ISTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS (SLD)

Reading – Beginning

Instruction:

1. Based on informal sound/letter assessment, provide direct, sequential, and systematic "sound/word study" or phonics instruction for unknown sound letter patterns
2. Always use a multi-sensory approach for 'sound/word study': see, hear, say, read, spell, trace, and write (on paper, in sand or salt, in the air)
3. Teach the key phonemic awareness skills of segmenting (for spelling) and blending (for reading)
4. Incorporate multi-sensory practice with high frequency 'sight words' that do not follow sound/letter patterns
5. Balance sound/word study with contextual practice of phrases, sentences, or short stories
6. Provide fluency training: (1) modeling of rate, accuracy, chunking, expression and (2) repeated oral reading using materials at or just below the student's current reading level
7. Provide support for written materials above the student's current reading level
8. Use meaning and authentic contextual materials that relate to the student's interests, life, or work

Visit the FREE online course "Teaching CCRS Reading Foundational Skills" available at http://online.themlc.org/

This course was created for Beginning and Intermediate ABE/ESL reading teachers, support staff, and volunteers. It is intended to improve their understanding, testing, and teaching of **beginning alphabetics and fluency**, which are aligned **w**ith **CCRS Reading Foundational (RF) Skills 1-4** at Levels A-C or K-5. These skills "are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines" (*College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education*, 2013, p. 40).

The instructor and participants will negotiate relevant course and activity completion for three to six Continuing Education Units.

Course Objectives:

1. To provide online access to adult literacy research reports and findings from 2000-2013
2. To improve understanding of beginning alphabetics (RF 1: Print Concepts, RF 2: Phonological Awareness, RF 3: Phonics & Word Recognition) and fluency (RF 4: Fluency)
3. To inspire use of informal tests to determine ABE/ESL students' needs in RF Skills 1-4
4. To inspire use of evidence-based tools and activities to explicitly teach RF Skills 1-4
5. To share Minnesota ABE/ESL case studies about successful beginning alphabetics and fluency instruction

Accommodations:

- Allow extended time for all reading-related assignments and testing

- Allow the use of taped texts. Visit https://www.learningally.org/ to access a library of electronic books based on documentation of reading disabilities
- Allow oral testing with a taped version of a test
- Allow oral testing with a test reader

Reading – Intermediate/Advanced

Instruction:

1. Determine a word reading level and word analysis skills with formal or informal word recognition tests
2. Based on word reading results, provide direct instruction of flexible syllabication rules and practice with multi-syllable words
3. Include instruction and practice with morphemes or word parts: prefixes, suffixes, root or base words
4. Provide fluency training: (1) modeling of rate, accuracy, chunking, expression and (2) repeated oral reading using materials at or just below the student's current reading level
5. Provide support for written materials above the student's current reading level
6. Pre-teach new vocabulary words specific to authentic contextual material (textbooks, study books, newspapers, or work-related materials)
7. Make flashcards or have students keep a word journal of new or unknown words encountered while reading. Write the word, a simple meaning, a phrase or sentence using the word, antonyms, synonyms, pictures, or associations. A personal connection or a personal example of a new word will help students remember
8. Before reading, teach students to survey the title and subheadings of the chapter, and preview the questions or activities at the end
9. Teach students to look for text cues that indicate important information: boldface, italics, color, larger font size, change in font style, or sidebars
10. Before reading, survey graphic additions that indicate related information: pictures, photographs, diagrams, tables, charts, and maps. Encourage students to gain as much information from the picture cues as they can
11. Before reading, ask students: "What do you already know about this topic?" and/or "What do you want or need to learn about this topic?" This establishes a connection between known and unknown. Encourage students to jot down questions during reading. This also helps connect new information with what is already known

Accommodations:

- Allow extended time for all reading related assignments and testing
- Allow the use of a tape recorder in class or during lectures
- Use study guides for textbooks if available
- Allow the use of taped texts. Visit Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic at https://www.learningally.org to access a library of electronic books based on documentation of reading disabilities
- Allow oral testing with a taped version of a test
- Allow oral testing with a test reader

Writing

Instruction:

1. Teach a consistent and efficient pencil grip: (1) the distance between the finger and the pencil tip should be between 3/4 – 1 inch, (2) pressure on the pencil should be

moderate, not too light or too heavy, and (3) the angle of the pencil should be about 45%
2. Teach fluent letter formation using both large muscles (in the air) and small muscles (on paper)
3. Further determine English sound/letter knowledge and teach unknown sound/letter patterns to mastery
4. Further determine high frequency or sight word knowledge and teach unknown words to mastery
5. Further determine English syllabication skills and teach syllable patterns to mastery
6. Teach simple sentence structure and provide daily sentence writing practice
7. Use daily sentence combining exercises to improve complex sentence writing skills
8. Provide a word bank of decodable and sight words for all writing practice
9. Teach the use of computer keyboarding and word processing for all writing tasks
10. Teach the use of an electronic dictionary available through Franklin Electronic Publishers at www.franklin.com/dictionaries
11. Teach the use of idea maps or notecards for organizing main ideas and supporting details for paragraph or essay writing
12. Teach the essay format of including an introductory paragraph, topic or position statements, supporting or body paragraph(s), and a concluding paragraph
13. Teach the use of outlining for planning and organizing longer essays or papers

Explicitly teach a multi-step process of writing such as **POWER**:

The **Planning** step involves deciding on the purpose by answering the questions: Who am I writing for? Why am I writing? What do I know about the topic? and making a brainstorm list of key words or idea map. This step helps reluctant writers get started rather than sit and stare at a blank piece of paper!

The **Organizing** step involves grouping or organizing the brainstorm list or idea map into possible sentences or paragraphs and determining the sequence. Some words or ideas will not "fit" and can be eliminated from the list. This step helps reluctant writers move from words to text.

The **Writing** step involves writing a draft of sentences and paragraphs. The writer is focused on expressing their ideas, not the mechanics of writing. Encourage reluctant writers to write and not worry about spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.

The **Editing** step involves looking over the draft for errors and mistakes. This is where the author or another proofer makes corrections in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage. It can be a set of teachable moments, where the teacher provides feedback and instructs the writer in the mechanics of writing.

The **Revising** step involves rewriting the draft into a final version using the revisions, improvements, or enhancements from the editing step.

Accommodations:

- Allow use of a pencil grip
- Reduce spelling lists or other written assignments
- Don't count off for spelling, mechanical, or grammatical errors
- Allow extended time for all writing-related assignments and tests
- Allow the use of an electronic dictionary, keyboarding, or word processing for writing assignments and tests

- Allow the use of a scribe for test essays

Math

Instruction:

Use math manipulatives such as number or decimal rods, or even everyday objects such as paper clips, pencils, crayons, blocks, buttons, or pennies to teach new concepts.

Gradually link concrete, manipulative activities to more symbolic representations such as lines, X's, circles, dots, or pictures on a page, and then finally to abstract numbers.

Improve fact knowledge with the following strategies:

1. Provide regular practice in small doses: 15 minutes once or twice every day
2. Provide a small number of new facts to master, but also include mixed review practice of known facts
3. Emphasize reversals or turn arounds: 4 +3 = 3 + 4; 8 x 7 = 7 x 8
4. Teach multiplication in this order: 0s, 1s, 2s, 5s, 9s, doubles (8×8), and then the remaining 20 facts
5. Include game or computer activities Use rhymes, word associations, or visual memory aids: "8 x 8 went out the door in '64"
6. Have learners self-chart their progress in fact knowledge
7. Provide step by step, systematic instruction of math processes and extended practice
8. Use different colored pencils for each step in a math process
9. Use graph paper or turn notebook paper sideways to assist with number alignment

Consider teaching alternative addition or multiplication processes such as:

Partial Sums

48 + 79

1. Add the ones: 8 + 9 = 17

2. Add the tens: 40 + 70 = 110

3. Combine the amounts: 127

Partial products

24 x 29

1. 4 x 9 = 36

2. 20 x 9 = 180

3. 4×20 = 80

4. 20 x 20 = 400

5. 36 + 180 + 80 + 400 = 696

Provide a list of **key math terms** paired with the associated operations:

- Sum, total, in all, altogether = ADD
- Difference, less than, left over, remaining = SUBTRACT
- Of, product, times = MULTIPLY
- Per, each, how many in each = DIVIDE

Teach and practice the following process for problem solving:

1. Read the whole problem carefully to get the "big picture"
2. Focus on the important information or relevant parts
3. Circle, underline, or highlight the important information
4. Verbalize the operations or draw a solution
5. Write a math sentence or equation (if appropriate)
6. Work the problem
7. Evaluate the answer for accuracy and reasonableness
8. Write the answer with the correct label
9. Always apply math skills to practical uses in everyday life

Accommodations:

- Reduce the number of problems to be completed on assignments and tests (odd or even gives an adequate sample of mastery)
- Allow the use of a math fact chart during assignments and tests
- Allow extended time to complete all math computation and problem solving
- Allow a reader for math problem solving
- Allow the use of a calculator for all math-related tasks
- Require functional math skills only