



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

By Gail Ghere, Jennifer York-Barr, and Jennifer Sommerness

*Institute on Community Integration (UCEDD)
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration*

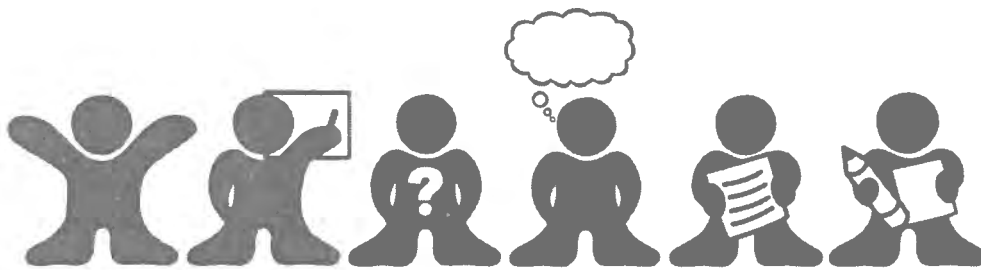


The College of Education
& Human Development

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



U.S. Office of Special
Education Programs



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

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Unit I: What is Inclusive Education?

By Gail Ghere, Jennifer York-Barr, and Jennifer Sommerness

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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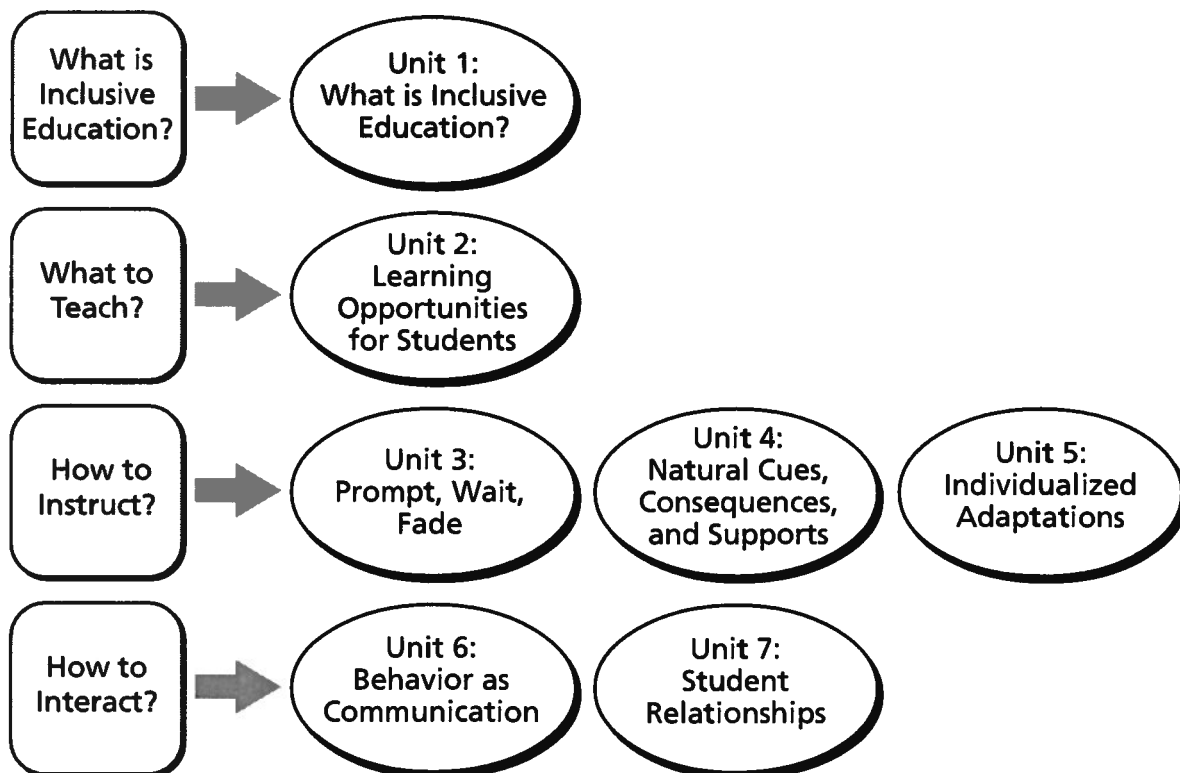


Curriculum Overview

Welcome to the *Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools: A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development*. To provide effective education for students with disabilities in inclusive schools, we must understand not only what students need to learn, but also how to instruct and support students across a wide range of activities and environments. This paraprofessional development curriculum was developed to meet this need. The desired outcomes for paraprofessionals who participate in this curriculum are that they —

- Understand their roles and responsibilities in providing instructional support for students with disabilities;
- Develop knowledge and skills that directly relates to their work supporting students;
- Appropriately use the knowledge and skills in inclusive environments; and
- Provide accurate and meaningful feedback about student performance to special educators and other team members.







The paraprofessional development curriculum has four main parts with a total of seven instructional units. The figure below illustrates all of the units and how they are organized in the curriculum. This unit is highlighted in the shaded circle.





Unit Sections

There are six sections in each unit. Each section has a specific purpose. For easy reference, a label and symbol in the header of each handout identifies which section is being taught. The table below identifies the six sections, their corresponding symbols, and the purpose for each section.

Symbol	Section	Purpose
	Welcome and Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To welcome you to the session; introduce you to the unit and indicate where this unit fits into the whole curriculum. • To share the desired outcomes from your participation in this session and the follow-up activity.
	Personal Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage you in personal reflection about an aspect of your life that relates to the content focus of each unit. The reflection brings to mind personal experiences to which new learning can be connected.
	Why is This Important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight the main points of the personal reflection activity. • To generalize to broader learning concepts. • To specify how the new learning concepts apply to student learning.
	New Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To teach new content and how the content can be applied when working with students with disabilities in a variety of learning environments.
	Unit Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To summarize why the unit content is important for student learning and what it means for your role as a paraprofessional.
	Follow-up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an activity for transferring the new learning of the unit to your work supporting students. • To offer a structured opportunity for applying new information and skills. • To provide a vehicle for special educators to specifically coach and offer feedback to you about the appropriate application of the content with students you support.



Personal Reflection: Thinking About Feeling Included and Excluded

Jot your thoughts in response to these questions.

**Think about an experience
when you felt included in a
group —**

- What did it mean to be included in the group?
- How did it feel?
- How did you act?

**Think about an experience
when you felt excluded
from a group —**

- What did it mean to be excluded from the group?
- How did it feel?
- How did you act?



Why is This Important?

- When we feel included, we open ourselves to new learning and new relationships. When we feel excluded, we close ourselves off from others and react in negative ways.
- Students who feel included are more open and ready to learn. Students who feel excluded close themselves off and may protect themselves with behaviors that interfere with learning and friendships.
- When students are part of classrooms and schools where they feel welcomed and valued, they are more willing to take part in new learning opportunities and develop new relationships.



What is inclusive education for students with disabilities?

- Inclusive education means that students with disabilities are educated in the same school as their brothers, sisters, and neighbors. They are provided the support to be successful in their age-appropriate grade and classrooms for most or all of the day. They feel welcomed and valued.
- The goal of inclusive education is to prepare students with disabilities to lead productive lives as full members of their schools and communities. We do this by —
 - Teaching students the skills and knowledge they need to develop greater independence.
 - Providing ways for students to communicate and make choices.
 - Assisting them to develop relationships with other students.



New Learning: What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Elementary

It is one thing to read about what inclusive education is, and another thing to visualize how all the pieces fit together to create a cohesive program. *Dan's Day* tells the story of a fifth grade student, Dan, who has a disability and who is a member of an inclusive school. The example is designed to help you understand how an inclusive education program can look. Understanding how to effectively support Dan so that he gains the knowledge and skills to be more independent requires knowing who he is, what he likes, how he learns best, and how his educational program is organized. The new learning section of this unit has four parts described below —

1. *Getting to Know Dan* (Handouts 6–7)

This page gives a “snapshot” picture of Dan by sharing important information, such as his likes, dislikes, friends, how he communicates, and relevant physical, health, and behavior information. Just as important, it shares which instructional strategies work best for Dan and which have not worked well in the past.

2. *IEP-at-a-Glance* (Handout 8)

The *IEP-at-a-Glance* briefly summarizes Dan's individual learning objectives, what strategies and adaptations are needed to support his learning, and what activities he needs assistance with during the school day.

3. *Learning Objectives Matrix: What to Teach and When?*
(Handout 9)

The *Learning Objectives Matrix* quickly identifies the activities or classes during the school day in which each of Dan's individual learning objectives are priorities for instruction. This does not mean that these learning objectives cannot be taught at other times, it simply identifies when each objective is focused on during the day.

4. *Dan's Day — Elementary* (Handouts 10–11)

Dan's Day — Elementary tells the story of Dan's typical school day and how his individual learning objectives are embedded across the school day.



Getting to Know Dan

Student: Dan

Date: September

Grade: 5

1. What do you enjoy about Dan?

Dan is a very happy boy. He is well liked by his classmates and many choose to be his partner during class activities. He is interested in many things and frequently adds to the classroom discussion.

2. What are some of Dan's gifts, can-do behaviors, areas of progress, strengths, and interests?

Dan is eager to try new activities on his own and only requests help when he is having a lot of difficulty. Last year, he made significant progress driving his electric wheelchair on the right side of the hallway, and understanding simple addition and subtraction. He is also doing better asking questions that are more on topic. He responds well to praise for a job well done.

3. What specific teaching strategies and learning style needs stand out for Dan?

Dan learns from being directly involved with all the activities. While he may need some assignments shortened or adapted, he is able to participate in everything. All written work must be enlarged because of his vision. He is working on staying on topic when he answers questions, so sometimes questions need to be restated to help keep him focused. When he gets frustrated by a task, help him to talk about the problem/issue to reduce his frustration. While he enjoys talking to others, he has difficulty starting conversations, especially with his peers.

4. What strategies have not worked in the past?

Dan is very sensitive to criticism, even when it is said very gently. Sometimes he gets very emotional and will cry. When you need to tell him to do something in a different way, make sure to point out what he did well. When you do this, he is better able to listen to the whole message and learn.

5. Who are some of the Dan's friends? When are they together during the school day?

While well-liked by his classmates, Dan is good friends with Jose, Karen, and Alfonso. They are in class together all day.

6. How does Dan communicate with others?

Dan's speech is usually clear. When he gets excited, his whole body tightens up affecting his speech. In these cases, ask him to relax and repeat what he said. When you ask Dan a question, make sure to give him time to answer because he processes information and decides on a response slowly.



7. Does Dan have any challenging behaviors? What strategies have been successful?

Dan can be very impulsive. In the classroom, he may need to be reminded to raise his hand and wait to be called on. His impulsiveness is a bigger issue on the playground and when driving his wheelchair. At recess, we need to make sure he is safely driving his chair on level surfaces, staying away from curbs, and not accidentally running into other students (both his vision difficulties and his impulsiveness affect his wheelchair driving).

8. Please list relevant physical or health information (e.g., medications, vision, hearing, motor abilities, chronic health problems).

Dan has cerebral palsy. He has difficulty coordinating his arms and legs. He does bear some weight on his legs, but needs moderate assistance for all transfers to and from his wheelchair. His hearing is fine. He has a vision impairment and wears glasses. He has a seizure disorder that is well controlled by his medication. He rarely, if ever, has a seizure at school. If he does, be sure to protect his head from bumping on furniture or his wheelchair. When the seizure is over, take Dan to the nurse to rest.

Format adapted with permission: York-Barr, J., Doyle, M.B., & Kronberg, R. (1996). *Creating inclusive school communities: Module 3a. Curriculum as everything students learn in school: Planning for transitions. (Form 16)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



IEP-at-a-Glance

Student: Dan

Date: September

Grade: 5

IEP Objectives

- Take out and put away materials with fewer prompts.
- Begin conversations with peers.
- Use more details when describing an event.
- Remain on topic while participating in classroom discussions.
- Write two sentences without assistance using the word processor.
- Comprehend and orally read material adapted to end of second grade reading level.
- Calculate two and three digit addition with regrouping.
- Calculate two and three digit subtraction without regrouping.
- Independently drive his electric wheelchair safely in school.
- Use good judgement about his wheelchair safety when on the playground (i.e., speed, near curbs, on inclines, around other students).
- Greater active participation when transferring to and from his wheelchair.

Instructional Strategies/Adaptations

- Enlarging of all written material (worksheets and books).
- Using word predictor software when doing word processing.
- Books on tape available for use during language arts, independent study, and at home.
- Allowing a "wait period" to organize his thoughts after he is asked a question.
- Helping Dan talk out problems/concerns to reduce frustrations.
- Dictating longer written assignments to a peer or an adult.
- For long worksheet assignments, breaking into parts and selecting most pertinent items.
- Accommodating standardized testing formats: short segment testing, extended time, alternate setting, reader for math, scribe to write down answers, enlarged print.

Management Needs

- Assistance with flexibility exercises.
- Assistance manipulating clothing in the bathroom.
- Medication administered daily by the school nurse.
- Assistance in the cafeteria line to obtain his food choices.
- Adapted evacuation plan.

Format based on: Udvari-Solner, A. (1995). A process for adapting curriculum. In R. Villa and J. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (p. 114). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



Learning Objectives Matrix: What to Teach and When?

Student Dan Grade 5 Date September

IEP Objectives

General Education Class Schedule

	Arrival	Open Activity	Lang Arts	Math	Phy Ed	Lunch/ Recess	Break	Science	Indep Study	Dis-missal
Take out and put away materials with fewer prompts.		X	X	X		X		X		X
Begin conversations with peers.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Use more details when describing an event.		X	X			X		X	X	
Remain on topic while participating in classroom discussions.		X	X	X	X			X	X	
Write two sentences without assistance using the word processor.		X	X					X	X	
Comprehend and orally read material adapted to second grade reading level.			X	X				X	X	
Calculate two and three digit addition with regrouping.				X					X	
Calculate two and three digit subtraction without regrouping.				X					X	
Independently drive his electric wheelchair safely in school.	X				X	X	X	X		X
Use good judgement about his safety when on the playground (i.e., speed, curbs, inclines, around students).					X	X				
Greater active participation when transferring to and from his wheelchair.					X		X		X	

Format based on Udvari-Solner, A. (1995). A process for adapting curriculum. In R. Villa and J. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (p. 115). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Elementary

8:30 a.m. — Arrival

Dan arrives at school on a lift bus. The bus assistant helps him exit the bus safely. He drives his electric wheelchair and enters the school with the other students. He is greeted at the cafeteria by Sally, a paraprofessional, who assists him go through the breakfast line and sit at a table with his friends. Sally then walks around the cafeteria to monitor all the students. When Dan is finished with breakfast, his friends help him clean-up. Dan meets Sally nearby at his locker, where she helps him get his materials organized for his morning classes. Dan enters his fifth grade classroom by himself while Sally goes to check on a student in another class.

