

No ADULT Left Behind



**STUDENT-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION
STRATEGIES AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR
WITH ADULT LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES**

**PART TWO
11/13/2020
FIRST LITERACY WORKSHOP
KELLY FOLSOM
X-CEL EDUCATION**

Goals for today



- Examine case studies and share tools and strategies beneficial to your program.
- Define Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and explore how it can be integrated into adult education programming.
- Discuss the HiSET/GED accommodation procedures.
- Identify additional resources for working with disabled students.

Kristin said she does not understand what she reads.



Strengths

- Self-aware
- Social skills
- Resilient
 - Motivated
 - Persistent
- Intact oral language
- Benefits from explicit instruction
- Decoding text

Weaknesses

- Attention
- Working memory (i.e. easily overwhelmed with large input)
- Vocabulary: breadth and depth
- Background knowledge
- Lack of engagement/practice with reading

Kristin



- What I know about reading comprehension: Reading fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge are essential for reading comprehension.
- What I observed: Kristin was able to read the words on the page at a reasonable pace, but could not summarize or paraphrase what she read. When I probed, I found that she did not understand close to 50% of the vocabulary in the first paragraph of the article on the Great Depression that she was attempting to comprehend.

What we did....



- Worked at the white board with colored markers
- Read the text one sentence at a time.
- Identified unknown vocabulary
- Kristin looked up these words on her smart phone and annotated text with
 - Definitions
 - Paraphrasing of the information in her own words.
- Working in a reciprocal fashion so I could model the process for her.

Kristin – take aways



- Visual prompts (e.g. color coding, pictures, symbols) are very helpful to Kristin.
- She needs an infusion of vocabulary to manage the texts she is given
 - Preteach vocabulary!!
 - Implement a vocabulary curriculum that includes spiraling and review. She should be actively reviewing and spiraling the words she is learning from text.
- Kristin's background knowledge needs a huge boost if she is to understand the texts she is given.
- Kristin needs to go at her own pace
- Kristin needs a personalized dictionary in which she records the new words she is learning (maybe on her smart phone)
- Use a strategy note book (maybe on her smart phone)

his chin cupped in his hands. Then the regular movement of the searchlight was reflected through an upper window and the boy had time to fix in memory the pile of cigarettes, the counter, and the small hole under it. The footsteps of a policeman on the pavement made him grab the first packet to his hand and dive for the hole. A light shone along the floor and a hand tried the door, then the footsteps passed on, and Charlie cowered in the darkness. At last he got his courage back by telling himself in his curiously adult way that if he were caught now there was nothing to be done about it, and he might as well have his smoke. He put a cigarette in his mouth and then remembered that he had no matches. For a while he dared not move. Three times the searchlight lit the shop, while he muttered taunts and encouragements. May as well be hung for a sheep. Cowardly, cowardly custard. grown-up and childish exhortations oddly mixed. But as he moved he heard footfalls in the street, the sound of several men walking rapidly. Charlie Stowe was old enough to feel surprise that anybody was about. The footsteps came nearer, stopped; a key was turned in the shop door, a voice said: 'Let him in,' and then he heard his father 'If you wouldn't mind being quiet, gentlemen' I don't want to wake up the family.' There was a note unfamiliar to Charlie in the undecided voice. A torch flashed and the electric globe burst into blue light. The boy held his breath; he wondered whether his father would hear his heart beating, and he clutched his nightshirt tightly and prayed, 'O God, don't let me be caught.' Through a crack in the counter he could see his father where he stood, one hand held to his high stiff collar, between two men in bowler hats and belted mackintoshes. They were strangers. 'Have a cigarette,' his father said in a voice dry as a biscuit. One of the men shook his head. 'It wouldn't do, not when we are on duty. Thank you all the same.' He spoke gently but without kindness. Charlie Stowe thought his father must be ill. 'Mind if I put a few in my pocket?' Mr Stowe asked, and when the man nodded he lifted a pile of Gold Flake and Players from a shelf and caressed the packets with the tips of his fingers. 'Well,' he said, 'there's nothing to be done about it, and I may as well have my smokes.' For a moment Charlie Stowe feared discovery, his father stared round the shop so thoroughly; he might have been seeing it for the first time. 'It's a good little business,' he said, 'for those that like it. The wife will sell out, I suppose. Else the neighbours'll be wrecking it. Well, you want to be off. A stitch in time. I'll get my coat.'

Fear of discovery builds up atmosphere of tension

Panic

Relief

Recovers

Gone so far, might as well go through with it

Still afraid

Why this word?

Tension again

'Gentlemen' - very polite and formal

Something out of the ordinary happening

Police?

Police again!

Stocking up - may not be back for some time

Why 'caressed'?

A bit like Charlie, 'if he were caught now there would be nothing to be done about it'

Fear of his 'crime' being found out

Tension

Why 'curiously' adult? - he is realistic about what is happening

Mixture of adult and child

Supposed to be in Norwich

Why not?

