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Inclusive Teaching Guide

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Introduction to Inclusive Teaching Guide

Where my school and class is now:

Hunter elementary school is a kindergarten through fifth grade public school. It is located downriver in the city of Gibraltar. Students attending the school are residents of Gibraltar as well as neighboring cities that boarder the district. This includes Woodhaven, Rockwood, and Flat Rock. Bussing is provided for all students in the district. I work as a special education resource room teacher at the elementary level. I service 26 students in the areas of language arts and math. I have my own classroom for the pull out services I provide.

Education for students with disabilities and gifted and talented:

Students with learning disabilities are serviced in a pull out program in my school and district. Students in the district who are severely mentally impaired are serviced in a program located in my school. Students in this program are kindergarten through fifth grade. They are segregated from the rest of the students in the school. They are self contained for all subjects except for their specials. They go to music, gym, and art class with students in third and fourth grade. Students in the district who have emotional impairments are serviced in another elementary school in the district. They are also self contained for all subjects except for their specials.

I am the LD resource room teacher in my school and I provide language arts and math instruction for the students on my case load. They are serviced in a pull out program. I see my students in small groups according to their grade level for 45 minutes a day in each subject (language and math). When the child's general education

classroom is working on language arts, they come to me for their language arts instruction. The same schedule works for math.

In my school, there are no children that are defined as gifted and talented. I was not sure how instruction for the gifted would take place, so I asked my principal. I was told that they would be serviced in the general education classroom. They would be taught the same curriculum the rest of the class was receiving except they would be expected to demonstrate their understanding differently. They would be asked to use more of their multiple intelligences on assignments and/or projects. I was very surprised by this answer. If the gifted and talented students are instructed in the regular education rooms, why not instruct the special education students in the same manner? I felt that the use of multiple intelligences on a regular basis would benefit all students. The gifted and special education students have so much to offer in the regular education classroom.

Development as an Inclusive Teacher:

In my second year of teaching, I feel I am very good at providing accommodations for my students. I also provide accommodations to teachers that they can use with their classes. I am very comfortable with the idea of full inclusion. If my students have science and social studies in regular education, why can't they be included in math and language arts as well. I understand that they are at a different level, but they could be learning from their peers. If they can be included in science and social studies, which requires the use of language skills they can also be included for all their subjects. I would like to see my students in regular education. I think collaborative teaming and team teaching between the general education teachers and myself would work great. As it is right now, I meet with the general education teachers of my students to share ideas.

It is in these meeting, that I feel I have developed skills necessary to be an effective inclusive teacher. It is during collaboration, that I am able to gain new insight and knowledge by kicking around ideas with colleagues.

Last year the general education teachers and myself even requested to have a presenter from Wayne RESA come in and give us more accommodations and ideas to use with our students. Through this meeting we learned a great deal about assistive technology. This year our district purchased Alpha Smarts to help our students who struggle with written language. Write out loud programs are present in the resource room and the computer lab. I feel these devises could also help make an inclusive setting successful. This year is the middle schools first year of inclusive teaching in my district. The thoughts throughout the district is that next year the elementary and high school will also adopt inclusive teaching. I would be delighted if this happened because I know it can be successful in my building. The teachers in my building have great attitudes toward special education students and feel they are an important part of the classroom. We share the same caring attitude, which is that we want to see all of our students succeed.

Classroom Design and Assistive Technology

Class Design and Resources for differing abilities

Teachers have to design the classroom with the needs of the students in mind. The design of a classroom must prove beneficial in allowing students to experience learning in groups as well as individually. The classroom should be set up in a way that is conducive to this learning. The room should have designated places where cooperative learning takes place and a particular place where one on one instruction is done. The more practical the classroom is, the easier it is to work.

In designing a classroom for an inclusive setting, I feel the room should be filled with print. By this I mean students' work should be displayed throughout the classroom, in order to give the students a sense of belonging that is necessary in building classroom community. The classroom setup should be organized into learning centers because they promote cooperative collaboration between students. The learning centers are places in the classroom that provide for activities and learning.

Tables should be placed throughout the classroom for various purposes. For example, the use of a kidney shaped table is good for working with students individually. This provides close proximity that is needed when working with a child or small group. Larger round tables are good for activities that require cooperative learning. I also feel that breaking up the classroom into smaller sections is great for inclusive classrooms because it helps provide transitions from one subject to another. This can be accomplished by using different parts of the classroom for different purposes. For example, when doing a science experiment it would be good to use a larger round table. When it is time for reading, the class can gather on the carpet. This type of arrangement

will help keep the students on task because they are in a routine that moves them around the room. This is much better than being rooted in the same desk all day long.

Classroom design also allows for diverse learning abilities. For example, the different classroom centers enable students to express themselves while practicing problem solving skills and improving motor skills. In addition, the active use of role-playing and creative drama encourages the use of imagination. I feel it is necessary to use creative drama to help with social skills and the building of a community. This is a way to use language to communicate with classmates. Cooperative grouping of students with different learning abilities provides the opportunity to listen and gain information while developing a classroom community. Through interaction students will develop an appreciation for differences while developing acceptable social skills.

The use of cooperative groups in an inclusive setting will allow teachers to accommodate all students. In order to meet the needs of students with different learning styles and abilities, Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences need to be present in the classroom. This includes:

- Linguistic*: The capacity to use language to express ourselves and to other people.
- Logical-mathematical*: Ability to use numbers effectively and to reason well logically.
- Spatial*: Competence to represent the spatial world internally in our mind and to use materials to impact the environment.
- Bodily-kinesthetic*: Expertise in using our whole body to express ideas and feelings and ability to use our body to make or change things.
- Musical*: Ability to think in music; to hear patterns, recognize them, remember them, manipulate them.
- Interpersonal*: Ability to understand thoughts, feelings, motivations of other people and to interact well with them.
- Intrapersonal*: Understanding of ourselves-of-our feelings, and reactions to others-and ability to act on that understanding.
- Naturalist*: High sensitivity and responsiveness to living beings, the natural world, and the environment.