8:55 a.m. — Opening Activity

Dan's teacher has arranged her room with wide aisles so he can move throughout the class independently. He knows that his teacher begins every day with all the students writing in their journals, so he takes his journal out of his desk. Writing sentences is very difficult for Dan, so he begins by writing two sentences using the word processor. After that, Dan tells the rest of his story to a friend who writes his ideas in the journal for him. Dan's teacher walks around the room checking all of the students' journals. She notices that Dan doesn't have many details in his story, so she asks him some questions and quickly jots down his new ideas in his journal.

9:20 a.m. — Language Arts

Language Arts is co-taught by Dan's classroom teacher and the special education teacher, Mr. Jones. In the first part of class, all students participate in a whole class discussion and vocabulary game. This week the topic is the rainforest. Both teachers lead the discussion. Afterwards, the class breaks into three small groups. Mr. Jones leads a small group with Dan and two classmates. Today they are reading aloud and discussing a book about the rainforest that is appropriate for their reading level. Afterwards, Dan does his independent work. Sally uses this period to leave the classroom to enlarge the written material that Dan will need next week in his classes.

10:50 a.m. — Math

Three days a week, Mr. Jones stays in Dan's classroom to co-teach Math with the classroom teacher. Two days a week, Sally follows through with the math lesson that Mr. Jones has planned. Depending on the topic and skill being taught, the teachers decide how to best group the students for each lesson. Sally stays in the classroom to learn how she should review Dan's math with him and how to support the other students with special needs in the class. When these students are doing their work, Sally moves around the classroom assisting other students. Today, Dan is working in a small group. He is working on addition with regrouping; other group members are doing two step problems that use addition. Sally stays with the group to learn how she should review Dan's math with him and to help keep students' attention focused on the lesson.



What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Elementary (Continued)

11:45 — Physical Education

Dan goes to Gym with the class. Sally follows the lead of the teacher and adapts the activities for him based on guidelines she has received from the adaptive physical education teacher. Once a week, the physical therapist is in the gym class teaching Sally how to include flexibility exercises into this week's activities. Before and after class, Dan practices safely driving his wheelchair in crowded areas by staying along the wall on the right side of the hall.

12:30 — Lunch/Recess

Dan meets Jose, a friend, at the cafeteria and they go through the cafeteria line together. Dan tells Jose his lunch choices. Jose puts them on Dan's tray and carries them to the table for him. Sally meets Dan at the table to help him set up for lunch, then she takes her own lunch break. After lunch, David, another paraprofessional, meets Dan to go to the playground. While David watches all the students, he specifically makes sure that Dan is safe and that he is using good judgment about his speed, driving near curbs, and staying on level surfaces. If Dan is having a difficult time connecting with friends, he organizes a playground game that Dan and his classmates would all enjoy.

1:10 — Break

After recess, Dan and Sally travel to the accessible bathroom. Dan needs assistance to transfer to and from his wheelchair and to manage his clothing. Afterwards, they travel to the nurse so Dan can get his daily medication.

1:40 — Science

Traveling to and from the science lab, Dan practices keeping pace with his class and safely steering his wheelchair along the right side of the hallway. In class, Dan participates in a hands-on science unit about pollution. Sally physically assists Dan as he works with his partner during the lab session. His partner records the findings which they both turn in at the end of the class.

2:30 — Independent Study

During independent study, Dan practices transferring out of his wheelchair onto a mat. While he stretches out, Sally reviews two-digit addition with Dan. Two other classmates join them to practice their math.

3:15 — Dismissal

Dan begins to organize his belongings to go home. His teacher briefly meets with him to check his assignment notebook to make sure he has not forgotten anything. He leaves his class 10 minutes early to get to the bus on time. Sally walks with him to make sure he arrives safely.



New Learning: The Inclusive Education Myths & Truths Game

Directions: For each of the following statements, write “M” for MYTH or “T” for TRUTH.

1. _____ Inclusive education is about creating school communities in which all children are welcomed, accepted, and successful.
2. _____ There is a specific “recipe” for making inclusive education work — one way works for all students, all grades, and all schools.
3. _____ In general education classrooms, the only learning objective for all students is the core curriculum (reading, writing, math, etc.).
4. _____ Inclusive education means that students with disabilities spend 100% of their instructional time in general education classrooms and can never receive instruction elsewhere.
5. _____ High expectations and quality instruction are key factors in learning for all students.
6. _____ The opportunity to socialize with others is the only reason for students with disabilities to be included in general education classes.
7. _____ The people who usually experience the greatest concern about inclusive education are the classmates of the student with a disability.
8. _____ Having an extra adult in the classroom always promotes participation by students with disabilities.

Adapted with permission from: York-Barr, J., Kronberg, R., & Doyle, M. B. (1996). *Creating inclusive school communities: Module 1: A shared agenda for general and special educators*. (Forms 24A–24B). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



Unit Summary: What is Inclusive Education?

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- They feel welcomed and part of the school community.
- There are specific, individualized learning objectives and when what is taught is meaningful to them.
- They are working towards greater participation and independence in the skills they are learning.
- They are interacting with their classmates.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Believe in students' abilities to learn and become more independent.
- Have high expectations for students.
- Follow through on the educational programs developed by special education and classroom teachers.
- Help students access and be active participants in different environments across the school day.
- Assure that each student's learning objectives are implemented across the whole school day.
- Model respectful and enjoyable interactions with other students and adults.



Follow-up Activity: IEP-at-a-Glance

- Choose one student.
- Review selected parts of the student's IEP and/or interview team members to identify the key points of that student's individual educational plan. List them below.
- After you complete this follow-up activity, share your findings with the student's special education teacher.

Student: _____ Date: _____ Grade: _____

IEP Objectives

Instructional Strategies / Adaptations

Management Needs

Format based on: Udvari-Solner, A. (1995). A process for adapting curriculum. In R. Villa and J. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (p. 114). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Appendix

Dan's Day — Secondary

If a secondary example is more applicable for this paraprofessional development session, remove *Dan's Day — Elementary* (Handouts 5–11) and substitute *Dan's Day — Secondary* (Handouts 15–21).



New Learning: What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Secondary

It is one thing to read about what inclusive education is and another thing to visualize how all the pieces fit together to create a cohesive program. *Dan's Day — Secondary* tells the story of a tenth grade student, Dan, who has a disability and who is a member of an inclusive school. The example is designed to help you understand how an inclusive education program can look at the secondary level. Understanding how to support Dan effectively so that he gains the knowledge and skills to be more independent, requires knowing who he is, what he likes, how he learns best, and how his educational program is organized. The new learning section of this unit includes four parts described below —

1. Getting to Know Dan (Handouts 16–17)

This page gives a “snapshot” picture of Dan by sharing important information, such as his likes, dislikes, friends, how he communicates, and relevant physical, health, and behavioral information. Just as important, it describes instructional strategies that work best for Dan and those that have not worked well in the past.

2. IEP-at-a-Glance (Handout 18)

The *IEP-at-a-Glance* briefly summarizes Dan's individual learning objectives, the strategies and adaptations needed to support his learning, and what activities he needs assistance with during the school day.

3. Learning Objectives Matrix: What to Teach and When?
(Handout 19)

The *Learning Objectives Matrix* quickly identifies the activities or classes during the school day in which each of Dan's individual learning objectives are priorities for instruction. This does not mean that these learning objectives cannot be taught at other times, it simply identifies when each objective is focused on during the day.

4. Dan's Day — Secondary (Handouts 20–21)

Dan's Day — Secondary tells the story of Dan's typical school day and how his individual learning objectives are embedded across the school day.



Getting to Know Dan

Student: Dan

Date: September

Grade: 10

1. What do you enjoy about Dan?

Dan is a great guy who enjoys other people. He is well known by his classmates and has a close group of friends that he sees throughout the day. He is interested in many things and likes to talk about his interests. He shares his opinions in class discussions.

2. What are some of Dan's gifts, can-do behaviors, areas of progress, strengths, and interests?

Dan is always eager to try new activities. When he is having difficulty, he will ask a classmate or his teacher for help. He is very interested in sports, computers, and acting. This fall, Dan joined the Theatre Club and has a part in the fall production. In the winter, he plans to be on an adapted floor hockey team. Dan moves independently between classes on the same floor. He has just begun using the elevator independently this year.

3. What specific teaching strategies and learning style needs stand out for Dan?

Dan learns from being directly involved in all classes and prefers hands-on electives. While he frequently needs his assignments shortened or adapted, he is able to participate in all class activities. Periodically, he needs reminders to stay focused on the discussion topic. All written work must be enlarged because of his vision. Dan is able to use a word processor for short assignments, but his speed is quite slow. For longer assignments, he dictates his ideas to a classmate or a paraprofessional who writes them for him. He is learning to use voice-activated software for longer assignments, and how to advocate for himself. Every semester, Dan writes a letter to introduce himself to his teachers, tell them about his disability, and describe the adaptations that help him learn.

4. What strategies have not worked in the past?

Dan continues to need assistance with organization. He also does not respond well to criticism and can get angry. When you need to tell him to do something in a different way, do it at a private time when his friends are not around, make sure to point out what he did well and then explain what he needs to do differently, and why.

5. Who are some of the Dan's friends? When are they together during the school day?

Dan is well known by his classmates. It is quite common to see one or two students accompany him between classes or help him at his locker. He usually meets Jose, Karen, and Eric in the cafeteria for lunch.



6. How does Dan communicate with others?

Dan speaks for himself. When he gets excited, his whole body tightens up affecting his speech. In these cases, remind him to relax and then repeat what he was saying. When you ask him a question, make sure to give him time to answer because he processes information slowly and sometimes requires extra time to construct his responses.

7. Does Dan have any challenging behaviors? What strategies have been successful?

When Dan gets frustrated, he will swear or abruptly drive off in his wheelchair. He is learning how to talk about his frustrations. When you notice him becoming frustrated, talk to him about what is happening and help him figure out how he might deal with it. When Dan is overly excited, he can be impulsive and not drive his wheelchair carefully. Take him aside and remind him to slow down so he does not hurt himself or others.

8. Please list relevant physical or health information (e.g., medications, vision, hearing, motor abilities, chronic health problems). Dan has cerebral palsy. He has difficulty coordinating his arms and legs. During transfers, he is able to support his own body weight on his legs, but needs moderate assistance to come to standing and for balance. His hearing is fine. He has a vision impairment and wears glasses. He has a seizure disorder that is well controlled by his medication. He rarely, if ever, has a seizure at school. If he does, be sure to protect his head. When the seizure is over, take Dan to the nurse to rest.

Format adapted with permission: York-Barr, J., Doyle, M.B., & Kronberg, R. (1996). *Creating inclusive school communities: Module 3a: Curriculum as everything students learn in school: Planning for transitions*. (Form 16). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



IEP-at-a-Glance

Student: Dan

Date: September

Grade: 10

IEP Objectives

- Refer to and use his student planner independently.
- Remain on topic during class discussions.
- Read with comprehension at the sixth grade level.
- Write a one to two paragraph essay with ideas well organized, and with sentences well constructed and correctly punctuated.
- Apply basic multiplication and division skills to word problems.
- Make purchases in the cafeteria and community without assistance.
- Use good judgement about his and others' safety when moving throughout the school and community in his electric wheelchair.
- Describe and advocate for his needs in his classes.
- Use accessible public transportation from school to shopping center with minimal support.

Instructional Strategies/Adaptations

- Enlarging of all written material.
- Accessing and using word predictor software when doing word processing.
- Dictating longer written assignments to a peer or an adult.
- Using voice activated software for longer assignments.
- Providing books on tape for use at home.
- Allowing a "wait period" to organize his thoughts after he is asked a question.
- Helping Dan talk out problems or concerns to reduce frustrations.
- For long assignments or projects, breaking the work into parts and selecting the most pertinent items.
- Accommodating standardized testing formats: short segment testing, extended time, alternate setting, reader for math, scribe to write down answers, enlarged print.
- Extending passing time between classes.

Management Needs

- Assistance with flexibility exercises and wheelchair transfers.
- Assistance manipulating clothing in the bathroom.
- Medication administered daily by the school nurse.
- Assistance in the cafeteria line, as needed.
- Adapted evacuation plan.

Format based on: Udvari-Solner, A. (1995). A process for adapting curriculum. In R. Villa and J. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (p. 114). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



Learning Objectives Matrix: What to Teach and When?

Student Dan Grade 10 Date September

IEP Objectives	General Education Class Schedule									
	Arrival	English	World Studies	Home-room	Support Class	Lunch/Break	Math	PhyEd	Biology	Dismissal
Refer to and use student organizer independently.	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Remain on topic during class discussions.		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Read with comprehension at the sixth grade level.		X	X		X				X	
Write a one to two paragraph essay with ideas well organized and sentences well constructed.		X	X		X				X	
Apply basic multiplication and division in word problems.					X		X			
Make purchases in the cafeteria and community without assistance.	X				X	X				
Use good judgement when moving throughout the school and community.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Advocate for his needs in classes.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Use accessible public transportation from school to shopping center with minimal support.					X					

Format based on: Udvari-Solner, A. (1995). A process for adapting curriculum. In R. Villa and J. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (p. 115). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Secondary

8:10 a.m. — Arrival

Dan arrives at school on a lift bus and a bus assistant helps him exit the bus. He drives his electric wheelchair into school with the other students. In the cafeteria, he is met by Steve, a paraprofessional, who assists him to get his breakfast. Dan sits with his friends while Steve leaves to assist other students. When Dan is finished, his friends help him clean-up and together they go to their lockers. Dan's locker is near the elevator for easy access. A friend helps Dan hang up his coat and get his books for his morning classes. Steve is nearby assisting another student, but doesn't help Dan unless he is requested. Dan travels to his first hour independently.

8:40 a.m. — English

Dan enters his English class and sits with a small group of students. Steve is present at the beginning of class to help Dan get his materials organized. Steve then leaves for the remainder of English. The class has a reading emphasis. They are reading the play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Dan reads an abbreviated, large print version of the play. He also has audio-tapes of the book to listen to at home. Dan participates in the small, cooperative discussion groups. A classmate takes notes on carbonless paper and gives Dan a copy. Dan leaves class five minutes early to travel independently to his next class while the hallways are less crowded.

