

Supporting High Quality Special Education Instruction

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Instructional Snapshot

Take a minute to think of a time when you observed in a classroom, ANY classroom, and you felt you saw truly high-quality instruction taking place.

- What was the teacher doing?
- What were the student's doing?
- What made that instruction effective?

We should expect to see high quality instruction happening with ALL students in every classroom, general ed or special ed

Let's start with some basics

Administrators are
Responsible for ALL Students

Learning

Behavior

Social
Emotional

Safety

More Basics

Administrators Are
Responsible for all Staff

Instruction

Behavior

Social
Emotional

Safety

Administrators and Special Education



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Some things all administrators need to know about Special Education

- We are obligated, by law, to provide students with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education.
- Students with disabilities are entitled to education in the Least Restrictive Environment (yet still having their needs met).
- ★ • There are a complicated set of rules and regulations that have to be followed in special education.
- ★ • Special Education equates to Specially Designed Instruction.

Regarding the first 

Compliance Matters

But...

Achievement and Progress Matter More

Compliant IEP's don't
teach kids to read or
do math.



Now for the second 

What is Specially Designed Instruction?

SDI means adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of an eligible student relative to content, methodology, or delivery of instruction

- To meet unique needs
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum (in LRE)

Adapting Instruction As Appropriate

Content

How does the student access the general education curriculum (i.e., accommodations, modifications, or pre-requisite skills)?

Examples:

- Decodable text on the same content
- Reading passages shortened
- Sections of content eliminated

*Please note that the content should be adapted for only a small percentage of students.

Adapting Instruction As Appropriate

Methodology

Is there a practice or set of approaches that prove to be more productive and/or ideal for this student when acquiring knowledge and skills?

Examples:

- Chunking
- Multi-sensory phonics instruction
- Math manipulatives that are additional to what is already being used with the class
- Scaffolded writing process with increased emphasis on planning and organizing

Adapting Instruction As Appropriate

Delivery

How is this applied to the content that the student is learning currently? Is the instruction more explicit or systematic? What is 'special' about it?

Examples:

- Pre-teaching/re-teaching specific skills or content or vocabulary
- Explicit step-by-step instruction for more comprehensive skills or tasks
- Speech to text software to support written idea development or evidence of comprehension

What makes it SDI?

- Planned
- Intentional
- Organized
- Systematic, structured process
- Specifically addresses student needs as outline in the goals and objectives
- What the teacher does, not what the student does (explicit instruction)
- Frequently progress monitored



What makes instruction explicit?

- Explicit Instruction is a way to teach in a direct, structured way.
- When teachers use explicit instruction, they make lessons crystal clear
- They show kids how to start and succeed on a task
- They also give kids plenty of feedback and time to practice.

**Explicit and Specially Designed Instruction:
A Special Education Instructional Practice Guide and Reflection Tool**

Coming
Soon!!!

Instruction = Achievement

Great
Instruction is
the Key



Sooo.....what does the Administrator need to do to support all of that???



Be Visible

Know What To Look For

1. Student Engagement

- a. Teachers ensure multiple opportunities for students with disabilities to respond, for example.
 - i. Oral responses: (e.g., choral response, think-pair-share; partner response).
 - ii. Unison responses: (e.g., choral response; white-boards; response cards),
 - iii. Team responses: (e.g., numbered heads together; jigsaw).
 - iv. Written responses: (e.g., response cards, white boards, think-jot-share; pair and write).
 - v. Action responses: (e.g., touching/pointing; gestures; acting out; hand signals; facial expressions).
- b. Students with disabilities engage in structured activities designed to allow for processing (e.g., I-time, think-pair-share, numbered heads, elbow partners, think-jot).
- c. The teacher explicitly teaches strategies for responding to higher-order questions (e.g., problem solving, generalization, evaluative, inferential, application).

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Ask Questions!

What is the specially designed instruction you are providing? (CT classes especially!)

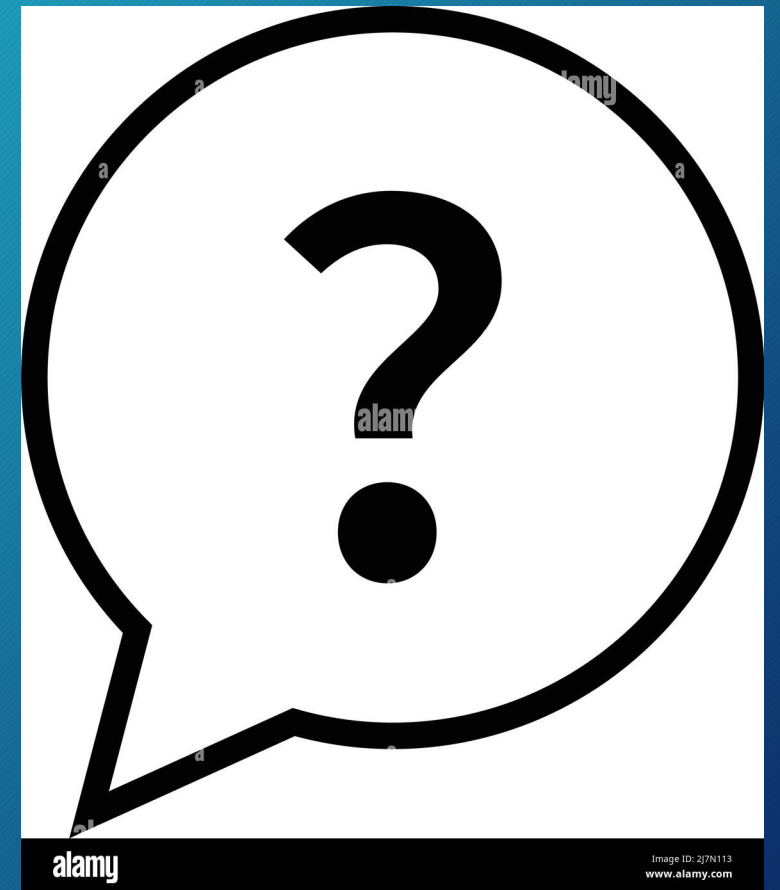
How are you scaffolding this lesson?