While it is necessary to provide of those with different learning abilities, it is also necessary to provide for those students who have physical handicaps. This goes beyond just the classroom. School buildings need to be made accessible by all. For example, school building need to provide ramps for those that use wheelchairs or need crutches. The restrooms also need to be considered for students with special needs. The design should incorporate stalls with railings and automatic sink turn on. The classroom itself also needs to provide for these mobility issues.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology assists and enables users with various disabilities, such as movement, communication, writing and speaking to participate in these activities more successfully. When working in an inclusive classroom it is necessary to provide the students with this technology. This technology will be beneficial for the success of the student. The types of assistive technology that will be used in my inclusive classroom will include:

-In *reading* I will provide tape recorders, books on tape, large print books, different level books, and books of students' interests.

-For *writing*, I will provide an Alpha Smart for those students that have a difficult time writing. I will also provide write out loud software which allows the student to speak into a mic, while their words are transcribed onto the computer screen. I will also provide such things as fat pencils, crayons, markers, alphabet punch-out, and handwriting guides.

-In *math*, I will use manipulatives to assist students with abstract thinking. Geo boards, pattern blocks, tangrams, shapes, counters, scales, rulers, and calculators will also be provided.

-In *science*, I will use hands on materials to assist the students. This will include magnets, magnifying glass, tornado tubes, sound shakers, simple machines, and thermometers.

-For *computer* use I will provide headphones, audio books, mouthsticks, adaptations to keyboard, alternative inputs, and voice recognition programs.

Source: (Peterson & Hittie, 2003).

Students with the following disabilities will be provided for by using the following assistive technology:

-For those that have *hearing impairments*, I will use sign language, speechreading, hearing aids, FM units, sound field amplification, speech interpretation aids, and visual communications (cut outs with various directions pictured).

-For those that have *visual impairments* canes, sighted guide dog, talking computers, magnified screens, sighted readers, Brailers, Optacon, tape-recorder books, and large print books will be provided. Other valuable technology, includes The Premier Programming Solutions Accessibility Suite created by Steve Timmer. In this program, students with VI can create text to audio files, scan to read documents, use a talking work processor, and a screen magnifier to assist them (www.theezine.net/articles/5/premier-programming-solutions)

-Students *with physical impairments* will have access to wheelchairs, crutches, braces, guide dog, adjustable tables, augmentative communication devices, rubber pads on desks, and talking software.

-Students with *cognitive impairments* will be provided with books on tape, dictation software, computer games, alternative keyboards, picture cues, checklists, graphic software, and daily schedules.

-Those with *autism* will have access to a picture exchange system, laptop computers, Alpha Smarts, picture communication, dictation software, and sign language.

-Students with *emotional impairments* will have carrel time, headphones for recording, Alpha Smarts, and graphic software.

-My student with *learning disabilities* will also have access to books on tape, alternative keyboard, daily pictorial, graphics software, alpha smarts, extended time to complete work, and alternative test taking.

(Peterson & Hittie, 2003).

Building Community

In order to build community in the classroom, I feel that it is imperative for teachers to recognize both the emotional and academic needs of the students. In order for a student to succeed in the classroom, they need to feel safe and comfortable enough to engage in learning. School is a place of learning and developing. Therefore, developing a sense of belonging is necessary. By doing so, relationships develop which lead to feelings of safety and security. The classroom is a very important part of a child's development because it serves as a place where students can engage in learning and develop life skills.

William Glasser addresses the five basic human needs; power, love and belonging, fun, survival, and freedom as rudimentary (Peterson/Hittie, 2003). These needs must be addressed in order for learning to occur. Therefore, a classroom community must be a safe environment where all students are included and feel safe. A caring classroom promotes caring attitudes towards others and helps foster positive behaviors.

Classroom community needs to be established on the first day of school and continue to grow throughout the year. Communities are established through respect. This is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Students model actions they see. Therefore, it is important to model the desired good behavior in the classroom. It is important that the teacher displays this positive behavior throughout the day and to all members of the school.

Some activities that help promote classroom community:

-Circle Time - At this time the daily agenda, calendar, pledge, lunch count, and daily house keeping are addressed.

-Buddy Reading – This can be accomplished in two ways. Buddy reading can take place in the classroom with students of the same grade or older students can pair up with the younger students to read stories. This allows both students to share the story with each other.

-Class Books – Students can create a book for the class that is left in the classrooms book center. Students can work together to create the book and share it with the rest of the class using the author's chair.

-Games and Activities – This activity includes a variety of hands-on strategies that incorporate fun with learning. For example, scrabble spelling teaches students' letters as well as incorporating fun into the activity.

-Food Activities - Incorporating food into games and activities in the classroom can also assist in building community. This is accomplished by using the foods in learning centers. For example, during holidays the appropriate food can be brought in and discussed as part of a lesson. For example, you can bring in pumpkin seeds for Thanksgiving and have a discussion about the pilgrims. Food can also be included in the classroom to promote various cultures in the classroom. This allows other students to learn about their peers.

-Role Playing – Students have the occasion to perform what they learn in the classroom. This is also a good exercise to use for modeling desired, positive classroom behavior.

-Classroom Jobs- Students have responsibilities in the classroom, which promotes a sense of ownership and worth in the classroom. They feel part of a team.

-Plants and Pets- Students begin to develop a sense of respect for living animals as well as responsibility for the nurturing of them.

-Reading Area- Having a designated place for reading allows students to have a place to read alone or with a partner. The reading area can be furnished with chairs and large pillows in order to create a place that promotes and welcomes reading.

Other ways to build classroom community involve dividing the class into smaller groups or teams. Allowing students to work together in teams will allow them to get to know each other. Students can ask their team members for assistance. I feel this makes the students feel as if they are part of a team, instead of feeling alone in the classroom. I also feel it is necessary to decorate the class bulletin board and walls with student work. For example, I enjoy decorating the bulletin board according to the seasons. For the fall, I have my students create a family tree. This is a way to bring each student's family into the classroom and make it part of the classroom family.