9:35 a.m. — World Studies

Dan's second hour class is World Studies and is co-taught by the social studies teacher and the special education teacher, Mrs. Winters. At the beginning of class, Mrs. Winters talks to each student about their population map assignment. Dan's map is enlarged and the assignment has been adapted to focus on the main learning concepts. The social studies teacher lectures on the effect of disease on populations. The class then divides into two groups. Each teacher leads a small discussion group.

10:30 a.m. — Homeroom

Students remain in their second hour class for homeroom. The teacher takes attendance, shares important announcements, and speaks to the class about the upcoming Homecoming Week events. Afterwards, the students have a few minutes to talk with friends. Dan talks to Eric about his part in the Theatre Club's play and the eight lines he needs to memorize.

10:45 — Support Class

Dan leaves homeroom early to travel to Support Class. Support Class is taught by Mrs. Winters with Steve, the paraprofessional, assisting. In Support Class, students learn strategies they can use to be successful in general education classes, such as being organized and communicating instructional needs. Students enrolled in the same core classes form study groups around upcoming assignments or tests. Mrs. Winters asks Dan about the strategy he will use to organize his population map. Later Dan practices writing using the voice activated software. On Friday, Dan will use public accessible transportation to go on a community outing to the public library with Mrs. Winters and a classmate.



What Does Inclusive Education Look Like?

Dan's Day — Secondary (Continued)

11:35 — Lunch/Break

Dan has extended lunch. He leaves five minutes early from Support Class and arrives to Math five minutes late. Steve meets Dan at the cafeteria to assist him in getting his lunch. Dan eats with three of his friends. Because his friends must rush to get to their next class on time, Steve helps Dan clean-up. After lunch, they travel to the nurse's office. Steve assists Dan to use the accessible bathroom. Dan then asks the nurse for his medication. Next, Dan and Steve stop at Dan's locker to get books for his afternoon classes. Dan uses the elevator to travel to Math independently.

12:15 — Math

Math focuses on learning and applying basic math principles. The class has fewer students and a paraprofessional assists. Because the teacher frequently uses an overhead projector to illustrate problems, Dan sits up front so he can see the problems on the screen. The paraprofessional assists Dan with writing the problems in his notebook. Dan places a Post-it™ note in his book to mark the page his class is working on. This makes it easier for him to find his place in the book, and for Mrs. Winters and his parents to review what he is studying.

1:10 — Physical Education

Dan attends one semester of physical education and one semester of health. This semester he is in an adapted physical education class. Once a week, the physical therapist joins the class to review with the paraprofessionals Dan's flexibility exercises, to observe his transfers to and from his wheelchair, and to offer program suggestions.

2:05 — Biology

Biology is co-taught by the science teacher and a special education teacher, Mr. Summers. The class is studying one cell organisms. The teachers have developed a graphic organizer about one cell organisms to help Dan understand the important concepts in the unit. Steve physically assists Dan during the lab sessions.

3:00 — Dismissal

Dan meets Steve at his locker. Steve prompts Dan as he uses his student organizer to decide what books he needs for homework. He then assists Dan to organize his belongings. A friend meets Dan at the locker and they go together to Theatre Club, an after-school activity.



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

Unit 2: What to Teach? Learning Opportunities for Students

By Gail Ghere, Jennifer York-Barr, and Jennifer Sommerness

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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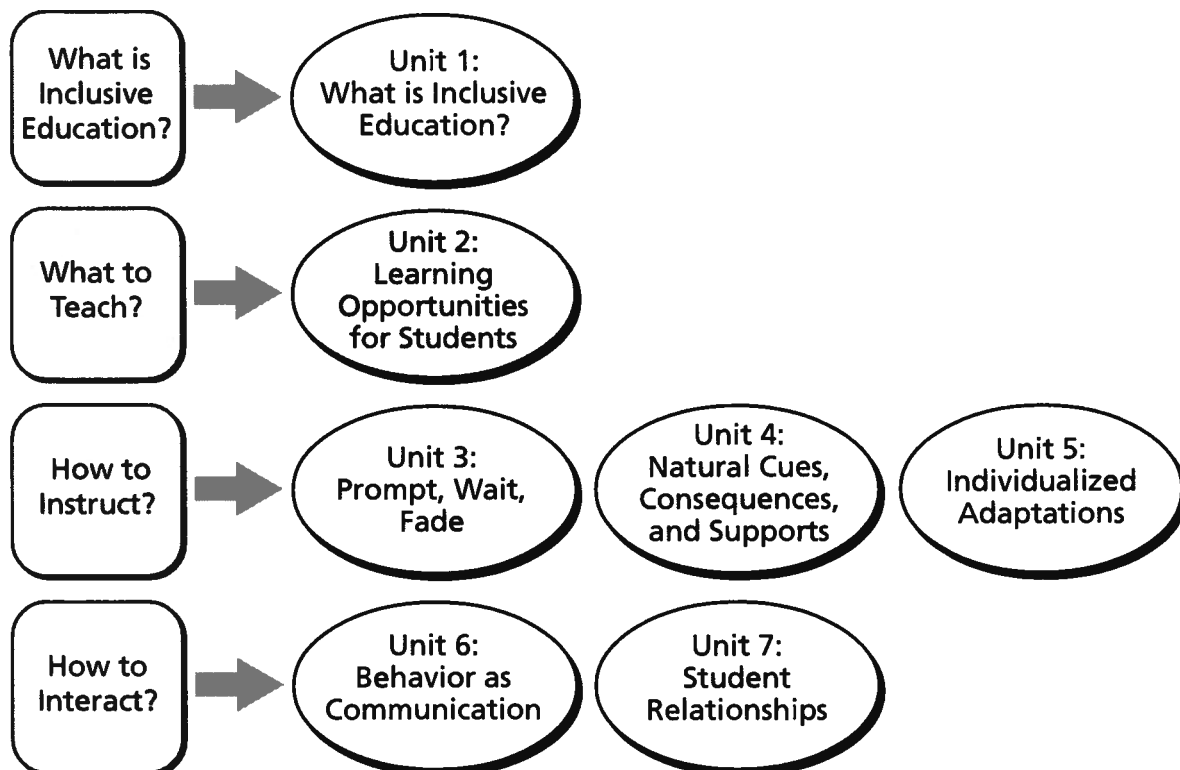


Curriculum Overview

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- Understand their roles and responsibilities in providing instructional support for students with disabilities;
- Develop knowledge and skills that directly relates to their work supporting students;
- Appropriately use the knowledge and skills in inclusive environments; and
- Provide accurate and meaningful feedback about student performance to special educators and other team members.







The paraprofessional development curriculum has four main parts with a total of seven instructional units. The figure below illustrates all of the units and how they are organized in the curriculum. This unit is highlighted in the shaded circle.





Unit Sections

There are six sections in each unit. Each section has a specific purpose. For easy reference, a label and symbol in the header of each handout identifies which section is being taught. The table below identifies the six sections, their corresponding symbols, and the purpose for each section.

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	Personal Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage you in personal reflection about an aspect of your life that relates to the content focus of each unit. The reflection brings to mind personal experiences to which new learning can be connected.
	Why is This Important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight the main points of the personal reflection activity. • To generalize to broader learning concepts. • To specify how the new learning concepts apply to student learning.
	New Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To teach new content and how the content can be applied when working with students with disabilities in a variety of learning environments.
	Unit Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To summarize why the unit content is important for student learning and what it means for your role as a paraprofessional.
	Follow-up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an activity for transferring the new learning of the unit to your work supporting students. • To offer a structured opportunity for applying new information and skills. • To provide a vehicle for special educators to specifically coach and offer feedback to you about the appropriate application of the content with students you support.



Personal Reflection: Thinking About Participating in Daily Routines

Jot your thoughts in response to these questions.

Think about your daily or weekly routines. For example, making coffee in the morning, getting to work on time, going grocery shopping, or reading a story to your kids.

What are some of your daily or weekly routines?

To participate in these routines, what kinds of skills do you use?

What skills do you need to get different places? For example, walking, driving your car, or using the city buses.

What types of reading and math skills do you use? For example, telling time, making change, or reading a newspaper.

What types of communication skills do you use? For example, talking on the telephone, listening to others, asking for directions, or leaving notes.



Why is This Important?

- We can think about our lives as a series of routines and activities that we engage in at home, work, and in our communities.
- Our daily routines require using many different skills. We use many of the *same skills* in a variety of routines and activities. For example, we communicate and use our motor skills in most daily routines and activities.
- Because we use many of the same skills throughout the day, we have lots of opportunities to practice and improve these skills.
- When we think about students with disabilities, it is important to recognize that they have many opportunities to use and practice their skills throughout a school day. When we recognize typical daily routines and activities as having valuable learning opportunities, we can take advantage of these naturally occurring “teachable moments.”
- Students with disabilities need to be taught new skills and to practice using these skills during everyday routines and activities. This increases their functional use of skills and also their participation and independence in a variety of environments.



New Learning: What to Teach? Learning Opportunities for Students

To be more independent, students need to learn how to actively participate throughout their daily routines and activities. To do this, we teach both the skills and knowledge and support their use in real school and life situations. We can think about what to teach by dividing the skills and knowledge into three instructional domains —

**Participating in
Routines and
Transitions**

**Engaging in
Academic and
Functional
Activities**

**Interacting
with
Others**

The new learning section in this unit has three parts described below —

1. *Learning in Inclusive Environments: What is Important to Teach Students?* (Handout 6)

When we look across the school day, it is important to understand the three instructional domains (Participating in Routines and Transitions; Engaging in Academic and Functional Activities; and Interacting with Others) and what learning opportunities are included under each domain. Each domain is described along with how it applies to the school day.

2. *What Might This Look Like?* (Handout 7)

Not only is it essential to understand why each instructional domain is important, but to recognize how we can teach students to participate in these routines. Each student has individual education needs. Some students have specific learning objectives related to all three domains. Other students have priority needs primarily in one or two domains. It is important to work with teachers to identify what are the priority areas for each student.

3. *The Principle of Partial Participation* (Handout 8)

Some activities and routines are very complex and require a high level of skill. All students will not be able to participate in every aspect of an activity. Yet, students can learn even when they are able to only partially participate. By breaking down activities into component parts, teams can identify where and how students can actively participate.



Learning in Inclusive Environments: What is Important to Teach Students?

➔ Participating in Routines and Transitions

In general education classrooms and throughout the school, there are common routines that all students follow. For example, gathering materials to begin a task, using materials appropriately, or following classroom rules. In addition, all students need to transition (move) between activities in a classroom and between places in the school. For example, moving in the cafeteria line, finding their way around the school or the community, or using the elevator. By increasing participation and independence during common routines and transitions, students are establishing useful skills that are necessary now, and useful for different situations in the future.

➔ Engaging in Academic and Functional Activities

Academic activities and objectives primarily focus on student instruction in language arts (reading, writing, listening and communicating), math, and other subjects. Functional activities and objectives focus on life skills that students need to “go out and function” in school, at home, and in the community. Examples include using a microwave to cook a meal, taking care of personal hygiene, playing a video game, browsing through a magazine during leisure time, using money, and following a schedule. Some students primarily have academic objectives, some have functional objectives, many have both. The best time to learn functional skills is when they are required throughout the day. For instance, a student would practice dressing skills in the locker room or determine the correct amount of money to make a purchase in the cafeteria or during a school field trip.

➔ Interacting With Others

Learning how to appropriately interact (communicate) with classmates and adults is crucial for students who have disabilities. Students need to learn how to request assistance, share their ideas, answer questions, and simply be able to join in a conversation. It is through interactions with classmates that students develop an understanding of what is appropriate or required in various situations and how to “fit in.” It is how students develop friendships which is a basic need in all of our lives. It is also through interactions with others in daily routines and activities that students have opportunities to make choices. Communication is an essential skill development focus throughout the school day. How we interact and communicate varies. For example, a student may point to a picture on a communication board to choose an activity, make eye contact when entering a classroom to acknowledge friends, or actively participate in a small group activity by stating an opinion.

Format based on: Rainforth, B. & York-Barr, J. (1997). *Collaborative teams for students with severe disabilities: Integrating therapy and educational services*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



What Might This Look Like?

- Read the items listed below under each domain.
- Next to each item, jot down the names of students who are learning these skills or whom the skills might be good priorities for instruction.

Participating in School/Classroom Routines and Transitions

- Follows schedules. _____
- Keeps up with tempo. _____
- Follows rules and community expectations. _____
- Enters classroom on time. _____
- Finds appropriate seat. _____
- Prepares for task; begins task; stays on task; ends task appropriately. _____
- Uses age appropriate school materials safely and for intended purposes. _____
- Transitions in response to natural cues (ex. classmates lining up). _____

Engaging in Academic and Functional Activities

- Works on academic skills identified in IEP. _____
- Works on functional skills identified in IEP in appropriate settings. _____
- Participates in general education activities and curriculum to the fullest extent possible. _____
- Works effectively in varied instructional situations. _____
- Initiates and follows through with assigned tasks. _____
- Uses problem solving skills to handle new situations. _____
- Evaluates quality of own work. _____

Interacting with Others

With adults and peers —

- Has or uses an appropriate means of communication. _____
- Greets others. _____
- Initiates and responds. _____
- Follows directions. _____
- Works with a partner or small group. _____
- Shows preferences and makes choices. _____
- Requests and accepts assistance. _____
- Behaves age appropriately. _____

Adapted from: York-Barr, J., Doyle, M.B., & Kronberg, R. (1996). *Creating inclusive school communities: Module 3b: Curriculum as everything students learn in school: Individualizing learning outcomes. (Forms 12A–12B)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



The Principle of Partial Participation

Have you ever gone to a sports event where you did not know the rules, all of the players' positions, or what the referee's signals meant? Did you enjoy the game, ask questions to your friends, and learn something that was useful for the next time you went to a game?

Have you ever taken a taxi where you did not know exactly where you were going, where to turn, or any landmarks? All you knew was an address. Did you pay attention and look at the parks, buildings, and street names to become familiar with the route?

What you were experiencing was partial participation. You benefited from being present, participating in part of the activity and learning from others. You learned new information and became familiar with the experience even though you did not understand everything that was happening. The more times you participate in these ways, the more you will understand, and be able to apply the next time you are in a similar situation.



All students can participate at least partially in a wide variety of school and community activities.

What Might Partial Participation for Students with Disabilities Look Like?

- During paired reading, one student reads a book aloud while the other points to the pictures.
- During Physical Education class, one student hits the ball while another student travels the bases using a wheelchair.
- During lunch, one student points to the picture of the type of food he wants and a friend places it on the tray for her.
- During a class presentation, one student activates a pre-recorded message on a tape recorder to introduce the project while another student reads their group's report.
- During a group activity, classmates plan a project poster and create stencils for the student with disabilities to color.