What progress are you seeing with this student? How do you know?

Why do you think progress is not where it should be?

Have you targeted the right skill?

Does the student have the pre-requisite skills for these tasks?



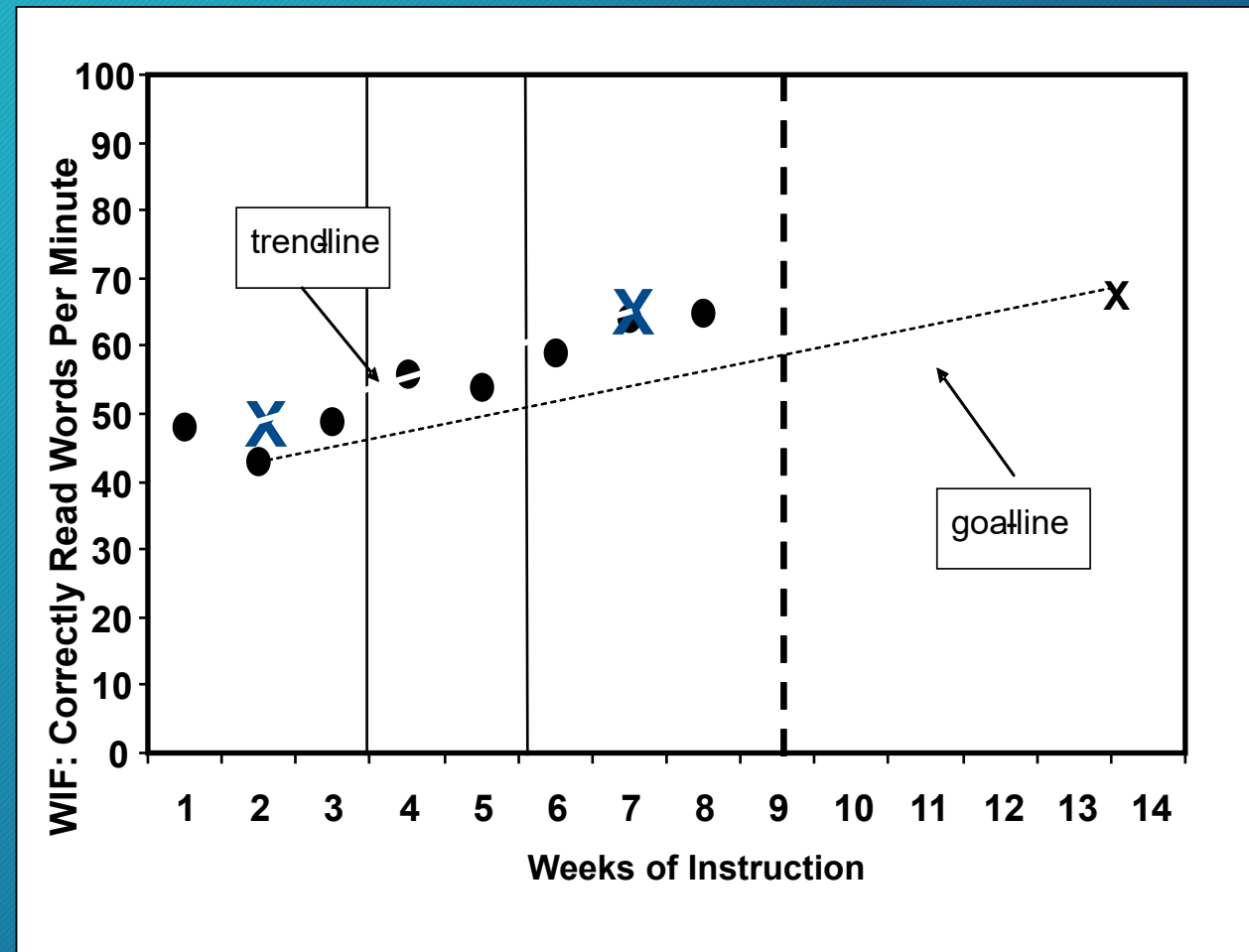
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INSIST ON DATA!!!

Decisions should hinge on the data to support them.

Ask about the progress monitoring.
Ask to see it. (should be happening at least every two weeks)

Insist it is presented at the IEP meeting. Help the teacher reflect on it.



Supporting High Quality Instruction

Support Teacher Learning



Special Education Teachers need professional development not only on compliance issues, but they need PD on good instructional strategies, behavior management, how to teach reading, writing and math, as well as a whole host of other things!

They need time for meaningful collaboration with colleagues to discuss data, strategies for various students, to create shared data collection tools, etc.

Provide resources both for themselves and their students

Supporting High Quality Instruction

And now a word about Co-Teaching

- The way most of us are doing it does not work.
- Insist on high quality professional development for this.
- Attend training yourselves to understand the true purpose of the structure.
- Insist and support your CT teams in using the most highly effective structures for two teachers being in a room.
- Ask what specially designed instruction is being done in that classroom. Ask for data on IEP goals.
- Administrator understanding of this model is critical.





**“Do the best you can until you know better.
Then when you know better, do better.”
— Maya Angelou**