I feel that building community goes beyond individual classrooms. Collaborative school-wide activities are an essential part of building a school community. For example, everyone in the school can: (1) create a child-and family-centered vision, (2) develop collaborative learning circles, (3) create schoolwide or multiclass themes for learning, and (4) have school celebrations for all (Peterson & Hittie, 2003). A way to build community in the school is having the entire school participate in a school wide function,

such as cleaning up the schools playground. A school-wide family reading night is also a great way to involve families in the school community and promote literacy.

As I stated earlier, I feel that in order to build community each student must feel good about themselves. If they don't feel good about themselves, they will not be able to do their best work. Creating a classroom environment that is accepting and warm will help build and foster self esteem. Some ways to build self esteem are taking time to talk with your students, using positive guidance, and providing opportunities for the child to succeed (Lerner, 2003).

I spend the first 5-10 minutes of each class talking with my students. During this time, students share information about what is going on in their lives. They may share any information that they feel comfortable discussing with the class. I think this is a great way to build a caring community because it gives the class a sense of "we are all in this together." This helps create a safe environment, in which students are able to share their thoughts and ideas. I also feel it is necessary to provide students with opportunities to succeed. I truly believe that giving students work that they can be successful on, builds self esteem. It gives them a feeling of success. If students feel successful they will feel good about themselves and in turn they will be a positive member of the classroom.

Responding to Behavioral Challenges

I feel that it is necessary to create a behavior plan that is positive and encourages the appropriate behavior, while fostering a caring community in the classroom that promotes learning. I believe in using a positive reward system to turn around behavior for the better. While I was working in a sixth, seventh, and eighth grade emotionally impaired, self contained classroom I used positive rewards with the students. I broke the class down into three fifteen minute sections. My behavior plan was very simple. I had two rules, which were to follow directions and work quietly. I would set a timer for 15 minutes and if the student was successful during that time, they earned a jolly rancher. I understand that students need intrinsic rewards. However, in the beginning of the year I used this system to teach the students my expectations. In the second half of the year, I still used the 15 minute intervals. However, I made their reward community based. Instead of handing out jolly ranchers, I allowed the students to build classroom dollars which they could use toward a whole class activity. This way the entire class was working toward the same goal.

In order for any behavior plan to work, you must be consistent. Any support staff member present in your room, needs to be consistent and follow the same rules for every child. A positive approach to managing will make it easier to build on individual students' strengths. For example, the following are several teacher behavioral strategies that can be used to avoid or to provide a consequence for students with behavioral problems:

Prior to Occurrence of Behavior(s)

- Break student tasks into manageable chunks
- Increase adult supervision/surveillance
- Increase reinforcement quality of classroom
- Offer choice
- Offer help strategies
- Preview rules/behavioral expectations
- Preview schedule
- Provide skills instruction
- Rearrange student seating or classroom setup
- Teach student to take 'calm-down' break

During and After Occurrence of Behavior(s)

- Apology
- Behavioral contract
- Loss of privileges
- Modeling (Vicarious Learning)
- Office referral
- Over-correction
- Parent contact
- Peer consequences
- Praise
- Private approach to student
- Promise
- Redirection
- Reflective essay
- Reprimand
- Response Cost
- Restitution
- Rewarding alternative (positive) behaviors
- Rules review
- Timeout – detention - in school suspension
(Behavior Intervention, 2005)

The above strategies direct the students' behavior in a positive manner. They also encourage character building. Students need guidance while providing them with choices. These strategies assist all students particularly those who have self-control issues, short attention spans, and academic difficulties. These strategies enable students to focus on the activity, reduce behavioral problems, and complete lesson objectives.

As a teacher, I believe that students' behaviors are greatly influenced by the response and consequences they receive from educators. As I stated earlier, I establish a community class plan, which promotes positive behavior. It allows for promoting student choices and consequences that are agreeable and geared towards the students' development. The following accommodations can help students with problems in behaviors function in the classroom:

- Placement in the classroom
 - Plan varied activities so students can move
 - Provide as much structure and routine as possible
 - Require a daily journal book
 - Make sure you have the students attention before you teach
 - Make directions clear and concise
 - Break assignments into workable chunks
 - Give extra time as needed
 - Provide feedback on completed assignments as soon as possible
 - Encourage parents to set up appropriate work space at home
 - Make use of learning aids
 - Find something that the students does well and encourage that interest
 - Provide ample praise and rewards
- (Lerner, 2003, p. 562)

While teaching I employ these behavioral strategies. I have found them to be very beneficial. Especially when dealing with a variety of students within the classroom. The strategies that I employ in the classroom promote a positive classroom community, while fostering a safe environment. The following is a list of strategies that can be utilized in the classroom to promote positive behavioral support. These include:

- Problem: Behavior, which is learned, is communicating something important.
- Assessment: Conduct "functional analysis" to determine reasons for the behavior.
- Goal: Help student learn better ways of communicating needs.
- Intervention: Develop a sense of safety and trust between teacher and student.

-Success: The person's problem is solved from his or her point of view.

(Peterson & Hittie, 2003, p. 357)

These strategies provide students with added responsibility for their individual behaviors. The student is given additional control over their behavior based on their point of view. This gives the student the ability to address the behavioral problem.

Support Staff Roles

As I stated earlier, I feel that every adult in the classroom needs to be consistent with the behavior plan that is in place. This includes special education teachers, general education teachers, para professionals, and social workers. The whole support staff team is involved in the positive behavior plan. Last year I was given a para professional. It was great to have another set of eyes in the classroom because one adult can not see everything that is going on. I would have liked her to carry out the behavior plan with more consistency. Since she did not carry out the plan the way it was intended, students knew they could get away with things when she was around. It is very important that every support staff member carry out the plan the same way. This way the students know the expectations of the classroom. The goals of the support staff team include:

- broad goals of intervention are determined (e.g., improved peer relationships, greater participation in integrated activities)
- specific behaviors of concern are defined in observable terms (what the person says or does that is problematic)
- baseline estimates of behaviors of concern are established; these reflect objective measures (e.g., frequency, duration, intensity)
- team achieves consensus regarding the target behaviors and goals of intervention (Behavior Intervention, 2005)

Strategies for Inclusive Academic Instruction

Strategies for Inclusive Academic Instruction

All students develop at different rates and ages. It is important that the teacher takes this into account when planning instruction in an inclusive classroom. Since students progress at their own rate, it is important to provide them with instruction that is at their level and pace. Given the opportunity to develop in this type of classroom will allow them to grow academically and socially in school. As teachers, we can not expect all students to be at the same level, while learning the same way.

