

Environmental Modifications **to Increase Student Success**

The Presentation of Materials

- Break assignment into segments of shorter tasks.
- Use concrete examples of concepts before teaching the abstract.
- Relate information to the student's experiential base.
- Reduce the number of concepts presented at one time.
- Provide an overview of the lesson before beginning.
- Monitor the student's comprehension of language used during instruction.
- Schedule frequent, short conferences with the student to check for comprehension.
- Provide consistent review of any lesson before introducing new information.
- Allow student to obtain and report information utilizing: cassette recorders, dictation, typewriters/computers, interviews, calculators, and fact sheets.
- Highlight important concepts to be learned in text of material.
- Monitor the rate at which material is presented.
- Give additional presentations by varying the methods using repetition, simpler explanations, more examples and modeling.
- Require verbal responses to indicate comprehension.
- Give frequent reminders of homework assignments.
- Provide clear, concise directions and concrete examples for homework assignments.
- Assign tasks at an appropriate reading level.
- Allow for the oral administration of tests.
- Check assignment sheet for accuracy.

Modifying the Environment

- Use study carrels.
- Seat student in an area free of distractions.
- Use preferential seating.
- Allow the student to select his/her seating.
- Help keep student's work area free of unnecessary materials.
- Use checklists to help the student get organized.
- Frequently check the organization of the student's notebook.
- Monitor the student's use of his/her assignment sheet.
- Check the assignment sheet for accuracy.
- Provide opportunities for movement.

Modifying the Demands

- Increase time allowed for completion of tests or assignments.
- Reduce the amount of work or length of tests.
- Prioritize assignments and/or steps to completing assignments for the student.
- Space short work periods with breaks or change of tasks.
- Consistently follow a specific routine.
- Alternate quiet and active tasks.
- Set time limits for specific task completion.

Modifying the Materials

Visual Motor Integration and Written Expression Problems:

- ❑ Allow for spelling errors.
- ❑ Allow student to use either cursive or manuscript.
- ❑ Set realistic and mutually agreed upon expectations for neatness.
- ❑ Let student type, record, or give answers orally instead of writing.
- ❑ Avoid pressures of speed and accuracy.
- ❑ Provide copies of notes.
- ❑ Reduce the amount of copying from text and board.
- ❑ Accept key word responses instead of complete sentences.

Visual Processing Problems:

- ❑ Highlight information to be learned.
- ❑ Keep written assignments and workspace free from extraneous and/or irrelevant distracters.
- ❑ Use high contrast text and legible copies.
- ❑ Provide clear and well-defined worksheets.
- ❑ Go over visual task with student and make sure student has a clear understanding of all parts of the assignment from the beginning.
- ❑ Avoid having student copy from the board.
- ❑ Have student verbalize instructions before beginning task.
- ❑ Avoid crowded, cluttered worksheets by utilizing techniques such as blocking (blocking assignments into smaller segments), and /or cutting, folding, underling, color-coding, or highlighting sections of the worksheet.

Language Processing Problems:

- ❑ Give written directions to supplement verbal directions.
- ❑ Slow the rate of presentations.
- ❑ Paraphrase information.
- ❑ Keep statements short and to the point.
- ❑ Avoid use of abstract language such as metaphors, idioms and puns.
- ❑ Keep sentence structures simple.
- ❑ Encourage feedback from student to check for understanding.
- ❑ Familiarize student with any new vocabulary before beginning the lesson.
- ❑ Reduce the amount of extraneous noise such as conversation, radio, TV, outside noises, etc.
- ❑ Alert student's attention before expressing key points.
- ❑ Ensure the readability levels of the textbooks are commensurate with the student's language level.
- ❑ Utilize visual aids such as charts and graphs.
- ❑ Utilize manipulative, hands-on activities whenever possible.
- ❑ Always demonstrate how new material relates to previously learned information.
- ❑ Cue student by calling his/her name before asking questions.

Organizational Problems:

- ❑ Provide an established daily routine.
- ❑ Provide clear rules and consistently enforce them.
- ❑ Contract with student and use rewards for completion of contract.
- ❑ Check the student's notebook to insure the use of dividers, assignment sheet, and calendar.

- ❑ Provide due date on written assignments.
- ❑ Provide a specific place for turning in completed assignments.

Use of Groups and Peers

- ❑ Utilize cooperative learning strategies when appropriate.
- ❑ Assign a peer helper to check understanding of directions.
- ❑ Assign a peer helper to read important directions and essential information.
- ❑ Assign a peer tutor to record materials dictated by the student.

Helping Focus Attention

- ❑ Establish relevancy and purpose for learning by related to previous experiences.
- ❑ Shape approximations of desired behavior by providing direct reinforcement such as praise or immediate feedback of correct answers.
- ❑ Seat student close to teacher.
- ❑ Make a positive, personal comment every time the student shows any evidence of interest.
- ❑ Make frequent checks for assignment progress/completion.
- ❑ Give advance warning of when a transition is going to take place.
- ❑ Use physical proximity and touch to help student refocus.

Assisting the Reluctant Starter

- ❑ Give personal cue to begin work.
- ❑ Give work in smaller units.
- ❑ Provide immediate reinforcers and feedback.
- ❑ Make sure the appropriate books and materials are open to the correct pages.
- ❑ Introduce the assignment in sequential steps.
- ❑ Check for student understanding of instructions.
- ❑ Check on progress often in the first few minutes of work.
- ❑ Provide time suggestions for each task.
- ❑ Provide a checklist for long, detailed tasks.

Dealing with Inappropriate Behavior

- ❑ Provide clear and concise classroom expectations and consequences.
- ❑ Consistently enforce rules.
- ❑ Avoid the use of confrontational techniques.
- ❑ Provide student with alternatives.
- ❑ Designate a “cooling off” location within the classroom.
- ❑ Assign activities that require some movement.
- ❑ Use praise generously.
- ❑ Avoid power struggles.
- ❑ Ignore attention-getting behavior for a short time.
- ❑ Avoid criticizing the student.
- ❑ Communicate frequently with parents.
- ❑ Monitor levels of tolerance and be mindful of signs of frustration.
- ❑ Speak privately, without the audience of peers, to student about inappropriate behavior.