Fear of being caught

Like Charlie clenching his nightshirt

Is he under arrest?

Fear, uncertainty

Why 'gently' / 'without kindness'? - an unusual combination

Has to ask permission - under arrest?

Or the last!

The end of his family life

Why would the neighbours do that?

D'Shawn has long standing difficulties with math



Strengths

- Attention
- Resilient
 - Motivated
 - Persistent
- Benefits from explicit instruction
- Benefits from hands-on manipulatives and experiential learning

Weaknesses

- Self-awareness, self-understanding
- Working memory (i.e. easily overwhelmed with large input)
- Ability to transform word problems into diagrams and equations.
- Understanding space and quantities.
- Understanding relationship between elements in a problem

Questions about D'Shawn



- What are his language processes really like?
- What is his reading comprehension like?
- Can he form visual images in his mind based on information?
- What type of math instruction has he had?
- Has he ever been evaluated for a learning disorder?

D'Shawn



- What I know about math problem solving: Successful math problem solving requires: knowledge of and fluent access for math facts and procedures, the ability to interpret word problems in terms of quantities and relationships, and the ability to execute algorithms systematically.
- What I observed: D'Shawn was able to read the problems and understand them superficially. He lacked an understanding of number patterns, and struggled to explain what the problem meant; i.e. what was known, what was unknown, and what he needed to do to answer the question. D'Shawn was impulsive and guessed randomly. He was firmly attached to his calculator but this was not helping him solve the problem.

What we did...



- I asked him to set aside his calculator.
- We spent the next two hours working through two problems.
- I made extensive use of scratch paper, diagraming problems as I talked aloud about them to make the connection.
- We acted out the problems to make them as concrete as possible.
- We mapped out number patterns with visuals and graphic displays:
 - $7/2 = 3.5$
 - $70/2 = 35$
 - $700/2 = 350$

D'Shawn – take aways



- D'Shawn needs very systematic and skilled remediation in math to shore up his foundational skills.
- He needs a step-wise, sequenced curriculum that includes drill and adds a 'twist at a time'
- He needs to be working with concrete manipulatives.
- He can use a calculator for checking his work, but using a calculator while problem solving has masked the extent of his difficulties. He should be showing ALL his work so he can backtrack and check it with a teacher.
- D'Shawn may benefit from a comprehensive evaluation to understand the nature and extent of his difficulties.

Carla: Erratic math problem solving



Strengths

- Self-aware (able to give me a detailed history)
- Resilient
 - Motivated
 - Persistent
- Knowledge of basic math: facts and procedures
- Memory appears to be intact

Weaknesses/vulnerabilities

- History of trauma
- Current mental illness, sleep apnea (also pregnant)
- Is not systematic in her work.
- Working memory appears to be compromised.
- Impulsive

Carla



- What I observed: Carla often lost her place when problem solving and became frustrated/overwhelmed by details. She over-relied on mental computation and often did not know why her answer was wrong. With support, she was able to demonstrate an intact understanding of math concepts and applications for the work she was doing. But she was not able to access this information and apply it systematically while working.
- What we did: Carla benefited from writing out the 'recipe', or the steps of problem solving on an index card and referring to it while she worked. She benefited from writing out all the steps so she could check her work.

Wes



Strengths

- Personable and strong interpersonal skills.
- Strategic
- Uses what he knows to do his work.
- Resilient
 - Motivated to learn

Weaknesses

- Lack of practice/familiarity/flueny with math skills.
 - Sums of 10
 - Concept of $\times 10$
 - Equivalency between fractions and decimals for .25, .5, .75
- Lacks systematic approach

Wes



- What I observed: Wes is very impulsive and disorganized in his approach. He has no trouble understanding math concepts for the work he is doing, but is not skillful. So, he may use repeated addition for multiplication, for example. His work is not efficient and includes many errors.
- What we did: Wes benefits from real-world strategies. For instance linking money concepts to understand that $.25$ is the same as $\frac{1}{4}$. He would benefit from learning strategies specific to math in a systematic and direct manner using a sequenced approach. When we were working, he tended to want to chat and be funny. This may be a way that he deflects attention from the things that he cannot do, are hard for him, or make him feel ashamed.

Michelle



- Michelle has a history of trauma and hearing loss. She began to hear and speak after a series of operations at age 7. Her first language was Spanish because that is what she was exposed to. She has a number of health problems including a seizure disorder and chronic mental illness.
- What I observed: Michelle struggles to pronounce complex words. Her vocabulary is limited (e.g. reading comprehension at grade 6+). She is an extremely motivated student who is going to great lengths to self-educate.