Teachers need to follow learning goals when planning instruction for their students. Following the learning goals will allow for the development of multilevel teaching. Steps to follow for the development of multilevel teaching include:

1. Step 1: Identify the learning goals, in which you consider expectations for the highest ability students and the lower ability students.
2. Step 2: Design learning activities that assist your highest ability students by allowing them to work in groups, alone, or in pairs. This does not include ability grouping.
3. Step 3: Develop average and lowest level learning goals. This is a way to insure that everyone in the classroom is included.
4. Step 4: Consider individual students with special needs. This is where we take a look at IEP goals and make sure they are being met by the instruction we are providing.

(Peterson/Hittie, pg. 163-164)

Peterson and Hittie also point out the importance of understanding student needs by laying out steps to follow. The first step is called student profiles for planning. Effective teachers ask themselves what they can do to help meet the individual needs of all students. After all it is the teacher's responsibility to adapt lessons that meet the learning styles and abilities of every student. For example, in reading accommodations can be made by looking at the reading levels present in the class. Participation in an activity should not be based on ability level. Appropriate accommodations need to be made to insure that all students can participate. For example, when reading about the nine planets students can be given books that meet their reading level. If someone struggles with reading, they can be provided with books that include more pictures and easier reading. Students at higher levels can be provided with chapter books. This is one way to include every student in the classroom, no matter what their ability level is.

The next step in understanding student needs is to analyze our classroom environment. Analyzing the class profile allows teachers to make necessary changes that help create a classroom environment where all students feel successful. Teachers can look at the following aspects when analyzing their classroom:

- general approach to the curriculum
- curriculum materials
- advance planning
- content
- physical environment and seating
- students participation
- teacher presentation and evaluation
- tests, assignments, and evaluation

- classroom climate and management
- home-school communication

(Peterson/Hittie, pg. 263)

The third step is determining discrepancy between the student and the classroom environment. Referring to the class profile can prove beneficial in this step. A teacher can see what types of challenges and abilities are present in the classroom. Teachers should ask themselves, “What is the discrepancy between what is expected and the abilities and needs of any given student?” (Peterson/Hittie, pg. 262). By doing so, you can locate the types of academic challenges that students have.

The fourth and final step is to adapt instruction to solve problems. As a teacher, I need to find a way to meet every student’s individual needs. This would include adapting material to meet a student’s needs. Some strategies for this include:

- principles for effective adaptations
- planning tools for adaptations
- presentation of information and learning activities
- expectations
- instructional materials
- instructional formats
- support and scaffolding
- methods of evaluation and assessment

(Peterson/Hittie, pg. 264-280)

Multilevel Learning Strategies based on Four Building Blocks and Best Practices

Multilevel Teaching

In an inclusive classroom, we are providing instruction for students' of different learning abilities. Therefore, we must provide instruction to each child at their own level.

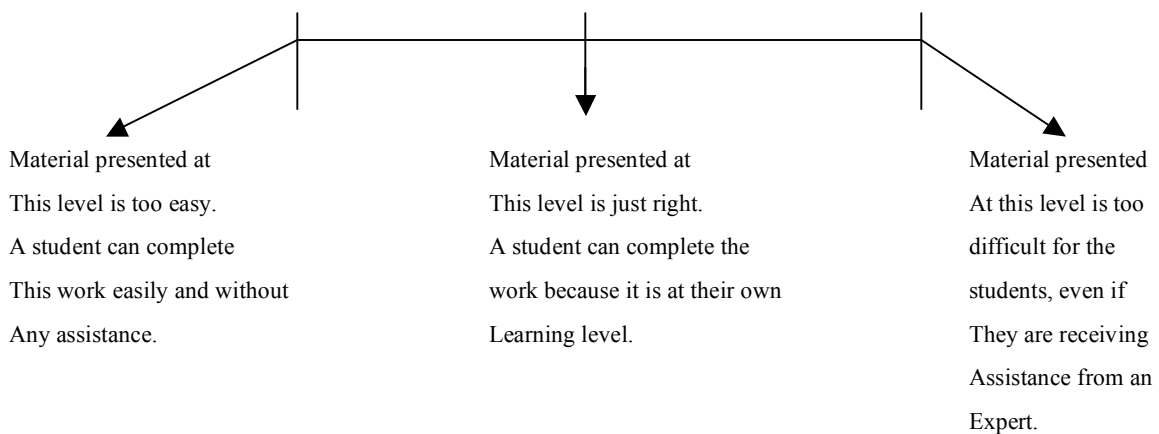
Advantages of a multilevel classroom are:

- Multilevel instruction understands that students work at different levels and focuses on the development of the learner.
- Multilevel instruction paves the way for continuous progress.
- Multilevel classrooms give students stability and helps develop a relationship between teacher and student.
- In this system, teachers also have an opportunity to develop understanding for each student and their needs.
- These classrooms also give students the opportunity to gain knowledge about themselves as learners.

(Learning and Teaching in the Multilevel Classroom)

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is used when dealing with students who have a variety of learning disabilities. This is to help a student complete tasks that are within their range or zone of proximal development. This tool is a good support system for a multilevel community classroom. The zone of proximal development can be understood as the following:



Multiple Intelligences

“Howard Gardner developed the idea of multiple intelligences in response to his dissatisfaction with typical intelligences tests” (Peterson/Hittie, pg. 173). He also developed the theory of differential learning styles for individuals (pg. 174). The eight multiple intelligences are:

- Linguistic: Capacity to use language to express ourselves and to other people.
- Logical/Mathematical: Ability to use numbers effectively and to reason logically.
- Spatial: Competence to represent the spatial world internally in our mind and to use materials to impact the environment.
- Bodily/Kinesthetic: Expertise in using the whole body to express ideas and feelings.
- Musical: Ability to think musically, hear patterns, and understand how to

manipulate them.