The concept of partial participation was originally described by Baumgart, D., Brown, L., Pumpian, I., Nisbet, J., Ford, A., Sweet, M., Messina, R., Schroeder, J. (1982). The principle of partial participation and individualized adaptations in educational programs for severely handicapped students. *Journal of the Association for the Severely Handicapped*, 7(2), 17-27.



Unit Summary: What to Teach? Learning Opportunities for Students

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- Their individual learning objectives are taught at natural times during the school day.
- They have lots of opportunities to practice skills they are learning across the school day.
- They can watch their classmates model what is expected.
- They are actively involved, even partially, in classroom and school routines throughout their school day.
- They are communicating, making choices, and solving problems throughout their school day.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Expect students to be involved in activities and support their participation.
- Instruct students so they learn to do things for themselves instead of adults or other students always doing things for them.
- Recognize and provide lots of opportunities to make choices.
- Support students to think and problem solve new situations.
- Assist students to interact with their classmates so they can establish relationships with other students and are not supported by adults all day.



Follow-up Activity: Learning in Inclusive Environments Observation Checklist

Student _____ Date _____ Class/Activity _____

- Observe one student in one general education class.
- Check what you see happening.
- Jot down notes about strengths, ideas, or questions you have.
- Share your findings with the special education teacher.

.....
Yes — Observed this happening
No — Did not observe this happening
??? — Not sure if it is happening or not

Participating in School/Classroom Routines and Transitions

Strengths?
Ideas?
Questions?

Yes No ???

- ☐ ☐ ☐ Follows schedules
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Keeps up with tempo
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Follows rules and community expectations
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Enters classroom on time
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Finds appropriate seat
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Prepares for task; begins task; stays on task; ends task
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Uses age-appropriate school materials safely and for intended purposes
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Transitions in response to natural cues (ex. classmates lining up)

Engaging in Academic and Functional Activities

Yes No ???

- ☐ ☐ ☐ Works on academic skills identified in IEP
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Works on functional skills identified in IEP in appropriate settings
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Participates in general education activities and curriculum to the fullest extent possible
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- ☐ ☐ ☐ Evaluates quality of own work

Interacting with Others

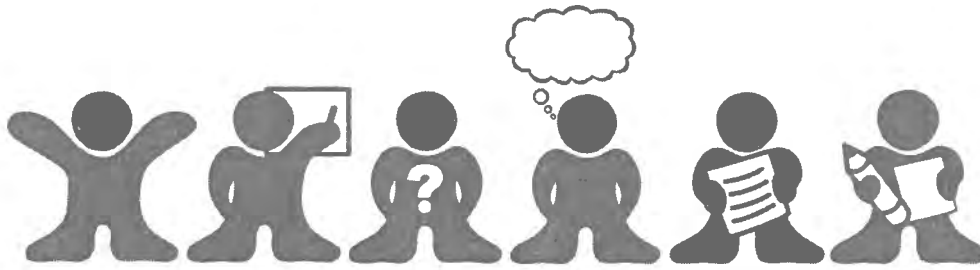
With Peers
 Yes No ???

- ☐ ☐ ☐ Has/uses an appropriate means of communication
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Greets others
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Initiates and responds
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Follows directions
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Works with a partner or small group
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Shows preferences and makes choices
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Requests and accepts assistance
- ☐ ☐ ☐ Behaves age-appropriately

With Adults
 Yes No ???

- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐
- ☐ ☐ ☐

Adapted from: York-Barr, J., Doyle, M.B., & Kronberg, R. (1996). *Creating inclusive school communities (Module 3b)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

Unit 3: How to Instruct? Prompt, Wait, Fade

By Gail Ghere, Jennifer York-Barr, and Jennifer Sommerness

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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How to Instruct?
Prompt, Wait Fade



Follow-up Activity: Handout 11
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How Are You Providing
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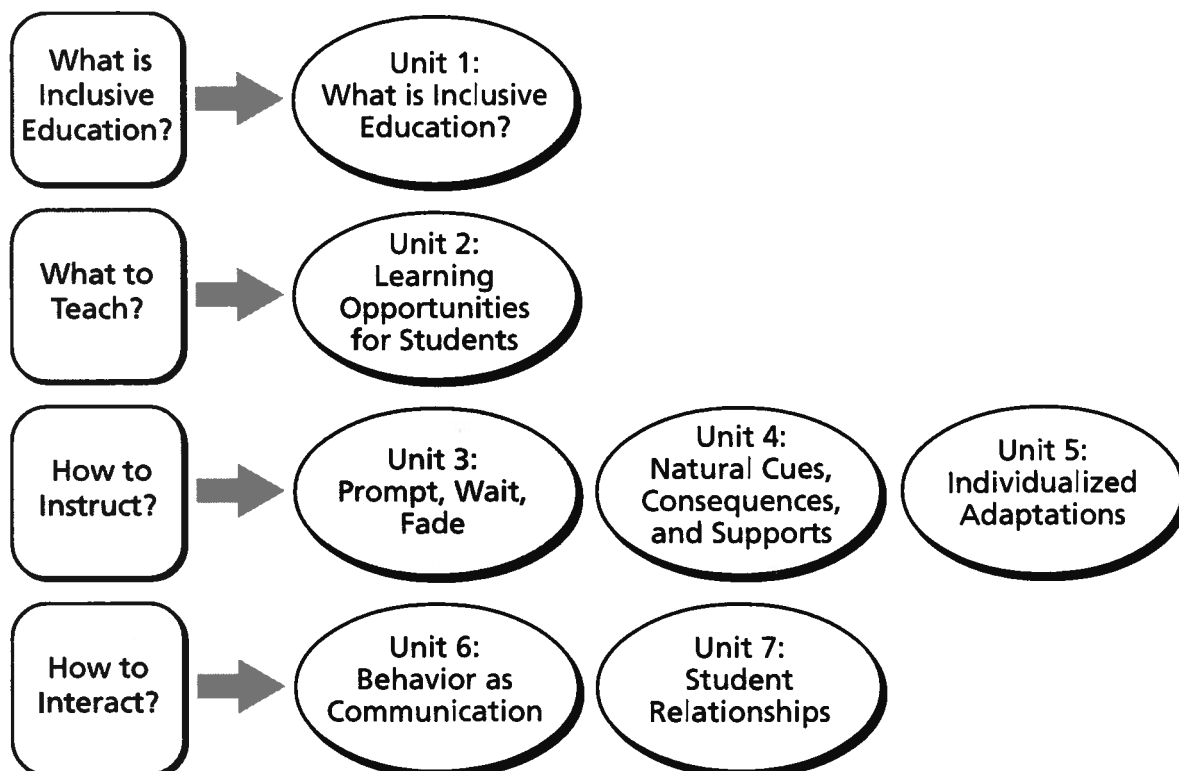


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There are six sections in each unit. Each section has a specific purpose. For easy reference, a label and symbol in the header of each handout identifies which section is being taught. The table below identifies the six sections, their corresponding symbols, and the purpose for each section.

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Personal Reflection: Thinking About Learning a New Skill

Jot your thoughts in response to these questions.

Think back to when you were learning a new skill, like driving a car, playing a sport, or using a computer.

How did you learn what to do?

How long did it take you learn the skill?

What did it feel like to learn a new skill?

Where did you practice?

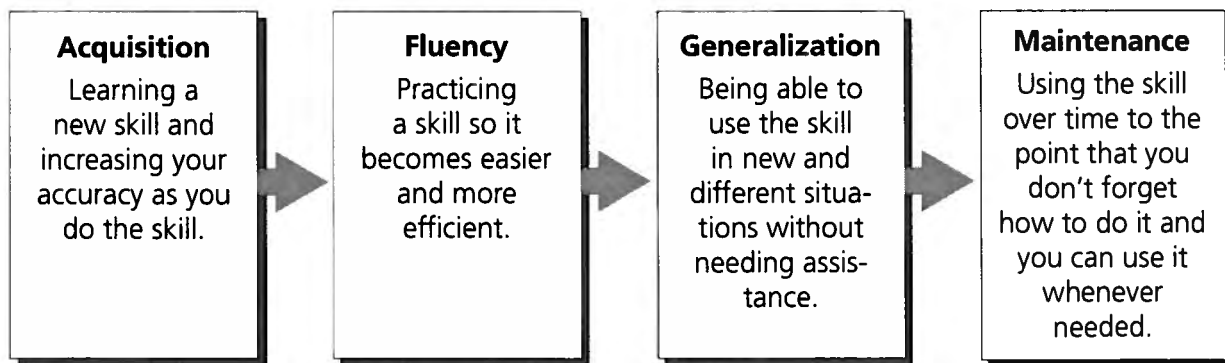
How many times did you practice?

What kind of help did you need early in your learning? Later?



Why is This Important?

- Learning a skill doesn't just happen. We usually need a reason to learn new skills. We frequently require some kind of assistance, and we always need lots of practice.
- We all go through similar stages when we are learning a new skill: acquisition, fluency, generalization, and maintenance. At each stage, we need different types and amounts of assistance. At first, we need instruction and a lot of assistance. As we become more skilled, we need and usually want less assistance. At first, we may choose to practice in a quiet place, but to become independent we must practice and use the skills in the real world.



- Students with disabilities follow the same sequence when they are learning a new skill. It may take more time and they may need more practice, but the sequence is the same.
- We must plan to teach in ways that are appropriate for the particular stage of learning.



New Learning: How to Instruct? Prompt, Wait, Fade

Students learn skills at different rates. How we provide instruction depends on what stage the student is at in learning that particular skill. We teach students new skills by using a combination of prompts, waits, and fades. When students are beginning to learn a new skill (acquisition), they need more assistance or prompting. As they become more proficient using these skills (fluency, maintenance), assistance changes and fades to promote greater independence. Three instructional strategies are presented in this unit —

Prompt

Wait

Fade

The new learning section for this unit has three parts described below —

1. How to Instruct? Prompts (Handouts 6 and 7)

Prompts are the types of assistance that we give students to help them learn a new skill. It is important to learn the four types of prompts and use them appropriately for individual students.

2. How to Instruct? Wait and Fade (Handout 8)

Assistance must be gradually reduced to help students become more fluent and independent with new skills. It is also important that students do not become dependent on adult prompts to do a skill. By incorporating wait time into our directions and by gradually fading prompts, we teach students to be more independent.

3. When Helping Becomes Hindering (Handout 9)

Sometimes adults give too much assistance to students. We may think that we are helping the students, but we can actually be hindering their learning. We avoid these problems by using prompts, waits, and fades appropriately.



How to Instruct? Prompts

We use prompts to teach students new skills. There is no specific recipe for when to use each prompt. Depending on the stage of learning the student is at for each skill and on how individual students respond to different prompts, we determine the best way to teach each student. There are four types of prompts: verbal, modeling, gesturing, and physical. Sometimes these prompts are used in various combinations.

Type	Special Considerations	Examples
Verbal Prompt Speaking to a student to give directions or to help the student pay attention to something important.	Verbal prompts need to be specific, clearly stated, and match the complexity that the student can understand. We can give direct verbal prompts by telling a student what to do or we can give indirect verbal prompts by asking a question and letting the student figure out what to do. Moving from direct to indirect verbal prompts usually helps student become more independent. Vary the tone of your voice to communicate different meanings. For example, directions are usually given in a firm voice. Questions are usually asked more softly.	Direct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Put your pencil down, then look at the board." • "Do not run in the halls. You can run later at recess." Indirect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "How could you figure that out?" • "Which books do you need to take out of your locker?" • "What does that bell mean?" • "Which way to the bus stop?"
Modeling Prompt Demonstrating a skill or doing a task to show the student what she or he should be doing.	Modeling only works when — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is watching what you are doing • What is being modeled is broken down into its parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating how to place a plate on the cafeteria tray. • Demonstrating how to flush the toilet. • Demonstrating how to look in both directions before crossing a street. • Demonstrating how to unzip a back pack to put books inside. • Putting on your coat to indicate it is time to go outside. • Pausing student assistance when the teacher addresses the class to model how to listen for class directions.

Adapted with permission from Sigafoos, J., Mustonen, T., DePaepe, P., Reichle, J., & York, J. (1991). Defining the array of instructional prompts for teaching communication skills. In J. Reichle, J. York, & J. Sigafoos (Eds.), *Implementing augmentative and alternative communication strategies for learners with disabilities* (p. 176). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



How to Instruct? Prompts

Type	Special Considerations	Examples
Gesturing Prompt Using a physical movement, such as pointing, to communicate without speaking.	Gesturing only works when — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is watching what you are doing. • The gesture is clear and easily understood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pointing towards the teacher or classmates to direct the student's attention. • Placing your finger over your lips to signal time to be quiet. • Tapping your watch with your finger to indicate time to change classes. • Pointing to the corner of the page to indicate when to turn the page. • Pointing to the schedule on the student's wheelchair tray to help him figure out which class is next.
Physical Prompt Physically assisting a student to participate in an activity.	The amount of physical assistance that a student needs can vary from minimal to a significant amount. It is important to match the amount of assistance given to a student with the amount of help the student <i>really</i> needs. Sometimes, too much assistance is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tapping a student's shoulder to encourage her to raise her hand. • Holding a student's arm to offer assistance when stepping off a curb. • Giving hand-over-hand assistance to help a student scoop his food. • Steadying a student while transferring from his wheelchair to his desk chair. • Holding a student's coat open so she can put her arm in the sleeve.

Adapted with permission from Sigafoos, J., Mustonen, T., DePaepe, P., Reichle, J., & York, J. (1991). Defining the array of instructional prompts for teaching communication skills. In J. Reichle, J. York, & J. Sigafoos (Eds.), *Implementing augmentative and alternative communication strategies for learners with disabilities* (p. 176). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



How to Instruct? Wait and Fade

Type	Special Considerations	Examples
Wait Pausing to give enough time for the student to figure out what to do and to respond before <i>any</i> assistance is given.	Waiting is appropriate when — <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We know that the student can figure out what to do in that situation.• The student is watching other students to figure out what to do.• The student has been taught a new skill and we are gradually fading support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The classroom teacher tells everyone to put away their books and come sit on the carpet in the back of the room. The student is given 15 seconds to see if he will follow his classmates to the carpet before any additional prompts are given.• After asking a student a question, the adult pauses and waits for the student to answer before repeating the question.• Classmates are working in pairs. The student with a disability is given time raise her hand to answer a question before her partner decides to answer for both of them.
Fade Gradually reducing assistance by changing the type of prompt or how often the prompt is given.	Fading is appropriate when you are sure that the student has acquired the skill and is moving towards fluency and maintenance. Do not fade support before a student has been taught and has acquired the skill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When walking downstairs, a student needs physical assistance to hold onto the railing. After several weeks, the assistance can be faded to simply touching his elbow as a reminder to hold the railing. After several months, he just needs an occasional verbal reminder to use the railing.• To board the correct bus home, the student is given a note card with his bus number on it. Initially, the adult must stop at each bus, have the student look at the number on the bus and on his card, and ask "Is this your bus?" Several months later, the student is able to match the number on his card without the verbal prompt.

