Strategies for Specially Designed Instruction

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Math

Visual Representations

Teaching visual representations is one way to help students with disabilities succeed in math (Marita & Hord, 2017). One example of a visual representation is a diagram to represent key components for solving a word problem (van Garderen, 2007; van Garderen & Scheuermann, 2015). A line diagram is often used to measure or order numbers and a part/whole diagram is used to group information. Another example of a visual representation is a graphic organizer, which is used to solve systems of linear equations (Ives, 2007). Explicit instruction in the use of a graphic organizer for math benefits students who struggle with working memory and processing (Keeler & Swanson, 2001).

Interested in learning more?

Explore examples of handwritten diagrams, computerized diagrams, and graphic organizers.

Want another math strategy?

Learn proceduralizing, featured in T/TAC William & Mary Link Lines.

Behavior

Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring is an essential skill for improving behavior and increasing independence (Bruhn et al., 2015). Teaching students to self-monitor requires structured, positive guidance from the teacher(s) to assist the student in tracking desired behavior (Menzies, Lane & Lee, 2009). As the student reaches independent self-regulation, supports are faded (Rafferty, 2010). Before implementing a self-monitoring strategy, review the following considerations.

- ✓ The student has the ability to perform the target behavior, but is not motivated.
- ✓ The student is expected to engage in the target behavior multiple times per week.
- ✓ The student's culture is not interfering with his lack of performance of the target behavior.

(Rafferty, 2010)

Interested in learning more?

Begin by creating a self-monitoring checklist.

Want another behavior strategy?

Read the related T/TAC William & Mary article on visual supports.

Need a class wide management system?

Browse management card examples in the related article 'It's in the Cards'.

Reading

Repeated Reading

Students who have strong reading fluency can process and understand literature (Rasinski, 2004; Stevens et al., 2017). One strategy which increases reading fluency for students with learning disabilities, is repeated reading. Not only does repeated reading address fluency deficits, it also improves comprehension and accuracy of text read (Stevens et al., 2017). When repeated reading is paired with video self-modeling, it promotes positive student experiences, and ensures errorless practice (Decker & Buggey, 2014).

Interested in learning more?

Watch repeated reading in action and find free graphing templates.

Follow a sequential process for video self-modeling.

Want free lessons to use in a small group?

Explore student activities on monitoring fluency.

Check out this list of additional links!

Reference T/TAC William & Mary's Reading Resource Guide.

Writing

Self-Regulated Strategy Development

Students with disabilities benefit from strategy instruction for the writing process (Gillespie & Graham, 2014). One teaching model which incorporates both strategy instruction and self-regulation is Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) (Harris, Santangelo, & Graham, 2008). SRSD may supplement a writing workshop approach to intensify the instruction for students in need. The stages of SRSD include direct instruction in activating prior knowledge, writing strategies, modeling, memorizing through use of mnemonics, and goal-setting prior to independent student practice (Harris et al., 2003).

Want to learn more?

View an in-depth module on using SRSD with a writing strategy from Vanderbilt University's IRIS Center.

View a testimony from a classroom teacher on the benefits of SRSD.

Need free tools?

Explore more tools to support the SRSD strategy.

Wondering how SRSD can support Specially Designed Instruction?

Browse a related T/TAC William & Mary's article on Specially Designed Instruction and SRSD.

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