-Interpersonal: Ability to understand thoughts and feelings of other people.

-Intrapersonal: Understanding of ones self. Includes feelings.

-Naturalist: Sensitivity and responsiveness to living things, the natural world, and environment.

(Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences, and Education)

While teaching, it is important to understand that every student learns in different ways. Adapting our lesson plans to fit different learning styles will allow all students in the class to succeed. Pearson Education (2002-2005) gives strategies on how to incorporate each intelligence into the classroom:

-Verbal/Linguistic: storytelling, retelling, debating, presenting, reading aloud, dramatizing, writing journals, listening, book making.

-Logical/Mathematical: problem solving, measuring, sequencing, critical thinking, predicting, logic games, experimenting, solving puzzles, using manipulatives, using money.

-Visual/Spatial: graphing, visuals, creating 3-D projects, mapping, illustrating, using charts, sketching, visual puzzles.

-Bodily/Kinesthetic: hands on experiments, taking field trips, dramatizing, cooperative learning groups, dancing, physical education.

-Musical: playing instruments, singing, rhyming, humming, playing music in classroom.

-Intrapersonal: individual projects, journals, choice projects, independent reading.

-Interpersonal: peer editing, sharing, group work, brainstorming, peer

teaching, cooperative learning groups.

-Naturalistic: dissecting, identifying, nature walk, classroom plants, collecting rocks.

Learning Styles

Learning styles have to do with how people are most comfortable learning and most receptive to learning (Peterson/Hittie, pg. 182). Jensen (1995) breaks learning styles down into four parts. Context, input, processing, and response filters are the four parts according to Jensen. Context refers to the physical environment. For example, does an individual prefer to lay down when reading. Input refers to our senses. For example, using sight, touch, smell, taste, and sound to enhance ones learning. Processing refers to the way we take in the information. This includes concrete and abstract thinking. Response filters have to do with reactions to factors such as time and risk involved or internal versus external referencing (Peterson/Hittie, pg. 182).

Learning Strategies for Instruction in Key Subject Areas

-Reading:

In an inclusive classroom, multilevel instruction is necessary. At the third grade level, reading strategies such as sounding out words are practiced. Students who have learning disabilities can be asked to point out the letters and sounds they know in a book. This helps students predict the next word in a story. These students can participate in the curriculum by reading books at their level. This activity also includes those students who are gifted. These students can participate in the same curriculum as those who have learning disabilities by reading a higher level book on the same topic (chapter book).

This provides for higher and lower level students. Both are learning about the same topic, however at different levels.

-Math:

In math, students can work with others and at their own ability level. For example, students can work with manipulatives to solve problems. Students who have learning disabilities can use manipulatives to help them understand addition, subtraction, and fractions. Working in groups allows for group members to help each other. For example when dealing with fractions students can use manipulatives in assisting each other with understanding. Working in groups takes into consideration the highest and lowest level student. Higher level students can assist lower level students. Manipulatives will also be provided to students on assignments and tests.

-Science:

Activities are open ended. Higher level students can go beyond the requirements and discover other ways to perform an experiment/activity. Since science involves hands on experiments, students of all ability levels can participate. For example, the students can perform an activities, in which they observe, manipulate, and work with other students. All students will be able to observe how items are manipulated. Science provides a great opportunity to work in cooperative learning groups. All students in a group will be able to participate no matter what their disability may be. I will assign jobs to each person in the group. These jobs will be materials manager, reporter recorder, investigator, and time keeper. This insures that all the students in a group can participate and work together. During the activity, the higher level student can be the reporter recorder since this job requires writing. The lower level student can perform the job of

materials manager or time keeper for activities that require a lot of writing. When an activity comes along which does not require a lot of writing, the lower level student can be the reporter recorder. They may find this difficult, but the higher level student will be there to assist them with the activity.

-Social Studies:

In an inclusive classroom, social studies can be used as a way to promote awareness and acceptance of all students present in the room/school. Learning about cultural diversity and how to get along with others will help build community among the students. This is a way for students to gain awareness of themselves and others. Activities in social studies would include learning the core democratic values. This is open ended because it means something different to each student. Again I would group my students together by having higher level and lower level students working together. By doing so, they will gain acceptance of differences in abilities and cultures. This not only promotes acceptance, but it also prepares students for the real world in which they will encounter all types of people. Open ended projects like this allow the higher level students to go beyond the objectives.

MULTILEVEL AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION
A Learning Activity

<p>TEAM MEMBERS Alex Fodor</p>

TOPIC: Predicting the Bouncy Ball	
LEARNING GOALS	LEVELS <i>State highest to lowest learning goals</i>
<p>General Focus of Learning Students will predict the height a ball will bounce and which ball will bounce the highest.</p>	Students will understand how to predict with more accuracy.
	Students will measure the height that the ball bounced.
	Students will observe the height a ball will bounce.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	INCLUDING STUDENTS
List learning activities that will help students achieve learning goals. Do NOT have different activities for each level of learning goal but design activities that allow students to function at multiple levels of learning.	Describe how a child will participate and learn in each activity.
Students will make a prediction about how high a ball will bounce when dropped from 50 cm. Students will choose the ball that they think will bounce the highest. Students will place a small sticker on the object they fell will bounce the highest, verbalize their predictions, or write down their predictions.	Students with CI will predict the order from least to greatest of what three balls will bounce the highest. Students who are gifted will predict the order of all 10 balls.
Students will drop the balls from 50 cm to see the results and record their observations. Students will work in groups of 3 or 4 to observe the results. They will record their findings on the chart provided or by placing stickers labeled one, two, and three on the balls to show their highest to lowest bouncing ball, or by writing down their findings.	Students with CI will record their findings of the three balls with their group. The students who are gifted will record their findings on all the objects in their group.
As a class and in small groups we will discuss the order of the balls. In the groups, students	Students with CI will record their findings by using pictures. The

will work together to record their findings. Students may either use pictures or writing to convey their findings. Students will then create a graph using a computer program.	students who are gifted will display their findings by using the computer program to create a graph that represents their data.
Students will choose other balls and predict how high they will bounce. Then students will display their predictions with a picture or in writing.	Students with a CI will choose one other ball to observe. They will then draw their predictions. Students who are gifted will choose four more objects to observe. These students will then write their prediction in paragraph form giving reasons for the order.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Describe options for assessing learning including products from the learning activities.