Adapted with permission from Sigafoos, J., Mustonen, T., DePaepe, P., Reichle, J., & York, J. (1991). Defining the array of instructional prompts for teaching communication skills. In J. Reichle, J. York, & J. Sigafoos (Eds.), *Implementing augmentative and alternative communication strategies for learners with disabilities* (p. 176). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



When Helping Becomes Hindering

Students need to actively participate to learn a new skill. They cannot develop skills simply by watching or being totally assisted. Sometimes adults help students too much. They do the task for students, rather than teaching the necessary skills. They don't allow students enough time to actively participate or problem-solve new situations. They may think that they are helping, but sometimes the outcome is hindering student learning.

- Read the items below.
- Identify the type and amount of support being given to each student.
- Think about why this might be happening and how instruction might be improved.

Instructional Circumstances That Could be Problematic

Why Might This be Happening? How Might Instruction be Improved?

1. A student is repeatedly reminded to stand up and line up at the door without being given the time to figure out for herself what her classmates are doing and what she should be doing.
2. A student becomes "hooked" on verbal prompts and waits for the paraprofessional to repeat the directions rather than listening to the classroom teacher.
3. In an effort to have the student finish on time, an adult provides more assistance than is needed for the math problems.
4. A student receives a lot of physical assistance to eat his lunch at school when he is able to feed himself at home with much less assistance.
5. When changing classes, an adult always takes control of the student's electric wheelchair joystick rather than letting the student steer her own wheelchair.
6. An adult sits next to the student during circle time even though the student can participate independently.
7. While changing classes, the adult walks beside the student even though the student can go to her next class without assistance.
8. An adult asks the teacher for clarification of instructions, rather than letting the student raise his hand and ask.
9. In a small group, the adult responds for the student without including the student in the science lab discussion.

Concept of helping or hindering was derived from: Giangreco, M., Edelman, S.W., Luiselli, T.E., & MacFarland, S.Z.C. (1997). Helping or hovering? Effects of instructional assistant proximity on students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 64 (1), 7-18.



Unit Summary: How to Instruct? Prompt, Wait, Fade

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- They are expected to actively participate.
- They are specifically taught how to do a skill.
- The type and amount of assistance students are given matches the stage of learning they are at for each skill.
- They do not become dependent on adults or classmates for all of their cues and support.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Remember that students learn at different rates and need different levels of support.
- Do not assume that just because a student can do a skill one time that she will be able to do that same skill every time after that. Learning is a process that requires practice and repetition.
- Provide individualized prompting strategies designed for each student.
- Instruct students in such a way that they learn to do things for themselves, instead of always doing things for them.
- Assist students to learn new skills and then gradually fade your assistance, as appropriate, so they become more independent.



Follow-up Activity: Student Support: How Are You Providing Instruction?

- Choose one student.
- Identify three skills that student is currently learning.
- Use the questions in the second and third columns to reflect on the support being provided.

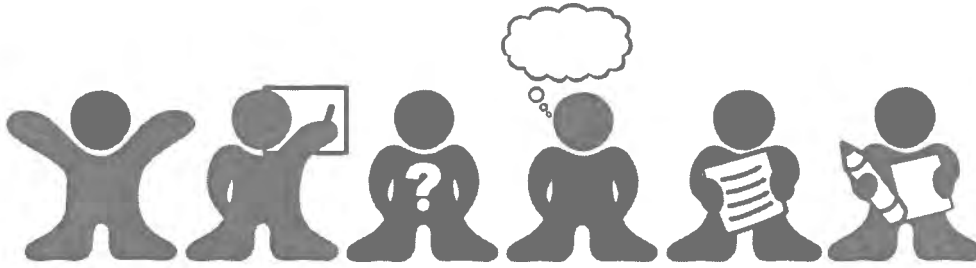
Student _____ Date _____

**What skill is being taught?
Where is it being taught?**

**What type of assistance
is being provided?
How much assistance is
being provided?**

**What is working?
What is not working?
Ideas? Questions?**

After you complete this follow-up activity, share your findings with the student's special education teacher.



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

Unit 4: How to Instruct? Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports

By Gail Ghere, Jennifer York-Barr, and Jennifer Sommerness

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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Thinking About Natural
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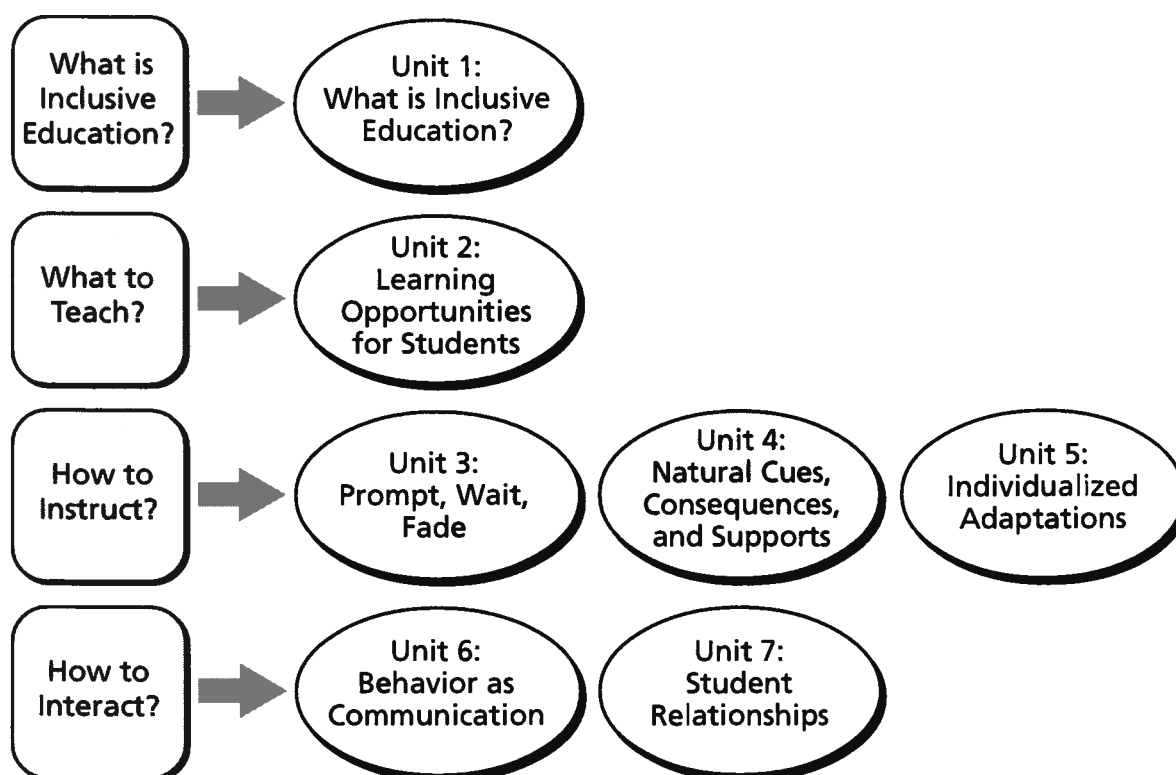


Curriculum Overview

Welcome to the *Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools: A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development*. To provide effective education for students with disabilities in inclusive schools, we must understand not only what students need to learn, but also how to instruct and support students across a wide range of activities and environments. This paraprofessional development curriculum was developed to meet this need. The desired outcomes for paraprofessionals who participate in this curriculum are that they —

- Understand their roles and responsibilities in providing instructional support for students with disabilities;
- Develop knowledge and skills that directly relates to their work supporting students;
- Appropriately use the knowledge and skills in inclusive environments; and
- Provide accurate and meaningful feedback about student performance to special educators and other team members.







The paraprofessional development curriculum has four main parts with a total of seven instructional units. The figure below illustrates all of the units and how they are organized in the curriculum. This unit is highlighted in the shaded circle.





Unit Sections

There are six sections in each unit. Each section has a specific purpose. For easy reference, a label and symbol in the header of each handout identifies which section is being taught. The table below identifies the six sections, their corresponding symbols, and the purpose for each section.

Symbol	Section	Purpose
	Welcome and Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To welcome you to the session; introduce you to the unit and indicate where this unit fits into the whole curriculum.• To share the desired outcomes from your participation in this session and the follow-up activity.
	Personal Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage you in personal reflection about an aspect of your life that relates to the content focus of each unit. The reflection brings to mind personal experiences to which new learning can be connected.
	Why is This Important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To highlight the main points of the personal reflection activity.• To generalize to broader learning concepts.• To specify how the new learning concepts apply to student learning.
	New Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To teach new content and how the content can be applied when working with students with disabilities in a variety of learning environments.
	Unit Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To summarize why the unit content is important for student learning and what it means for your role as a paraprofessional.
	Follow-up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide an activity for transferring the new learning of the unit to your work supporting students.• To offer a structured opportunity for applying new information and skills.• To provide a vehicle for special educators to specifically coach and offer feedback to you about the appropriate application of the content with students you support.



Personal Reflection: Thinking About Natural Cues in Your Environment

Jot your thoughts in response to these questions.

Think back to when you started working at this school. Taking a new job requires figuring out the rules and ways of doing things in your new work environment.

How did you learn what to do? How did you learn what not to do?

How did you learn where to go during your break time?
Where to make copies? Where to park?

How did you learn who to go to for specific information or other needs?

How did you learn what was appropriate to wear to work?

How did you learn the routine for getting lunch? To check books out of
the media center?

How did you learn each teacher's classroom routines and expectations?



Why is This Important?

- It is important to learn what is expected and how to do it in order “fit in” to a new environment and to participate effectively in activities and routines. When we enter a new situation, we take the time to learn how things are done. Some rules and ways of doing things are told to us. Other rules and ways of doing things we need to figure out for ourselves by watching, copying, and talking to our co-workers.
- The environments in which we live and work offer many cues and supports about what to do and how to behave. When we recognize and use the cues and supports, we become more independent. When we are unable to recognize and use cues and supports, we need assistance from others to figure out what to do and how to behave.
- There are always consequences to how we act. Consequences give us feedback about what we did correctly or incorrectly. Consequences also help us to know what we need to do differently next time. We learn to adjust our behaviors based on the consequences of our actions.
- Being observant and identifying key information in our environments is a skill we use throughout our entire life. It directly affects our successful participation in these environments.
- Recognizing and using natural cues, consequences, and supports is as critical for students with disabilities as it is for the rest of us. If they cannot figure out what is happening in their environment, they will not become more independent. Because it is sometimes more difficult for students with disabilities to recognize and use naturally occurring information throughout their day, we must teach them to notice and then use these supports.



New Learning: How to Instruct? Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports

In order to become more independent, students must make sense of what is happening in their environments. We support students to become more independent by teaching them about —

**Natural
Cues**

**Natural
Consequences**

**Natural
Supports**

Many times students with disabilities have difficulty both recognizing the cues and supports in their environments and figuring out what they mean. We must teach students to recognize the natural cues and supports in the environment; to use the natural cues and supports to figure out how to act and what to do; to correctly respond to these cues; and to understand the natural consequences from their actions. This means learning why things happened and how to adapt their behavior next time.

The new learning section of this unit has two parts described below —

1. *What Are Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports?* (Handout 6)

Natural cues, consequences and supports are present in our environments. It is important to understand what they are and how we can teach students to recognize and use them.

2. *Teaching Students to Use Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports* (Handout 7)

Often when students are learning what to do and how to behave in different environments, we begin by pointing out and then interpreting the cues in the environment for them. What does teaching a student to recognize and use natural cues and supports look like? How do we use prompts, waits, and fades to teach about natural cues, consequences, and supports?



What Are Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports?

Examples

Natural Cues

- A natural cue is information that we learn from watching what is happening around us. These cues help us to figure out what we should do and how we should act especially in new situations.
- Natural cues already exist in the environment.
- Natural cues are available to everyone, not just the student who has a disability.
- The teacher tells all the students that it is time for music.
- A student sees other students taking out their math books so he figures he must take out his math book.
- There is a lunch line in the cafeteria which indicates that students must wait in line to get their food.
- The crossing light says "walk", so people know it is probably safe to cross the street.
- Students learn which side of the hallway to walk on by watching the other students.
- In the science lab, a new student watches a classmate to learn the routine of sitting down, looking on the board for the assignment, then beginning work independently.

Natural Consequences

- A natural consequence happens after an action to let us know if what we did was appropriate.
- Natural consequences already exist in the environment.
- Natural consequences are available to everyone, not just the student who has a disability.
- A student who places his paper into the correct bin gets a "job well done" comment from the teacher. He learns that is where he should turn in his paper.
- A student who tries to move to the head of the lunch line has other students tell him to wait in line. He learns that even though he is hungry, he must wait to eat.
- A student misses half of her recess because she refuses to put her materials away. She learns not to stall if she wants recess time.
- A student studies his history and does well on the quiz. He learns that studying helps him do well in school.

Natural Supports

- Natural supports are ways of getting assistance that are part of the ongoing routines in the classroom, school or community.
- Natural supports already exist in the environment.
- Natural supports are available to everyone, not just the student who has a disability.
- The classroom teacher helps the student focus on his math lesson.
- A classmate shows a student how to do division using the calculator.
- Two classmates study for a literature test together.
- A group of classmates walk to the media center with their classmate who has a disability.
- The school secretary assists a student who uses a wheelchair get to his room after he signs in tardy.
- Co-workers at a community work site show a student how to use the vending machine.

Concepts originally presented in Falvey, M., Brown, L., Lyon, S., Baumgart, D., & Schroeder, J. (1980). Teaching strategies: Using cues and correction procedures. In W. Sailor, B. Wilcox, & L. Brown (Eds.) *Instructional design for the severely handicapped* (pp. 109-134). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



Teaching Students to Use Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports

- Read each of the examples and teaching sequences below.
- Identify and circle the natural cues.
- Identify and underline the prompts and wait time that the paraprofessional uses to teach the student to recognize the natural cues in the environment.
- Discuss the reflection questions.

