etc.
Exhibits difficulty organizing problems on the page, keeping numbers lined up, following through on long division problems

**Strategies**
Allow use of fingers and scratch paper
Use diagrams and draw math concepts
Provide peer assistance
Suggest use of graph paper
Suggest use of colored pencils to differentiate problems
Work with manipulatives
Draw pictures of word problems
Use mnemonic devices to learn steps of a math concept
Use rhythm and music to teach math facts and to set steps to a beat
Schedule computer time for the student for drill and practice
**Dysgraphia (Writing or fine motor skills deficit)**

**Signs and Symptoms**
May have illegible printing and cursive writing (despite appropriate time and attention given the task)
Shows inconsistencies: mixtures of print and cursive, upper and lower case, or irregular sizes, shapes or slant of letters
Has unfinished words or letters, omitted words
Inconsistent spacing between words and letters
Exhibits strange wrist, body or paper position
Has difficulty pre-visualizing letter formation
Copying or writing is slow or labored
Shows poor spatial planning on paper
Has cramped or unusual grip/may complain of sore hand
Has great difficulty thinking and writing at the same time (taking notes, creative writing.)

**Strategies**
Suggest use of word processor
Avoid chastising student for sloppy, careless work
Use oral exams
Allow use of tape recorder for lectures
Allow the use of a note taker
Provide notes or outlines to reduce the amount of writing required
Reduce copying aspects of work (pre-printed math problems)
Allow use of wide rule paper and graph paper
Suggest use of pencil grips and /or specially designed writing aids
Provide alternatives to written assignments (video-taped reports, audio-taped reports)
**Dyspraxia (Sensory Integration Disorder-Problems with motor coordination)**

**Signs and Symptoms**
- Exhibits poor balance; may appear clumsy; may frequently stumble
- Shows difficulty with motor planning
- Demonstrates inability to coordinate both sides of the body
- Has poor hand-eye coordination
- Exhibits weakness in the ability to organize self and belongings
- Shows possible sensitivity to touch
- May be distressed by loud noises or constant noises like the ticking of a clock or someone tapping a pencil
- May break things or choose toys that do not require skilled manipulation
- Has difficulty with fine motor tasks such as coloring between the lines, putting puzzles together; cutting accurately or pasting neatly
- Irritated by scratchy, rough, tight or heavy clothing

**Strategies**
- Pre-set students for touch with verbal prompts, “I’m going to touch your right hand.”
- Avoid touching from behind or getting too close-inform peers about this, too
- Provide a quiet place, without auditory or visual distractions, for testing, silent reading or work that requires great concentration
- Warn the student when bells will ring or if a fire drill is scheduled
- Whisper when working one to one with the child
- Allow parents to provide earplugs or sterile waxes for noisy events such as assemblies
- Make sure the parent knows about what is observed about the student in the classroom
- Refer student for occupational therapy or sensory integration training
- Be cognizant of light and light sources that may be irritating to child
- Use manipulatives, but make sure they are in student’s field of vision and don’t force student to touch them
Central Auditory Processing Disorder (Difficulty processing and remembering language-related tasks)

**Signs and Symptoms**
Has difficulty processing and remembering language-related tasks but may have no trouble interpreting or recalling non-verbal environmental sounds, music, etc. May process thoughts and ideas slowly and have difficulty explaining them.
Misspells and mispronounces similar-sounding words or omits syllables; confuses similar-sounding words (celery/salary; belt/built; three/free; jab/job; bash/batch)
May be confused by figurative language (metaphor, similes) or misunderstand puns and jokes; interprets words too literally
Often is distracted by background sounds/noises
Finds it difficult to stay focused on or remember a verbal presentation or lecture
May misinterpret or have difficulty remembering oral directions; difficulty following directions in a series
Has difficulty comprehending complex sentence structure or rapid speech
“ Ignores” people, especially if engrossed
Says “What?” a lot, even when has heard much of what was said

**Strategies**
Show rather than explain
Supplement with more intact senses (use visual cues, signals, handouts, manipulatives)
Reduce or space directions, give cues such as “ready?”
Reword or help decipher confusing oral and/or written directions
Teach abstract vocabulary, word roots, synonyms/antonyms
Vary pitch and tone of voice, alter pace, stress key words
Ask specific questions as you teach to find out if they do understand
Allow them 5-6 seconds to respond (“think time”)
Have the student constantly verbalize concepts, vocabulary words, rules, etc.
Avoid asking the child to listen and write at the same time
Non-Verbal Learning Disorders (Trouble with nonverbal cues, e.g., body language, poor coordination, clumsy)

Signs and Symptoms
Has trouble recognizing nonverbal cues such as facial expression or body language
Shows poor psycho-motor coordination; clumsy; seems to be constantly “getting in the way,” bumping into people and objects
Using fine motor skills a challenge: tying shoes, writing, using scissors
Needs to verbally label everything that happens to comprehend circumstances, spatial orientation, directional concepts and coordination; often lost or tardy
Has difficulty coping with changes in routing and transitions
Has difficulty generalizing previously learned information
Has difficulty following multi-step instructions
Make very literal translations
Asks too many questions, may be repetitive and inappropriately interrupt the flow of a lesson
Imparts the “illusion of competence” because of the student’s strong verbal skills