Michelle



Strengths

- **Self-understanding (i.e. she gave me a very coherent and complete history)**
 - Self-monitoring (knows when she runs into difficulty)
 - Self-advocacy (asks for help readily)
- **Reasoning abilities**
 - Grasps concepts easily
 - Connects the dots and integrates information
- **Persistence**
- **Motivation**
- **Attention and mental stamina**

Weaknesses

- **Language processing**
 - Pronouncing words (often mis-sequences syllables in multisyllabic words)
 - Vocabulary development
 - Word analysis (i.e. applying phonics to read unfamiliar words)
 - Structural analysis (e.g. does not know that science and scientist are related and how)
- **Slow processing**

What worked for Michelle



- Listening or reading silently is best for Michelle.
- Working with a partner is most effective.
- Scaffolded process and prompts:
 - Read a paragraph
 - Identify words that are unfamiliar
 - Problem solve - syllabicate words, understand meaning.
 - Re-read paragraph
 - Answer the question, “What’s the most important idea in this paragraph”
 - Repeat

What worked for Michelle



- **Reciprocal reading worked very well: (NOTE: teacher models the process and teaches it explicitly)**
 - Read passage taking turns with teacher (teacher reads p1, student reads p2 etc)
 - Question (i.e. ask clarifying questions as needed)
 - Summarize (what is the gist?)
 - Paraphrase (state information in own words)
 - Predict (offer hypotheses about what will come next).
- **Expository text is more accessible than narrative or creative text.**

Overall



- Students over-rely on mental processing – they should be writing more to support their thinking processes in math and reading.
- Foundational skills need to be taught systematically for many students.
- Background knowledge needs to be taught so students can access content.
 - Use PBS documentaries (e.g. The Dust Bowl)

Universal Design for Learning



The goal of UDL is to minimize the need for individualized accommodations or modifications by teaching and designing curriculum in a way that reaches widest range of students possible. Just like Universal Design, it's a *proactive* approach. It anticipates the needs of learners that have specific challenges, and encourages us to design curriculum *from the ground up* to increase accessibility to learning for all.

Multiple Means of Representation



Perception: How are students perceiving the information you're teaching? Auditorily? Visually? Can we provide varied ways for them to receive and digest or process that information?

Language & symbols: Are we taking into consideration that not all students will have the same comfort and familiarity with written/spoken English? And even if they do, some people perceive and process the meaning of symbols and graphics more readily than words. Can we use these methods to enhance comprehension?

Comprehension: Are we helping connect key concepts with one another? Are we not assuming that all students have the same level of background knowledge of a subject?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TVKGvnGPoA&feature=emb_logo

Multiple Means of Expression



Physical action: Is the only way to interact with the class materials through a textbook? Or are there other ways to engage, like through an online tool, a screen reader, or through movement-based activities? Are you allowing all students to engage in an activity, even those with disabilities (e.g. students who are blind, hard of hearing, deaf, autistic)?

Expression and communication: Are you allowing students to express themselves in multiple ways? Do students *have* to write? Do they *have* to communicate orally? Or are they provided with different ways to express themselves?

Executive functions: Are you taking into consideration that students have various levels of executive functioning (AKA: ability to self-regulate), and may need different supports to help them build more executive functioning skills? Are you setting individual, appropriate goals for each student? Helping them each improve the ways they take in and process information?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H66jHEiGNLQ&feature=emb_logo

Multiple Means of Engagement



Recruiting interest: How can we make the subject we're learning about relevant and interesting to students/participants? Is there a way to make it more directly applicable to their lives? Allow them to have some choice in selecting topics for discovery, research, or projects?

Sustaining effort and persistence: Are students both with and without disabilities provided with the tools and supports to be able to focus their attention? Are they able to focus and learn in the way that works best for them?

Self-regulation: Are we using positive behavior supports in order to bring out the best in students/participants? When they have trouble or difficulty, are we helping teach them better coping skills? Are there clear expectations in place for our work?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmBsE4LX8NM&feature=emb_logo

Accommodations



ETS Documentation Criteria

Documentation on file for the applicant must:

- **Be typed or printed on official letterhead** and **be signed** by an evaluator qualified to make the diagnosis (include information about license or certification and area of specialization).
- **Clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities.**
- **Describe the functional limitations** resulting from the disability or disabilities.
- **Be current** — i.e., completed within the:
 - last five years for learning disabilities (LD), attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or intellectual disability (ID)
 - last 12 months for psychiatric disabilities and traumatic brain injury
- **(Note:** This requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature.)

Accommodations 2



- **Include complete educational, developmental and medical history** relevant to the disability for which testing accommodations are being requested.
- **Include a list of all test instruments** used in the evaluation report and relevant subtest scores used to document the stated disability; all test instruments must have adult norms. (This requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature.)
- **Describe the specific accommodations requested.**
- **Adequately support each of the requested testing accommodation(s).**

<https://www.ets.org/disabilities/documentation/>

Additional Resources



<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

<https://www.pyd.org/>

<https://www.cast.org/>

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-rehabilitation-commission>

Thank You



Kelly Folsom
X-Cel Education
202-262-3388
kfolsom@x-celeducation.org

Additional Workshop Info:
Bryan McCormick
First Literacy
bmccormick@firstliteracy.org