Examples	Teaching Sequence
A student needs to walk with her class to the bathroom. At the classroom doorway, the student stops and seems unsure of what to do or where to go.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the classroom door, the paraprofessional asks, "Which way do you go?" She waits. Ten seconds later, she asks, "Which way did your classmates go?" The student turns to follow her classmates.• As they approach the bathroom, the paraprofessional points to the bathroom sign and says "Do you see the sign for the girls' bathroom?"• When they get to the door, the student enters the bathroom. The paraprofessional follows in afterwards to assist as needed.• When approaching the stalls, the paraprofessional asks, "Which one?" She points to the closed door and states "No". She points to an open stall door and says "Open".
A student is returning a library book. He needs to slide his book under the scanner to check it in and then put it on the book cart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The paraprofessional asks "Do you see the sign for returning books?" If needed, she points to the sign and reads "Book Return."• While pointing to the scanner, the paraprofessional says, "Watch Cara (a classmate). See how she checks her book in. Now you check your book in."• After the student scans his book, the paraprofessional waits five seconds to see if he will initiate placing his book on the book cart. After waiting, the paraprofessional points to the cart. The student places his book on the cart.

Reflection Questions

1. What were the natural cues in the environments?
2. How did the paraprofessionals teach the students to recognize the natural cues?
3. When did the paraprofessionals use more than one type of prompt? Why did they do this?



Unit Summary: How to Instruct? Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- They are able to figure out what to do in new situations and environments.
- They recognize and use the natural cues and supports in their environment.
- They learn from the natural consequences of their actions — positive and negative.
- By understanding and using natural cues, supports and consequences, they become more independent.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Instruct students so they learn to do things for themselves instead of you doing things for them.
- Use a variety of prompts to teach students to recognize the natural cues in their environments and to understand what they mean.
- Over-emphasize and point out natural cues when students are learning. Gradually fade support so they learn to be more independent.
- Allow students time to figure out what to do. Prompt them by asking questions. Do not always tell them what to do.
- Before stepping in to support a student, think about naturally occurring supports (classmates, for example) that might appropriately provide support.



Follow-up Activity: Supporting Students: Natural Cues, Consequences, and Supports

- Identify one student during a general education activity or class.
- Use these questions to reflect on the support being given to the student.

Student _____ Date _____

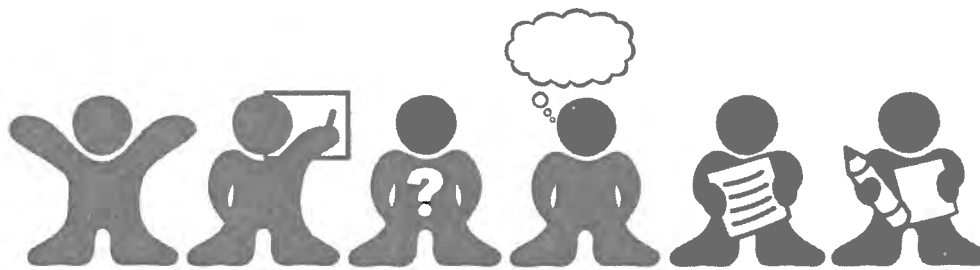
Describe the activity. What is the student doing? What are the classmates doing?

Identify five natural cues, consequences, and supports in the environment.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Did the student recognize the cues, consequences, and supports? What prompts did you use or could you use to teach the student to recognize natural cues and supports? How did you use wait time?

After you complete this follow-up activity, share your findings with the student's special education teacher.



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

Unit 5: How to Instruct? Individualized Adaptations

By Jennifer Sommerness, Jennifer York-Barr, and Gail Ghere

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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Follow-up Activity: Handout 9
How Are Adaptations
Working For Students?

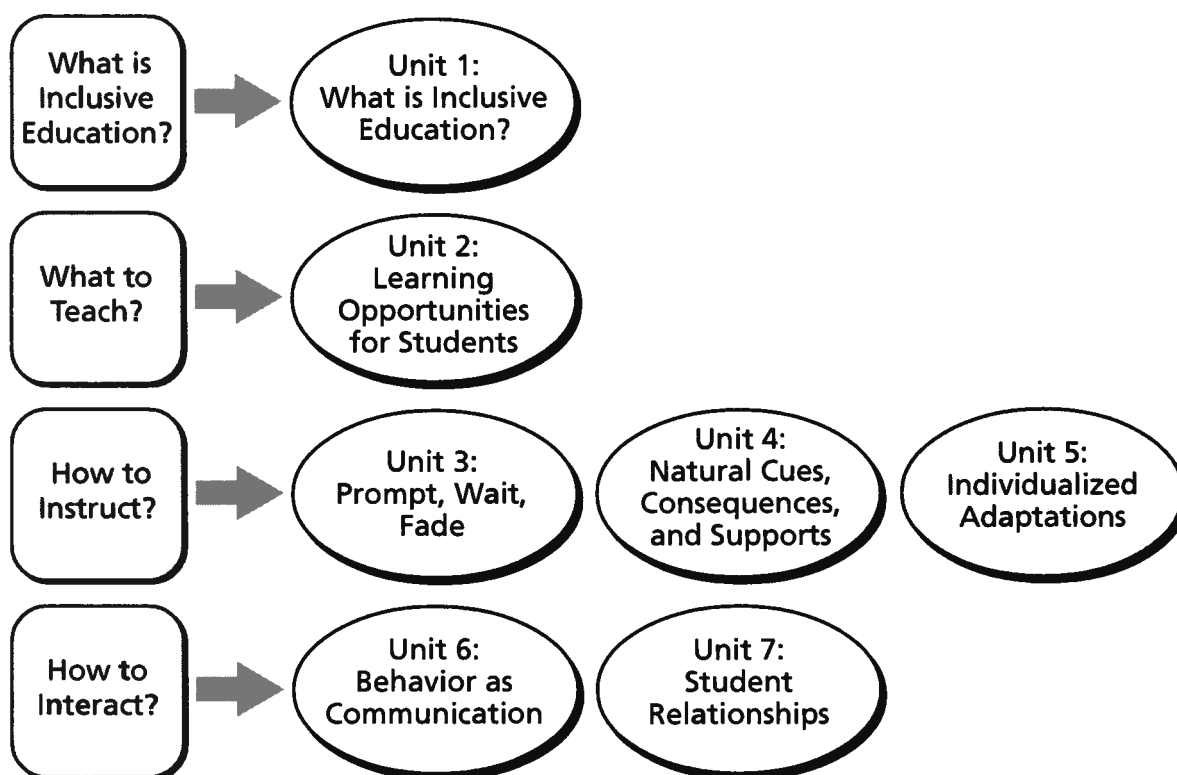


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Unit Sections

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Symbol	Section	Purpose
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	Personal Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage you in personal reflection about an aspect of your life that relates to the content focus of each unit. The reflection brings to mind personal experiences to which new learning can be connected.
	Why is This Important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight the main points of the personal reflection activity. • To generalize to broader learning concepts. • To specify how the new learning concepts apply to student learning.
	New Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To teach new content and how the content can be applied when working with students with disabilities in a variety of learning environments.
	Unit Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To summarize why the unit content is important for student learning and what it means for your role as a paraprofessional.
	Follow-up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an activity for transferring the new learning of the unit to your work supporting students. • To offer a structured opportunity for applying new information and skills. • To provide a vehicle for special educators to specifically coach and offer feedback to you about the appropriate application of the content with students you support.



Personal Reflection: Thinking About Adaptations We Use in Our Daily Lives

Think about some of the adaptations you use to simplify your life and to increase your participation in various activities.

Which of the following items do you use to help yourself stay organized?

- ☐ calendar
- ☐ shopping list
- ☐ monthly budget
- ☐ Post-it™ notes
- ☐ color coded folders
- ☐ other: _____

What kinds of *gadgets or equipment* do you use to make everyday tasks easier?
For example:

- ☐ calculator
- ☐ remote control
- ☐ computer
- ☐ eye glasses
- ☐ answering machine
- ☐ telephone
- ☐ grocery cart
- ☐ typing stand to hold paper
- ☐ credit card
- ☐ alarm clock
- ☐ other: _____

What different strategies do you use to enhance your learning?
For example:

- ☐ reading magazines or books
- ☐ listening to books on tape
- ☐ watching television or movies about different topics
- ☐ talking to people about new information
- ☐ asking questions
- ☐ watching other people perform a skill
- ☐ practicing a skill
- ☐ taking breaks during demanding tasks
- ☐ other: _____

Can you think of other adaptations you use on a regular basis?



Why is This Important?

- We all use adaptations everyday to make our lives easier, to be more involved, and to be more productive.
- Because students learn differently, teachers constantly adapt lessons and activities to increase student participation and learning. For example, teachers accommodate all students by using a variety of instructional strategies, such as reading aloud, using hands-on activities, using computers, small group learning, and utilizing the arts.
- Many of the adaptations regularly made for all students are also useful for students with disabilities.
- To increase participation and learning for students with disabilities, oftentimes adaptations above and beyond those made for all students are needed.
- Not everyone learns in the same way, and not everyone needs the same supports to learn. Adaptations that are appropriately individualized for students with disabilities to increase participation and learning should not be thought of as unfair to other students.
- Adaptations for students with disabilities can be thought of as any adjustments or modifications in —
 - What students learn.
 - How new skills and knowledge are taught.
 - What materials or equipment are used in the learning process to increase participation.
 - How the environment in which they learn is organized.



New Learning: How to Instruct? Individualized Adaptations

Adaptations are individualized for students based on their unique needs. The same adaptations will not be used for all students. Students have different needs, strengths and talents, and therefore their adaptations will look different. Adaptations can specifically increase student functioning in the three instructional domains described in Unit 2 —

**Participating in
Routines and
Transitions**

**Engaging in
Academic and
Functional Activities**

**Interacting
With
Others**

When students with disabilities require adaptations for learning and participation, the adaptations must be used consistently in order to maximize the likelihood of effective use.

The new learning section of this unit has one part, which is described below —

1. *Adaptations Within the Three Instructional Domains* (Handouts 6–7)

These handouts list the skills in the three instructional domains. Alongside these skills are adaptation examples that might increase participation for some students with disabilities. This activity gives you an opportunity to identify the adaptations currently used by students you support, and to generate ideas for new adaptations that might be helpful for these students.



Adaptations Within the Three Instructional Domains

Directions —

- Read the skills and adaptation examples in each instructional domain.
- Underline adaptations used by students you support.
- Circle adaptations you think might assist the students with whom you work.
- If you think of additional ideas for student adaptations, write them in the margins.
- Share the examples you underlined, circled, or thought might be helpful for student instruction.

1. Participating in School/Classroom Routines and Transitions

Skills	Adaptation Examples
Follows schedules.	Picture schedule on desk.
Keeps up with tempo.	Uses a timer set for different lengths of time to determine how long he/she will work on an activity.
Follows rules and community expectations.	Permitted to chew gum during school hours to minimize drooling.
Enters classroom on time.	Leaves and arrives to class early.
Finds appropriate seat.	Classmate helps student find seat; has an assigned seat that is close to the chalk board to keep attention.
Prepares for task; begins task; stays on task; ends task appropriately.	Takes breaks during class time while other students continue to work.
Uses age appropriate materials safely and for intended purposes.	Uses a lock with a key on his or her locker, instead of a combination lock.
Transitions in response to natural cues. (ex. classmates lining up)	Flashing light signals the end of class to a student who is deaf.



2. Engaging in Academic and Functional Activities

Skills	Adaptation Examples
Participates in general education activities and curriculum to fullest extent possible.	Does 10 problems instead of 20; takes multiple choice tests instead of open-ended essay questions.
Works effectively in varied instructional situations.	Audio tapes lectures; remains in same small group instead of switching partners.
Initiates and follows through with assigned tasks.	Has extra time to complete tasks.
Uses problem-solving skills to handle new situations.	Uses a list of suggested responses that were generated with an adult before the situation occurs.
Evaluates quality of own work.	Follows a checklist of requirements for each assignment.
Works on skills identified in the IEP.	Increases ability to concentrate by having only one problem per page.
Works on functional skills in appropriate settings as identified on IEP.	Uses extended zipper to assist dressing; uses time in home economics class to plan budget and grocery list.

3. Interacting with Others

Skills (With Adults and Peers)	Adaptation Examples
Has/uses an appropriate means of communication.	Communicates using sign language; picture boards; intro talker or other computerized method; or eye pointing.
Greets others.	Has favorite greetings programmed into intro talker to initiate interactions.
Initiates and responds	Uses a switch connected to the computer to interact with peers while working on the computer.
Follows directions.	Works with a partner during large group time, even though others are working or listening by themselves.
Works with a partner or small group.	Works with a small group of classmates for longer periods of time to establish relationships.
Shows preferences and makes choices.	Has a picture menu to order lunch items.
Requests and accepts assistance.	Classmates give verbal prompt when to go to lunch.
Behaves age appropriately.	When upset, chooses appropriate words from a list to share feelings.



Unit Summary: How to Instruct? Individualized Adaptations

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- Teachers offer a variety of instructional options to accommodate all students.
- Adaptations are viewed as a common support for learning and not as an unfair accommodation.
- Adaptations are individualized as needed to increase learning and participation in different environments and activities.
- Adaptations are developed based on specific student needs, strengths, and interests.
- Adaptations are used consistently and then faded when students become more independent.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Understand why an adaptation is being used and be able to explain it to the student's peers and other adults, if needed and appropriate.
- Make sure the adaptation is consistently available and that the student is taught and expected to use the adaptation.
- You may need to develop adaptations on the spot. Be sure to share with the student's special education teacher the adaptations you developed. Ask the teacher how such situations should be adapted for in the future.
- As students learn new skills, watch for opportunities to gradually fade the use of adaptations or to decrease your level of support, as appropriate. Some adaptations may only be necessary for short periods of time.



Follow-up Activity: How Are Adaptations Working for Students?

- Choose one student that you support in a general education activity or class.
- Using this form, take notes about the adaptations being used by the student and how they seem to be working.
- After you complete this follow-up activity, share your responses with the special education teacher.

Student _____ Class or Activity _____

1. What adaptations are being used by this student?
2. What are the purposes of these adaptations?
3. What adaptations seem to be working well for this student?
4. What adaptations are not working well or might be faded?
5. In situations where students are not participating well, what adaptations might increase participation?
 - During classroom or school routines and transitions?
 - During academic or functional activities?
 - During interactions with others?