Strategies
Rehearse getting from place to place
Minimize transitions and give several verbal cues before transition
Avoid assuming the student will automatically generalize instructions or concepts
Verbally point out similarities, differences and connections; number and present instructions in sequence; simplify and break down abstract concepts, explain metaphors, nuances and multiple meanings in reading material
Answer the student’s questions when possible, but let the student know a specific number (three vs. a few) and that you can answer three more at recess, or after school
Allow the child to abstain from participating in activities at signs of overload
Thoroughly prepare the child in advance for field trips, or other changes, regardless of how minimal
Implement a modified schedule or creative programming
Never assume child understands something because he or she can “parrot back” what you’ve just said
Offer added verbal explanations when the child seems lost or registers confusion
Visual Perceptual/Visual Motor Deficit  (Reverses letters; cannot copy accurately; eyes hurt and itch; loses place; struggles with cutting)

Signs and Symptoms
May have reversals: b for d, p for q or inversions: u for n, w for m
Has difficulty negotiating around campus
Complains eyes hurt and itch, rubs eyes, complains print blurs while reading
Turns head when reading across page or holds paper at odd angles
Closes one eye while working, may yawn while reading
Cannot copy accurately
Loses place frequently
Does not recognize an object/word if only part of it is shown
Holds pencil too tightly; often breaks pencil point/crayons
Struggles to cut or paste
Misaligns letters; may have messy papers, which can include letters colliding, irregular spacing, letters not on line

Strategies
Avoid grading handwriting
Allow students to dictate creative stories
Provide alternative for written assignments
Suggest use of pencil grips and specially designed pencils and pens
Allow use of computer or word processor
Restrict copying tasks
Provide tracking tools: ruler, text windows
Use large print books
Plan to order or check out books on tape
Experiment with different paper types: pastels, graph, embossed raised line paper
Language Disorders: Aphasia, Dysphasia or Global Aphasia (Trouble understanding spoken language; poor reading comprehension)

**Signs and Symptoms**
Has difficulty gaining meaning from spoken language
Demonstrates poor written output
Exhibits poor reading comprehension
Shows difficulty expressing thoughts in verbal form
Has difficulty labeling objects or recognizing labels
Is often frustrated by having a lot to say and no way to say it
Feels that words are “right on the tip of my tongue”
Can describe an object and draw it, but can’t think of the word for it
May be depressed or having feelings of sadness
Has difficulty getting jokes

**Strategies**
Speak slowly and clearly and use simple sentences to convey information
Refer to a speech pathologist
Allow tape recorder for note taking
Write main concepts on board
Provide support person or peer tutor
Use visualization techniques to enhance listening and comprehension
Use of graphic organizers for note taking from lectures or books
Use story starters for creative writing assignments
Practice story mapping
Draw out details with questions and visualization strategies
**Cerebral Palsy: Physical Signs and Symptoms**

Muscle twitching
Muscles contracting making it hard to walk at times (especially when under high amounts of stress)
Lack of balance, depth perception, and coordination making it hard to do simple tasks.

**Students with Multiple Disabilities: Physical Signs and Symptoms**

May have difficulty remembering skills or putting different skills together in different situations.

**Tips for Physical Education Majors**

Make the students fell like a part of the class from the very first day. Do not allow them to be different.

When the disabled student is sick or not in class, use that time to teach the rest of the class about different handicaps so they can have a better understanding of disabilities.

Catch the child one-on-one so that he/she understands and knows you are there to help them.

Figure out what the child’s strengths are and concentrate on those.

Have high expectations—they can achieve them.

**Do not** allow other students to harass, make fun, or joke about the handicapped student.

REFERENCES:


Appendix A

Samples created by Sharon Wehde, paraeducator
Bryant Elementary, Sioux City Community Schools
Using the computer program: Board Maker from the AEA
I am mad, I need a timeout.
I can handle this.

This might make me feel uncomfortable.

This could make me really nervous.

This can make me MAD!!!

This can make me lose control!
My fingers do not go in my mouth. Fingers have germs on them.

I do not want germs in my mouth.

When I chew on my fingers, spit gets on my fingers.

When I touch things my spit gets on them. That is gross.

My classmates do not chew on their fingers. I will not put my fingers in my mouth. I will not chew on my fingers.
My new teacher is my teacher today.

I will listen to my new teacher today.

I will follow the same rules that Mrs. Voegeli has.

I will sit on the carpet and not touch anyone.

I will do my work at my table when my new teacher tells me.

I will follow the class rules.
When I get mad I will not hit other students or my teachers.

When I get mad I will get a timeout pass and give it to my teacher.

Then I will talk about being mad with my teacher.

I will not hit. Hitting hurts people, I do not want to hurt anybody.