In this activity, students will use an observation log to show their knowledge. Class discussion and observation of the groups will also be used to check for understanding through participation.

MULTILEVEL AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION
A Learning Activity

<p>TEAM MEMBERS Alex Fodor</p>

TOPIC: Buoyancy	
LEARNING GOALS	LEVELS <i>State highest to lowest learning goals</i>
<p>General Focus of Learning Students will discover if objects sink or float in water.</p>	Students will understand the term buoyancy.
	Students will understand if certain objects will sink or float.
	Students will discover object sinking or floating.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	INCLUDING STUDENTS
List learning activities that will help students achieve learning goals. Do NOT have different activities for each level of learning goal but design activities that allow students to function at multiple levels of learning.	Describe how a child will participate and learn in each activity.
Students will make a prediction about whether they think an object will sink or float. Students choose objects that they think will float. They will either place these objects on the left/right side of their desk, verbalize their predictions, or write down their predictions.	Students with CI will predict what three objects will sink or float. Students who are gifted will predict whether all the objects will sink or float.
Students will put objects in water to see the results and record their observations. Students will work in groups of 3 or 4 to observe the results. They will record their findings on the chart provided or by placing the object on the right/left side of their desk (right=float, left=sink), or by writing down their findings.	Students with CI will record their findings of the three objects with their group. The students who are gifted will record their findings on all the objects in their group.
As a class and in small groups we will discuss how many objects floated and how many sank. In the groups, students will work together to	Students with CI will record their findings by using pictures. The students who are gifted will display

record their findings. Students may either use pictures or writing to convey their findings. Students will then create a graph using a computer program.	their findings by using the computer program to create a graph that represents their data.
Students will choose other objects and predict whether they will sink or float. Then students will display their predictions with a picture or in writing.	Students with a CI will choose one other object to observe. They will then draw their predictions. Students who are gifted will choose four more objects to observe. These students will then write their prediction in paragraph form giving reasons why.
Students will work in pairs to create an object out of clay that will float and an object that will sink.	Students with a CI will work with a partner to create the object that will sink and the object that will float. The students who are gifted will create an object that will sink and an object that will float. They will then predict whether it will sink or float.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Describe options for assessing learning including products from the learning activities.

In this activity, students will use an observation log to show their knowledge. Class discussion and observation of the groups will also be used to check for understanding through participation.

MULTILEVEL AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION
A Learning Activity

TEAM MEMBERS Alex Fodor

TOPIC: ___ Plant Phototropism	
LEARNING GOALS	LEVELS <i>State highest to lowest learning goals</i>
General Focus of Learning The students will observe plants growing toward light and record the angle at which the stem bent toward the light.	Interpreting data
	Graphing, recording, and predicting data
	Observe the plant stem growing toward the light.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	INCLUDING STUDENTS
List learning activities that will help students achieve learning goals. Do NOT have different activities for each level of learning goal but design activities that allow students to function at multiple levels of learning.	Describe how a child will participate and learn in each activity.
Plant seeds into a sponge, then water	Students can work with a partner to prepare their seeds
Predict when your seeds will sprout	Students can predict by verbalizing, coloring, or pointing on a calendar, or writing out their predictions
Observe when the seeds germinate	Students can visually observe their seeds, or students can draw or write their observations
Graph which type of seed sprouted first	Students can record their observation with a partner
Record the plants progress	Students can record their information through pictures or writings
Order the planting and germinating process	Students can order the process by gluing pictures in order with a partner, drawing their own pictures in order, displaying information on PowerPoint, or through writings

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Describe options for assessing learning including products from the learning activities.
Observations, looking at students completed germinating process, class discussions

Support for Inclusive Teaching

Support Team and Ways of Working with Teacher and Staff

A support staff consists of educators who have their own roles in helping a student accomplish goals. In my third grade room, each member of the support team must be willing to collaborate with the rest of the team in order to make inclusion successful. “Through collaboration, two or more individuals interact in a supportive manner that benefits each member, as well as the people they are supporting” (Lerner, pg. 143). This means that everyone in the support team must work together and initiate a plan that is in the best interest of the students involved.

Responsibilities of the classroom teacher and special education teacher have been unclear in the past. With collaborative teaming, the responsibilities of the regular education teacher, special education teacher, support staff, parents, and volunteers are made clear. The roles of each member are defined through collaborative team meetings, in which instruction and core curriculum plan are designed. It is through this design that the teachers and support staff begin generating ideas that will benefit the students. “A collaboration team considers a student’s strengths and weaknesses and explores possible interventions for that student” (Lerner, pg. 74). In doing so, each member is providing useful information that will allow a student to excel in an inclusive classroom.

My guide is geared toward a third grade classroom. I can see myself and the special education teacher working together and becoming more comfortable with each other as the year goes on. Through out the year, we will work in the three models, which are supportive, complementary, and team teaching. The supportive model will be used to help those students with the work. For example, if there are students who do not

understand a lesson on fractions, then the special education teacher will pull them aside and work with them. While this is going on, I would be providing instruction for the students who understand the topic and are ready to move on.

I can also see us working together in the complementary model. I plan to use this as a way to accommodate assignments for students in the class. I will work on teaching the material and the special education teacher will provide accommodations for the material I am presenting. Before the lesson, we will sit down together and discuss how we are planning to accommodate all students. Finally, as the year goes on and we become more comfortable with each other, we would be using the team teaching method.

I would prefer this model, but I understand it will take time. I see this as a tag team approach. This way the special education teacher and I are planning, instructing, and assessing the students together. For example, while I am instructing the students, the special education teacher could be giving the students visuals by drawing on the board. Now when the special education teacher is instructing the class, I will be supporting them by doing the same (giving support by writing/drawing on the board). This would reinforce what we want the students to learn.

