



Bridging the Gap



Strategies and interventions to help students with learning disabilities, AD/HD and emotional disorders meet the Standards in regular ed classrooms

This section has been created by Special Education teacher Anne Sepe
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Reading

This section focuses on strategies and interventions to help students with learning disabilities, AD/HD and ED experience greater reading success in the academic content areas

Teachers need to provide interventions and support to help bridge the gap
between low reading skills and the demands of content classes

Proactive Interventions (Remediation):

- Determine student's reading skills, including decoding, sound blending, word recognition, comprehension. Evaluate silent as well as oral reading ability. Provide direct instruction in low-skill areas
- Teach student strategies to identify unknown words:
 - 1) break large words into smaller parts
 - 2) recognize commonly used prefixes and suffixes and what they mean
 - 3) recognize root words within bigger words
 - 4) simple rules that usually work (*when 2 vowels go walking, the first one does the talking, a silent e makes a vowel say its name, etc.*)
 - 5) letter-sound correspondence
 - 6) word families (*train, vain, plain, etc.*)
 - 7) context clues
 - 8) Involve more than one sense in teaching new words (*For example: have student write new vocabulary words on the chalkboard or whiteboard, then*

run finger slowly along word, pronouncing each sound; Practice “writing” new words with finger in sand, shaving cream, pudding, on window screen or other highly tactile surface)

- For students with visual tracking problems, teach them to use a finger, index card, ruler, etc. to keep track of place as they read down the page.
- Encourage reading for pleasure:
 - 1) provide high-interest material at the independent reading level
 - 2) establish a daily read-for-pleasure time
 - 3) offer comfortable places to read (*rug, pillows, soft chairs, etc.*)
 - 4) read aloud interactively with student
 - 5) allow interactive buddy reading
 - 6) cut apart high-interest pictures and captions from newspapers and magazines, have student match captions and pictures
 - 7) encourage student to share interesting things s/he has read
- Build confidence by providing motivating, non-threatening reading practice for older students with low reading skills:
 - 1) Using a teacher or peer scribe, or voice-activated dictation software, have student dictate a story, essay, poem, or other material, then practice reading back what they’ve dictated
 - 2) arrange to have student read stories to younger children (kindergartners, preschoolers); let students choose primary story books they’d like to read aloud, rehearse reading with teacher before reading to kindergartners
- Invent games to teach skills
 - 1) using thesaurus, student teams find words with targeted sound or letter combination, such as “ough”, “silent e”, etc.— give 1 point for each syllable in word
 - 2) Give student a pile of alphabet-shaped pretzels with letters you’ve chosen, have them make as many words as they can, with bonus points for words containing letter or sound combinations you want to reinforce
 - 3) Have student pairs look for “stumpers” (multi-syllable words they don’t know) in dictionary, then write words on board — award points to student volunteers who can break the “stumper” words into syllables then combine the syllables into whole words)

- 4) Play Reading Bingo: Fold paper into 16 boxes, have students write one letter combination provided by teacher –for example bl,, tion, ough, in each box. Teacher reads sounds randomly, players covers boxes, players win same way as Bingo
- To enhance comprehension, teach students how to:
 - 1) use the organizational structure of textbooks
 - 2) skim and scan text for information;
 - 3) identify main ideas and supporting details;
 - 4) use context clues to figure meaning of new vocabulary;
 - 5) paraphrase material in own words;
 - 6) reflect back on the content of what they've just read by asking themselves questions about the material
 - 7) reread complex material; take notes; underline, highlight main ideas, supporting details
 - Create teacher-made tests, worksheets and handouts that facilitate reading:
 - 1) Use a computer rather than manuscript
 - 2) Organize the page so information is presented in a clear, simple format
 - 3) Avoid cluttered, closely-packed text
 - 4) Use white space and bold headings to introduce new concepts
 - 5) Skip lines between questions
 - 6) Avoid large amounts of bold, italicized or upper-case text
 - 7) Choose an easily read, familiar type face (font) such as Times New Roman, Bookman or Arial, size 10-12
 - 8) Select vocabulary at student's independent reading level

Bypass (Compensation) Strategies:

- Know the student's reading level. Make sure material for independent reading is on student's level.
- Read tests and quizzes to student

- Provide an outline or modified version of the required information, using vocabulary at the student's independent reading level.
- Highlight or underline important information. Provide simplified directions.
- Read text/instructions/explanations to student (*teacher or high-reading peer can read individually to student, or text can be read to whole class*).
- Tape record difficult reading material. Have student read along while listening to tape.
- Avoid placing the student in embarrassing situations, such as being expected to read aloud
- When grouping, place low readers with strong readers who will read text aloud to whole group
- Shorten the required amount of reading or allow extra time.
- Direct teach key word recognition
 - 1) Frequently used direction words like underline/circle/compare
 - 2) Vocabulary and concept words student will need to complete assignments.
- Provide the student with taped texts and novels. (*Get novels from Library of Congress (1-800-248-5701) and textbooks from Recordings for the Blind (1-800-221-4792)*).

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