Supporting Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools
A Curriculum for Job-Embedded Paraprofessional Development

Paraprofessional Handouts

Unit 6: How to Interact? Behavior as Communication

By Jennifer Sommerness, Jennifer York-Barr, and Gail Ghere

*Institute on Community Integration
and Department of Educational Policy and Administration
University of Minnesota*

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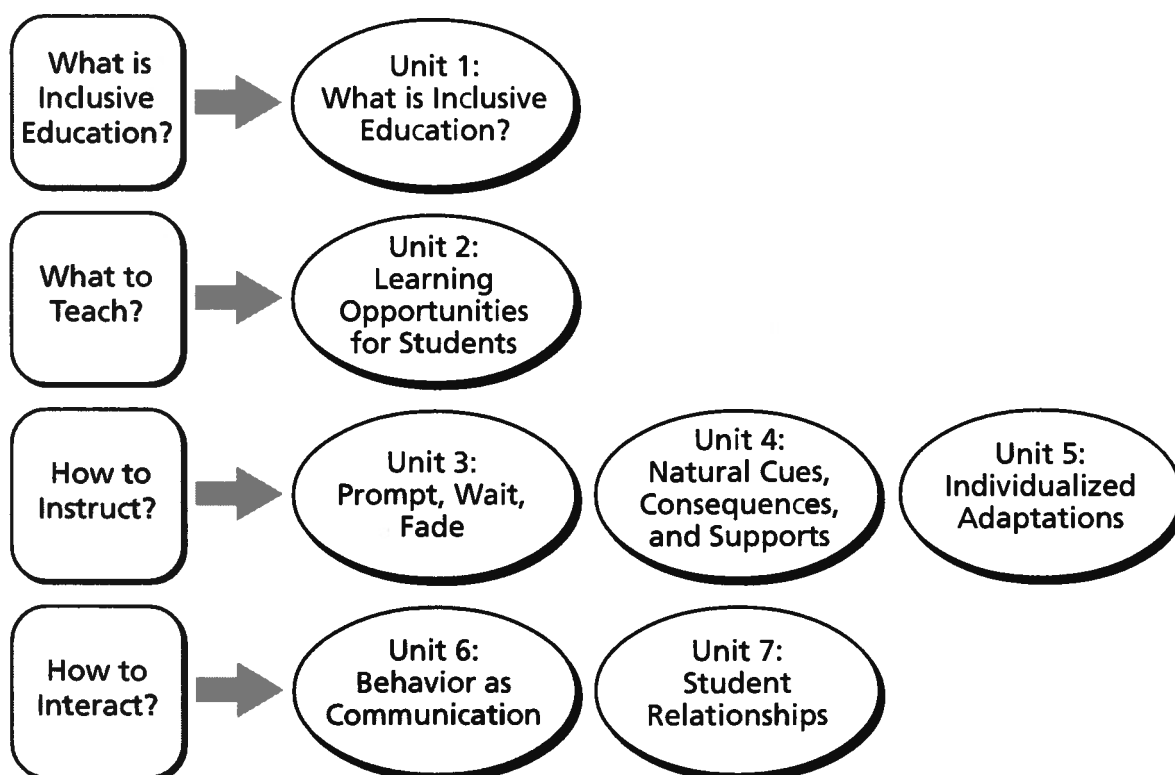


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- Understand their roles and responsibilities in providing instructional support for students with disabilities;
- Develop knowledge and skills that directly relates to their work supporting students;
- Appropriately use the knowledge and skills in inclusive environments; and
- Provide accurate and meaningful feedback about student performance to special educators and other team members.

The paraprofessional development curriculum has four main parts with a total of seven instructional units. The figure below illustrates all of the units and how they are organized in the curriculum. This unit is highlighted in the shaded circle.





Unit Sections

There are six sections in each unit. Each section has a specific purpose. For easy reference, a label and symbol in the header of each handout identifies which section is being taught. The table below identifies the six sections, their corresponding symbols, and the purpose for each section.

Symbol	Section	Purpose
	Welcome and Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To welcome you to the session; introduce you to the unit and indicate where this unit fits into the whole curriculum.• To share the desired outcomes from your participation in this session and the follow-up activity.
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	Follow-up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide an activity for transferring the new learning of the unit to your work supporting students.• To offer a structured opportunity for applying new information and skills.• To provide a vehicle for special educators to specifically coach and offer feedback to you about the appropriate application of the content with students you support.



Personal Reflection: Thinking About How We Behave and Why

Jot your thoughts in response to these questions.

Think of a time when you felt very frustrated in the past two weeks when trying to get something done or trying to learn something new.

How did you express your frustration?

How did you act?

What did you say?

What were some of the things that contributed to you feeling frustrated?

If you could go back, what could have made this situation less frustrating?



Why is This Important?

- Behaviors are frequently used as a way to communicate a need or frustration that we have.
- We all use our behaviors everyday to influence the situations, environments, and people that are around us. For example, sometimes when we become frustrated, the ways we react become magnified and at times inappropriate. Other times, we react by changing the situation or by becoming quieter and more reserved.
- Like us, students may use their behaviors to try to influence the people and environment around them. Student behaviors affect their learning.
- When students feel confident and comfortable, their behaviors show it. When students feel like situations are out of their control or frustrating, they may communicate these feelings by behaving in inappropriate or negative ways. Their behaviors are attempts to communicate and change the situation or regain control of their environment.
- When undesirable behaviors occur, students benefit if the adults supporting them think about the entire situation and what the student may be trying to communicate. Sometimes this is difficult, especially if the behavior involves the adult in some way. Remaining calm and thinking about all of the things that may be affecting the student's behavior may help the situation. If we focus on getting rid of the behavior without addressing *why* it may be occurring, student behavior can continue or get worse.



New Learning: How to Interact? Behavior as Communication

There are many reasons students behave as they do. Sometimes the reasons are very complicated and require analysis by experts. However, often *careful* observation of the student in his or her environment and the circumstances that led up to the behavior can provide very useful information. Paraprofessionals are frequently in a position to be good observers and to provide information to teachers. Two ways of generating information about student behavior are —

Conducting an
A – B – C
Documentation

Identifying
Possible Communicative
Functions

When we think about student behavior in both of these ways, we gather information that is likely to help the student's team to figure out how best to provide support.

The new learning section of this unit has three parts described below —

1. **A-B-C Documentation: Examples** (Handout 6)

When thinking about student behavior, we need to recognize what is happening in the environment around the student and how that influences his or her behavior. We need to look at what was happening before, during and after a behavior to help figure out why the behavior occurred. In order to provide effective behavioral supports, we must recognize the A-B-C's and understand how they are connected to one another.

2. **Communicative Function of Behavior** (Handout 7)

Considering what students may be trying to communicate through their behavior is important information. Thinking about communicative functions of behavior is different from the A-B-C documentation, but equally important in figuring out what behavioral supports or changes are necessary.

3. **Behavior Observation Form (Sample)** (Handout 8)

The Behavior Observation Form is a tool that can be used to think through and record information related to A-B-C documentation and communicative functions. It is essential to collect all of this information so that discussions with the special education teacher and other team members can "get to the bottom" of the behaviors and make the necessary changes to a student's behavioral supports.

For more information about A-B-C documentation and communicative function of behavior, see —

Waker, D.P., Berg, W.K., Harding, J. & Asmus, J. (1996). A functional approach to dealing with severe challenging behavior. In S. Stainback & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (pp. 327-342). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Hitzing, W. (1996). Support and positive teaching strategies. In S. Stainback & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (pp. 313-326). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



A-B-C Documentation: Examples

Here are some examples of how what is happening in the environment around students can influence their behavior, and what happens as a result of their behavior.

A (Antecedent) What is happening before the behavior occurs?		B (Behavior) How the student responds?		C (Consequences) What happens next?
The classroom is noisy and there are many distractions.	➔	Joe yells and uses inappropriate language.	➔	Joe is removed from the class.
Peers tease and taunt Mary when there are no adults around.	➔	Mary sits quietly, and will not interact with peers or adults.	➔	Mary does not have positive interactions with adults or peers, because she is so quiet and reserved.
Brian is very frustrated with the math assignment.	➔	Brian kicks a group member in the leg.	➔	The teacher gave Brian a verbal reprimand.
Ron appears tense and uncomfortable with the activity and nervous about his environment.	➔	Ron talks excessively with peers.	➔	Ron is seated two desks away from any peers, so he will not to disturb them during class time.

- What are your thoughts about the students' behavioral responses to the antecedent events?
- Do the behaviors make sense given an understanding of the antecedents?
- Do you think that the consequences will be effective in teaching students to behave more effectively in the future?
- What supports might be provided to improve student behaviors given an understanding of the antecedents?



Communicative Function of Behavior

All behaviors communicate something. When using the A-B-C documentation, it is important to recognize that the student may be trying his or her best to communicate some need or feeling.

- Read the examples below of behaviors that may be communicating a number of different needs or feelings.
- Brainstorm ideas about what each student might be trying to communicate. Write your ideas in the space provided.

Observed Student Behavior

Possible Communicative Function

1. On many days, Jill starts hitting and pinching herself and others around 11:00 a.m.

2. Ben lays down when sitting on the floor during circle time.

3. Jose frequently hits other students when preparing to take the bus home.

4. Kang stops talking to friends when in the cafeteria.

5. Annie shrugs her shoulders and refuses to answer when asked a question in front of her peers in math class.

6. Ivan constantly sings out loud while he is working, which disturbs the other students.



Behavior Observation Form (Sample)

Accurate information about student behaviors must be collected so we can figure out the most effective way to intervene. The Behavior Observation Form below provides a means of gathering both the A-B-C information and ideas about the possible communicative functions of behaviors.

- Read the sample Behavior Observation Form below
- Then discuss the questions on the bottom of the page.

Behavior Observation Form

Student: Annie Date: March 23 Subject/Location: Math class

1. Instructional Format:

☐ Lecture _____

☐ Independent work

☒ Cooperative Group group of 4

☐ Other, specify:

2. Behavior: Describe the student behavior. What is he or she doing? (Think about what the student did; how often it happens; and how long the behavior occurs.)

Annie is sitting in her group and needs to respond to the questions her peers are asking. She is not responding to her math group at all, even when her peers try to get her to start working with them. Instead, she shrugs her shoulders and refuses to answer.

3. Antecedents: What happened *before* the behavior that might have influenced the students' behavior? (Think about the time of day; activities; locations; materials; people; requests and commands.)

☒ Demand or request

☐ Alone, no attention

☐ Do not know

☒ Task difficulty

☐ Interruption

☐ Other, specify:

☐ Change in activity or location

☐ Environmental factors

4. Consequences: What happened *after* the behavior? How was the situation handled by the staff, student, and peers? (Think about what happened after the behavior that may have positively or negatively reinforced the behavior.)

Annie had to stay and work with the teacher during recess to finish her assignment.

5. Possible Communicative Functions: What might the student have been trying to communicate?

☐ Wants attention

☒ Anger

☒ Do not know

☐ Wants to be involved

☐ Frustration

☐ Other, specify:

☒ Needs help

☐ Pain or discomfort

When Annie gets frustrated or confused at other times of the day, she exhibits the same behavior. I think Annie was frustrated with the assignment because it needed to be adapted for her. Annie also shrugs her shoulders when she feels like she does not know what the right answer might be. I think that she gets embarrassed in front of her peers, and wants to make sure that she has the right answer.

- Do you have questions about the type of information that is requested in each part of the form?
- Can you think of students for whom use of the Behavior Observation Form might be useful? Who might this be and why?

Adapted from: York-Barr, J. Doyle, M.B., Kronberg, R. (1996). Module 3b: Curriculum as everything students learn in school: Individualizing learning outcomes. In J. York-Barr (Ed.), *Creating inclusive school communities: A staff development series for general and special educators*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



Unit Summary: How to Interact? Behavior as Communication

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- Their needs and feelings are recognized and appropriately addressed.
- They learn appropriate ways to communicate their needs and feelings.
- They know that they have choices, and they understand the rules and the consequences for their behavior.
- Instructional situations are developed to provide the right balance between challenge and support for new learning.
- Adults try to figure out why students behave in challenging ways instead of punishing students.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Be aware that challenging behaviors may be the way for students to communicate needs and feelings.
- When students exhibit challenging behaviors, think specifically about the circumstance in which the student is behaving; the antecedents and the consequences.
- Talk to teachers and other specialists about your A-B-C observations. Describe in as much specific detail as possible to help with figuring out why behaviors occur and what might be effective interventions.
- Address challenging behaviors in discreet ways that maintain the student's dignity and respect.
- Actions speak louder than words...model the behaviors and interactions that you wish your students to possess.



Follow-up Activity: Behavior Observation Form

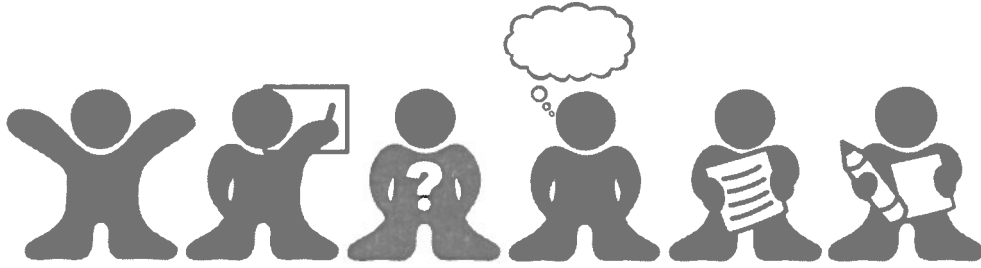
Directions —

- Use this form to provide information about student behavior.
- Describe what happens *before* the behavior, what happens *after* the behavior, and what might be the *communicative function*.
- Share this information with the student's special education teacher.

Student: _____ Date: _____ Subject/Location: _____

- 1. Instructional Format:** ☐ Lecture _____ ☐ Independent work
☐ Cooperative Group _____ ☐ Other, specify: _____
- 2. Behavior:** Describe the student behavior. What is he or she doing? (Think about what the student did; how often it happens; and how long the behavior occurs.)
- 3. Antecedents:** What happened *before* the behavior that might have influenced the students' behavior? (Think about the time of day; activities; locations; materials; people; requests and commands.)
☐ Demand or request ☐ Alone, no attention ☐ Do not know
☐ Task difficulty ☐ Interruption ☐ Other, specify: _____
☐ Change in activity or location ☐ Environmental factor: _____
- 4. Consequences:** What happened *after* the behavior? How was the situation handled by the staff, student, and peers? (Think about what happened after the behavior that may have positively or negatively reinforced the behavior.)
- 5. Possible Communicative Functions:** What might the student have been trying to communicate?
☐ Wants attention ☐ Anger ☐ Do not know
☐ Wants to be involved ☐ Frustration ☐ Other, specify: _____
☐ Needs help ☐ Pain or discomfort

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Unit 7: How to Interact? Student Relationships

By Jennifer Sommerness, Jennifer York-Barr, and Gail Ghere

*Institute on Community Integration
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in Your School?