I think the most important part of inclusive schools and teaching is the need for support teams. They prove beneficial in an inclusive setting. Teacher support teams collaborate by meeting to discuss student's needs as well as solutions. For example, when a child with special needs is included in a general education classroom the team meets to find the best way to support the child. The team collaborates to present information at the child's level. At this time, strategies that can assist the child are discussed. The team may decide that the use of an Alpha Smart would best help the child

with written language. Therefore, the child would use this device through out the day for any type of written assignment. Teacher support teams collaborate by meeting to discuss student's needs as well as solutions.

Collaboration and Co-Teaching Strategies

Team teaching is a collaboration and co-teaching strategy, in which general education teachers and special education teachers work together in the classroom to support the curriculum and behavior. Both teachers are responsible for the instruction of students with and without disabilities. Every aspect of teaching, such as planning, instruction, and accommodations are a collaborative effort. I have seen team teaching in person and I think it can work in any classroom. During my student teaching, a special education teacher teamed with my cooperating teacher two to three times a week. During this time, we would work with small groups, in which the individuals were working at different levels due to their ability. For example, during center time I would be working with a group of students at the science center and the other team teacher would be working with another group in the math or language arts center. In addition to a special education teacher, the school social worker would come into the classroom once a week to teach social skill. I felt this type of support was great for the students. I just wish the school I am teaching at now did the same.

In my third grade inclusive classroom, the special education teacher would be present for language arts and math every day. The special education teacher would split time between the second and third grade rooms. Therefore, classrooms would be comprised of special education students and regular education students, in order to allow the special education teacher the ability to be present at both grade levels. This would

also take some planning between the two grades. Since both grades need the special education teacher for the same subjects we would need a plan. For example, the second grade would do language arts and math in the mornings, while the third grade would do those subjects in the afternoon. I would also ask the special education teacher to assist in science and social studies when there would be an activity/experiment taking place.

During language arts and math, we would share the responsibilities of instructing the class. For example, during writers' workshop each of us would give instructions on how to make their writing better. We would also be working with small groups or individuals to provide support. This is a time in which students are to create and share stories with their classmates. This was a great activity for all the students in the class. They are able to work at their own level. By this I mean, that some students are able to write more than others. The students who have difficulty writing will express their stories in other ways, such as using stickers and pictures in their stories. In class, we will have magazines that the students can use to cut out pictures that support their stories. While the students are working, the special education teacher and I would be working with groups of students to help them improve their writing skills.

This type of collaboration between general and special education teachers can be accomplished in various ways. Janet Lerner makes some suggestions for effective inclusion in her book titled, Learning Disabilities and Related Disorders. For example, you can use a team approach, in which the general education teacher shares responsibility with special education teachers and related professionals. Other strategies include providing for supportive services, planning for social acceptance, teaching students appropriate classroom behavior, and using co-teaching (Lerner, pg. 136). Other methods

can also include having one teacher teach the entire lesson while at the same time the other teacher is observing/working with one student or a small group. Another way this can be accomplished is through centers. Students work at centers while the teachers work with a group or an individual. Teaching together is another method of team teaching. Here, two teachers instruct and manage the class together (Peterson/Hittie, 2003). I feel that team teaching works best when both general and special education teachers share responsibility for instruction and behavior. By doing so they are developing the best plan to meet each of the student's needs.

Logistical Issues: Scheduling planning time/Case Load/Schedule of Support Staff

Collaborative support staff meetings need to be held the first week of school and every week after. It is important to start off on the right foot. This time is needed for inclusion to work. Every staff member a child works with needs to be present. This will allow teachers the opportunity to discuss the student's needs. I feel this should be done the first week of school in order to start out on the right foot. These meeting should also continue throughout the year. Setting aside a specific time each week for these meetings will allow the support staff the time to develop the best plan for an individual child as well as the entire class involved in the inclusive setting. I would plan to meet with the special education teacher every day on my prep. This way things are fresh in my mind. If there are any concerns, we can share them with each other that very day, instead of waiting till a set day to bring it up. I feel this can be accomplished. It will also help build our relationship for working together. I also feel it is important that each member of the support team has the child's necessary information on hand. This will allow each

member of the collaborative support team to formulate planning, develop interventions/strategies, and accommodations appropriate for the child. These meetings should serve as a time and place for the team to review what has been working and formulate new strategies that will assist students of the inclusive classroom.

In order for inclusion to be successful, I feel it is also important to work as a team rather than in parallel. Specialists need to coordinate their services or talk together about how to support the teacher instructing students with such differing abilities, instead of only seeing the students on their case loads (Peterson/Hittie, pg. 134). It is necessary for the specialist to follow up on their students in the regular education classroom. Too many times specialists overlook this issue. Just because the students are not being taught by the specialist in a classroom, doesn't mean the job ends there. It is necessary to follow up on students of your caseload while they are attending regular classrooms with non-disabled students. This follow up will not only prove beneficial to the student, but also the classroom teacher, who can take suggestions to improve instruction for that child and the entire class. I also feel that the support staff should develop time to provide support in class, rather than pulling students out of class to work with. This will allow the support staff to see the child work in the classroom. This is a valuable tool because they can see exactly what they need to assist the child with. For example, I think it would be beneficial for a social worker to be present in the classroom during activities that involve group work (socializing). This will give the social worker more information about the child. The social worker would then be more aware of the student's needs and would also be able to make suggestions to the teacher about what strategies may work the best. If members of the support team work in parallel, they are not able to truly evaluate a

child's needs. Collaboration allows each member of the team to gain valuable insight in order to make the inclusive experience a successful one.

As I stated earlier, the special education teacher would be scheduled to assist in language arts and math every day. The special education teacher would split time between the second and third grade rooms. Therefore, classrooms would be comprised of special education students and regular education students, in order to allow the special education teacher the ability to be present at both grade levels. This would also take some planning between the two grades. Since both grades need the special education teacher for the same subjects we would need a plan. For example, the second grade would do language arts and math in the mornings, while the third grade would do those subjects in the afternoon.

