

Repairing the Ruins 2024: Handout

Session 4: "Early Intervention and Educational Therapy"

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WHAT DOES TRINITY EARLY INTERVENTION LOOK LIKE?

Early Intervention is a Pull-Out class of 4-5 students meeting 3-5X a week for 30 minute sessions. Typically the program runs from October through May for 26 weeks. In most cases we do not remove students from regular classroom instruction for Early Intervention and classes are held during non-academic portions of the school day or after/before school.

Early Intervention "Snapshot"

Here is a snapshot of each 30 minute session. Each session is very similar with a lot of repetition for reinforcement and new skills added incrementally and systematically. Each session includes time devoted to each element of the identified "5 Components of Reading"-- the necessary tools for literacy. Here is how our time is spent:

- **Comprehension and Fluency-** A well chosen "Book of the Week" is read daily. The content of the book correlates with the letter of the week (Igloos during "I" week). Students gain comprehension competency through a variety of techniques, including answering questions and summarization (retelling the story). Repetition in guided oral reading is essential for building fluency.
- **Vocabulary-** Vocabulary development is closely connected to comprehension. The larger the reader's vocabulary (either oral or print), the easier it is to make sense of the text. Vocabulary from the "Book of the Week" is defined and practiced. We use new vocabulary throughout our sessions to reinforce learning.
- **Phonemic Awareness-** Phonemes, the smallest units making up spoken language, combine to form syllables and words. Phonemic awareness refers to the student's ability to focus on and manipulate these phonemes in spoken syllables and words. We use both our vocabulary words, phrases from the book of the week, and additional words to practice manipulation of phonemes. Students segment, blend, delete the initial sound, change the initial sound, replace a vowel sound or delete, add or change an ending sound in these words. This phoneme manipulation is done kinesthetically and hands-on with visual moving counters to represent each phoneme.

- **Phonics-** Phonics is the relationship between the letters (or letter combinations) in written language and the individual sounds in spoken language. Phonics instruction teaches students how to use these relationships to read and spell words. We do this through a hands-on kinesthetic activity working through the alphabet's letter to sound correlations, both in alphabetical order and randomized. We are also writing written sounds and learning a penmanship method that encourages blending, proper spacing, and reduces letter reversals sometimes associated with reading challenges.
- **Enrichment Activities-** The final 2-3 minutes of our sessions are spent creating. We do an enrichment activity each week that requires some engineering (building), is tied to our theme, and is slowly completed throughout the week. This allows an opportunity to use our new vocabulary, expand understanding, and this final fun activity keeps the students engaged and working hard through the rest of our session time. They look forward to it!

Workshop Notes:

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WHAT IS NILD EDUCATION THERAPY?

At its inception in 1973, the National Institute for Learning Development (NILD) has sought to understand the root causes of learning disabilities. This organization, in collaboration with the fields of neuroscience, psychology and education, has developed four key components to every student's learning: cognition, perception, academics and emotions. By using evidence-based, multisensory techniques to strengthen learning processes in children, we can teach them to solve problems and think independently.

NILD's Mission: To build the competence and confidence of those who struggle to learn by training educators and developing programs.

NILD Philosophy: Believing that all students can learn and that the brain is open to change at all levels of development. This change can come about by providing a direct and focused educational intervention for cognitive systems that are weak and vulnerable.

NILD's Method: Individualized or small group interventions, two to three times a week, develop core academic skills and higher order processing.

NILD's Tools: A complete psycho-educational battery of tests identifies a student's cognitive strengths and patterns of weaknesses. Based upon initial and annual assessments, an individualized program is developed for each student from a variety of different techniques designed to develop academic skills and higher order processing.

THE FIVE CORE TECHNIQUES OF NILD EDUCATION THERAPY

Gray Matter: This is a structured literacy program developed by NILD and approved/endorsed by the International Dyslexia Association. The Gray Matter technique promotes phonological awareness, enhances orthographic mapping (connecting sound to letters), improves long-term visual and auditory sequencing recall, and helps to increase spelling pattern retrieval. Work in this task also encourages students to develop a growth mindset and to build a strong identity as a reader. This builds their confidence and self-efficacy with reading and spelling tasks.

Rhythmic Writing: This technique improves the integration of intermodal skills, while strengthening hemispheric language specialization. The task requires students to draw on a chalkboard, crossing their midline, to practice correct motif

formation, while simultaneously answering auditory math questions. This helps to build handwriting skills, math facts fluency, and vocabulary skills, while also increasing processing speed, visual-motor integration and self-regulation skills.

Dictation and Copy: A task that familiarizes students with paragraph structure; i.e. margins, indents, topic sentences and supporting details, while improving their language processing skills. This technique helps students to build long-term auditory working memory, increase visual-scanning abilities, and develop self-monitoring skills. Emotionally students work on expanding their growth mindset to learn from their mistakes. Academically this helps students improve their capabilities with near point copying, handwriting, proofreading and reading comprehension.

Buzzer: The Buzzer task uses a Morse Code alphabet card, a buzzer and a chosen word that ties into our other spelling/word analysis tasks. Students improve their auditory discrimination skills, visual and auditory working memory and visual imagery abilities. The exercises within this technique help to increase vocabulary, grammar skills, and morpheme knowledge.

Math Block: The intention of this task is to help students develop foundational internalized numeracy skills. Increasing a child's cognitive flexibility to solve math problems using multiple strategies. This focuses more on building mathematical reasoning, problem solving and logical thinking skills. Ultimately allowing the child to build mathematical vocabulary and conceptual understanding.

Workshop Notes:

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