Case Study

I feel that the best way to include students with cognitive disabilities is to focus the lesson on their capabilities. Observe their need/requirements as you go through an activity and adjust accordingly. All students can be included through the use of accommodations, attitude, peer involvement, and team collaboration. The reason I include attitude is because in my two years of teaching I have found many teachers unwilling to accommodate a special needs student. These types of attitudes need to change for inclusion to work. Regardless of a student's disability all children have talents and are capable of learning. Multilevel instruction is a key strategy in teaching students with cognitive disabilities. Strategies teachers can implement include:

- Use pictures cues for multiple purposes: daily schedules, use of stick-figure drawings to tell stories as a basic writing strategy.
 - Provide books at multiple levels of difficulty with good graphics and illustrations
 - Break complex activities into smaller pieces, simpler parts
 - Partner students with buddies and have students with mental retardation participate in the elements of an activity that they can do
 - Promote connections of skills across home and school
- (Peterson & Hittie, 2003, p. 212).

Teaching students with cognitive disabilities is basically the same as teaching regular education students. Teachers should be flexible and allow students to be themselves. By allowing choices and not limiting preferences, a teacher can establish a community in the classroom that allows the inclusion of students with cognitive impairments. Establishing realistic expectations and setting appropriate goals will set the foundation for success by the students with cognitive impairments. By creating multilevel activities students in the classroom do not have to be performing the same task for the same purpose or by using the same methods. As teachers we need to be flexible and try

new things by using different techniques. Every student learns differently and it is the teacher's job to meet their needs through their strengths.

I will include a student with a cognitive disability in my classroom. They will be included in the general education classroom and in every activity we do. I understand that some activities may be difficult for this child. Therefore, I will allow the student to have a peer buddies. The peer buddies will work with the student who has a cognitive disability. For example, during a subject that requires note taking the peer buddies will assist. I will allow students to convey their knowledge to me in many different ways. I will allow students to draw pictures and work with manipulatives to increase their understanding. Since the child with CI has difficulty writing an Alpha Smart will be provided, as well as access to the write out loud program.

In the core classes and specials (gym, music, art) the student with CI will also be included. In the core classes, I will use cooperative learning groups in which students will be working together on activities and assignments. This is a way to include every student in my class. For example, in science class we do many experiments/activities. Each member of the group has a responsibility that is vital to the success of the group. Group responsibilities include time keeper, materials manager, reporter/recorder, and investigator. If there is an activity that requires a lot of writing, I will have the student with CI manage the time or the materials. When an activity comes along that does not require tons of writing I will assign the job of reporter/recorder to that child. This way the student with CI is an active member of our classroom. Participation in all activities allows the student to feel part of the class. All members of my community will feel welcome and be active contributors in class.

Three Lesson Plans

The first lesson plan I created was predicting how high a bouncy ball would bounce. My learning goal for this lesson included the discovery of rainbow properties. The lesson incorporates multilevel learning objectives from whole number computation to observations. This was designed to include students with cognitive impairments. I created a lesson that can be completed with a partner or small group. For example, when observing rainbows in prisms students with cognitive disabilities have the opportunity to complete the assignment based on their capability. The student with cognitive impairments can simply observe the prism, manipulate the prisms, or draw their own prism based on their individual ability.

The second lesson plan I created focused on bouyancy. The students' objective is to discover whether objects sink or float. This is a great activity for students with cognitive impairments. Students with cognitive impairment can work with a partner or in a small group. Depending on their individual abilities students with cognitive impairments can simply place the objects in the water, record whether the object floats or sinks with stickers, or observe the outcomes. Then students have the opportunity to place an assortment of classroom objects in the water table to observe the outcome.

In the last lesson plan students will be observing seeds germinate and record the amount of time they take to sprout. Again students with cognitive impairments will have the opportunity to work with a partner or small group. Students with cognitive impairments will be able to place the seeds in the sponge with or without help depending on their motor function. Students will daily observe the seeds and record with their partner or group how long they took to sprout. Students with disabilities can use stickers or crayons

to place a mark to record their observations. All recording observation sheets for the above lessons will be provided, unless the student chooses to create their own.

In conclusion, the important steps teachers need to focus on when adapting lessons for students with special needs include:

- Understanding students needs
- Analyze our classroom environment
- Determine discrepancy between student and our classroom environment
- Adapt instruction to solve problem

Source: (Peterson & Hittie, 2003, pgs. 261-264).

Strategies for Change

I think the best way to become a more effective inclusive teacher is to start small. I am an elementary resource room teacher. I support students in the areas of math and language arts with a pull out program. This year I have begun to go into the general education classrooms to support teachers with certain activities. I have assisted third and fourth grade teachers with science activities. I have done this on my prep hours so that I do not miss any of my student's scheduled times. I feel this is a great way to introduce the idea of inclusion and co-teaching to my school. This is a way for the teachers and me to become comfortable teaching together.

As the year goes on, I plan to go into this general education classroom with my students for their scheduled time in math and language arts. I have spoken with all the general education teachers who share my students. Two of these general education teachers have expressed interest in me team teaching with them. We have spoken about implementing a twice a week schedule, in which I would come into the general education classroom. The two teachers and I have discussed the curriculum we will present to the class. In the third grade classroom, we will be working with fractions in math and fairy tales in language arts. The students I assist in the resource room will be included in math and language arts at least twice a week. I feel this is a way to start small and introduce the idea of inclusion.

The middle school in my district has gone to inclusion this year and the thought in the district is that next year the elementary schools will also go to inclusion. Many of the teachers at the middle school were not trained on the process of inclusion and were not thrilled about the idea of inclusion. The parents of the special education students at the

middle school were also not happy about the change. However, things seem to be settling down at the middle school and people are adjusting their way of thinking about the process of inclusion. In order to inform parents and teachers about inclusion, my special education director has provided workshops and seminars for those staff and parents at the middle school. I have asked my director to provide the elementary school teachers and parents with these same seminars. I feel this will be a way to introduce the idea to people and ease any tensions about it. I feel I have taken a leadership role to move toward inclusion in my school by working with general education teachers in the general education classroom, planning with the general education teachers, and asking my special education director to provide the elementary teachers and parent with information about inclusion to make the transition smoother next year.