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How to Interact?
Student Relationships



Follow-up Activity: Handout 11
Enhancing Student-to-
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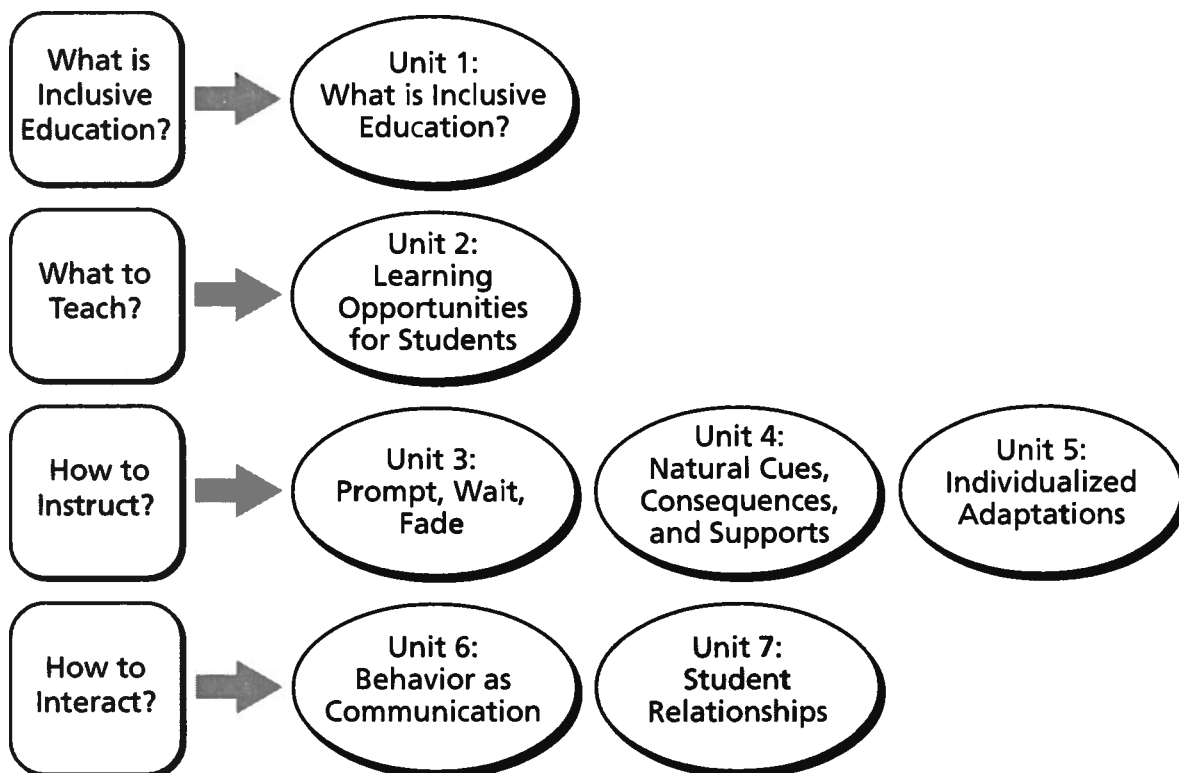


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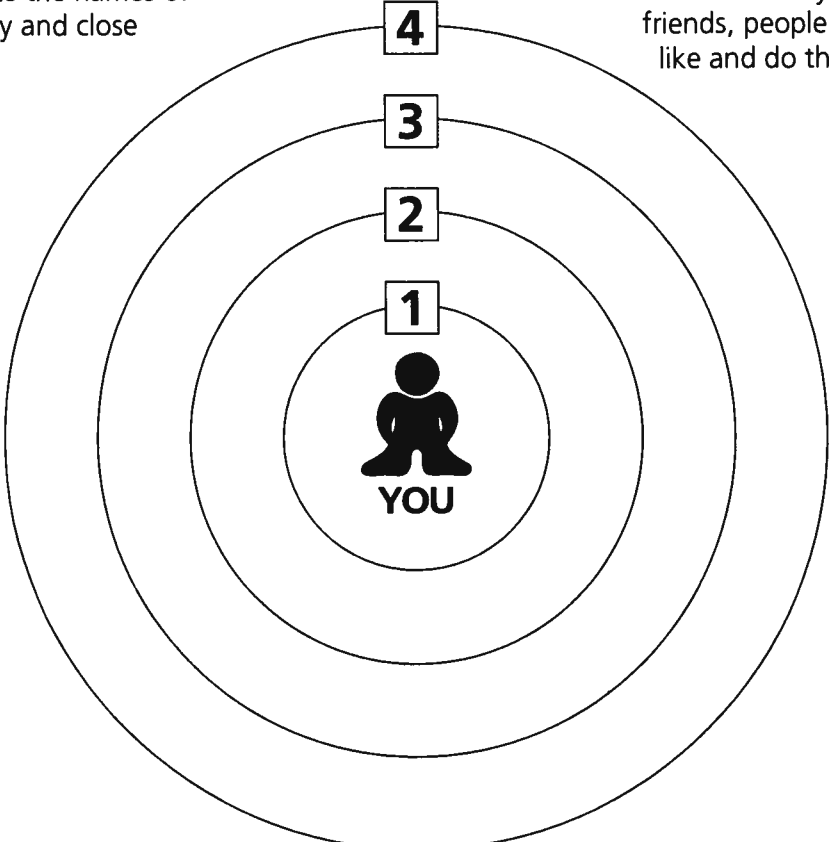
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Personal Reflection: Thinking About People in Our Lives

1 In the first and innermost circle, write the names of your family and close friends.

In the second circle, write the names of your good friends, people who you like and do things with regularly. **2**



3 In the third circle, write the names of people you enjoy and do things with occasionally. For example, bowling league or book club.

In the fourth circle, write the names of people who are paid to interact with you. For example, your doctor or aerobics instructor. **4**

Looking at the circles of people in your life —

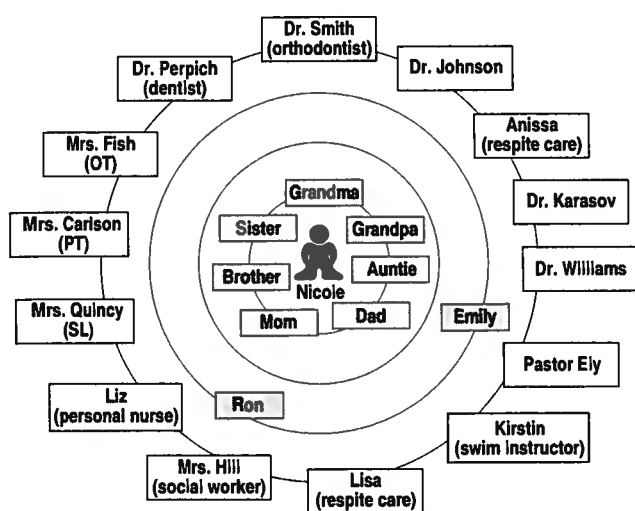
- Where, how, and when did you meet your friends?
- Who are the people that you count on most?

Circle of Friends framework described in: Forest, M., Pearpoint, J., & O'Brien, J. (1996). MAPs, Circles of Friends, and PATH: Powerful tools to help build a caring communities. In S. Stainback & V. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (pp. 67-86). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

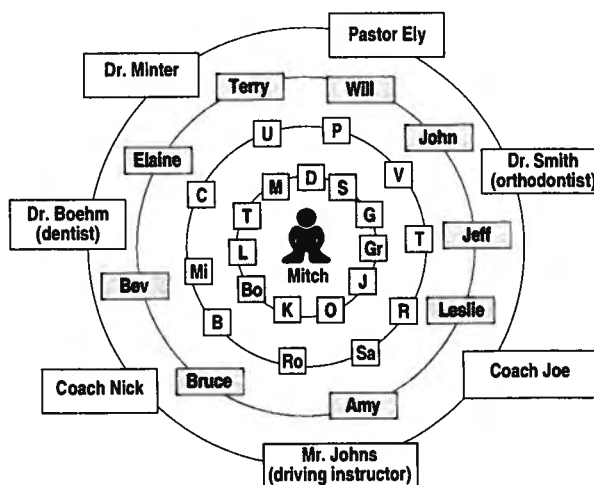


Thinking About People in Our Lives (Sample Circles)

The following are two sample circles. The sample on the left shows the people in the life of a specific student with disabilities. The sample on the right shows the people in the life of a specific student without disabilities.



Student with Disabilities



Student without Disabilities
(initials represent names)

Let's Compare the Two Samples —

- How are the two samples similar? What do you notice is different?
- Why might circles 2 and 3 be less full for Nicole than for Mitch?
- How do you think Nicole and Mitch's experiences at school might affect what people are in each of their lives?
- As students with disabilities get older, what do you think happens to the people in their circles?
- How do the outer circles compare? How do you think a very full outer circle affects the families of students with disabilities?

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Why is This Important?

- Friendships meet our human needs to belong and feel cared about.
- Our relationships and friendships change throughout our lives as we experience different environments, needs, activities and opportunities to learn.
- Relationships and student-to-student interactions are an important emphasis in students' educational experiences. Like other learning for students with disabilities, being able to interact successfully with peers frequently requires instruction from adults.
- Adults in schools can act as a bridge between students with and without disabilities. They influence where, when, and how students spend time together.
- Relationships make a difference in learning. When students have positive peer relations, they want to go to school. When students feel isolated from peers or when there are few interactions between students, their learning can suffer.



New Learning: How to Interact? Student Relationships

In order to have a successful school experience, students with disabilities need opportunities to interact and establish relationships with other students. Adults play an important role in supporting student interactions and relationships.

Students with disabilities need the adults in their lives to be aware of the importance of relationships with other students and how relationships affect learning and the quality of school experiences. We can positively influence student interactions by —

**Facilitating the
Ways Students Interact**

**Facilitating Interactions
Among Students**

The new learning section for this unit has three parts —

1. *Recognizing the Ways Students Interact* (Handout 7)

There is a wide range in the types of interactions that occur between students, from negative to positive. The range of interactions reflects what ALL students may experience across the school day. The types of interactions are described and examples provided.

2. *Facilitating Interactions Among Students* (Handout 8)

Adults help create opportunities to promote positive interactions for students with disabilities. There are a variety of different strategies that can be used to enhance student-to-student relationships. Each strategy is shared along with two examples that highlight their use in everyday activities.

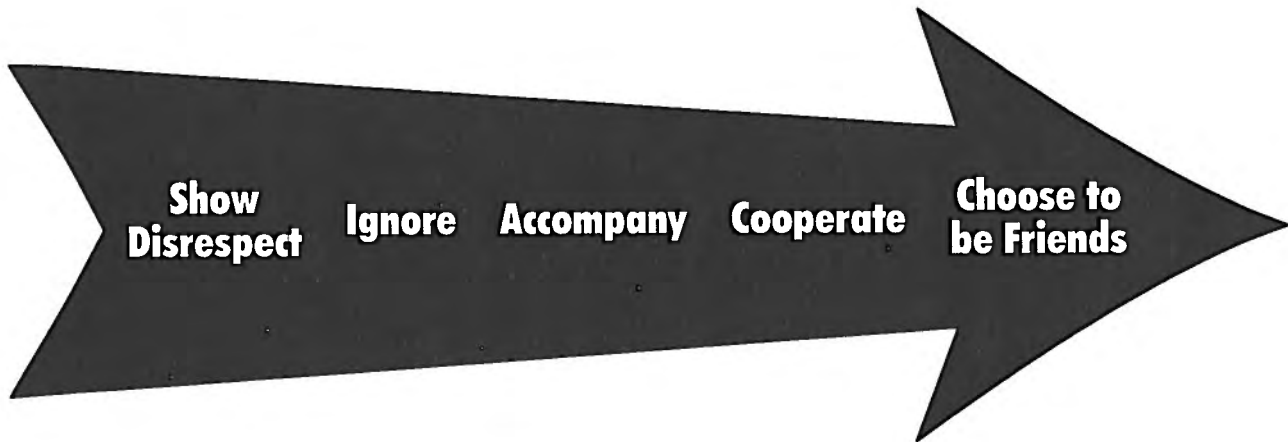
3. *When and Where Are Students Interacting in Your School?* (Handout 9)

In addition to using strategies that support more student-to-student relationships, we need to identify natural opportunities for promoting positive interactions between students. We do this by thinking about when and where most students interact (socialize, talk, hang out) across the school day.



Recognizing the Ways Students Interact

Students interact in a variety of ways — sometimes positive, sometimes not. The arrow shows a range of specific types of interactions that occur between students. When supporting students with disabilities, adults must intentionally work to minimize negative interactions and to support positive interactions.



Here are Some Specific Examples of These Types of Interactions

- **Show Disrespect:** making rude comments, insulting, teasing, bullying.
- **Ignore:** no interacting between students, avoiding eye contact, making no attempts at communication.
- **Acknowledge:** greet, showing recognition in passing, such as making eye contact, nodding head, or smiling; calling a student by her/his name.
- **Accompany:** walking alongside one another; sitting next to each other.
- **Cooperate:** working on school tasks or projects together, playing together during recess or physical education, participating in extracurricular activities together.
- **Choose to Be Friends:** viewing someone as a close friend; knowing, liking, and trusting someone very well; mutually choosing to spend time together.



Facilitating Interactions Among Students

Listed in the table below are strategies and specific examples for helping students learn to successfully interact with each other.

- Read through the strategies and examples.
- Think about students that you support. Are there times that you have used these strategies to promote more successful student interactions?
- Share your thoughts and examples.

Strategy	Examples
Modeling ways to interact	<p>"Jasmine would be able to play this game if you could show her how to match her cards."</p> <p>"Rebecca has a brand new way to communicate. It is called an intro-talker and she can show you how to have a conversation with her."</p>
Highlighting similarities	<p>"You and Eric might want to compare your essays, each of you have had similar experiences."</p> <p>"I heard Monica say that she also wanted to see that movie. Maybe you could go together."</p>
Identifying varied strengths and differences	<p>"It sure works great when everyone in a group is good at doing different things. How did each group member help get your project done?"</p> <p>"You and Carlos will make great book report partners! You have a talent for writing, and Carlos has a talent for drawing. Together, you should end up with a super project!"</p>
Teaching interaction skills	<p>"Randy, let's practice how you could call a friend on the phone and invite him to go to a movie."</p> <p>"What is another way that you could ask Patrick to borrow his ruler?"</p>
Interpreting behaviors	<p>"Mark talks aloud during math because it helps him think through the equations."</p> <p>"When Brent hits his hand on the desk, he is letting us know that he is frustrated. He is working hard to learn other ways to let people know what he is feeling."</p>

Adapted with permission from: Kronberg, R., York-Barr, J., & Doyle, M.B. (1996). *Module 2: Curriculum as Everything Students Learn in School: Creating a Classroom Community*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



When and Where Are Students Interacting in Your School?

- Think for a minute about the schedule and flow of the students' day at your school. Specifically, think about the places and times during which students interact (socialize, talk, hang out).
- Write down your responses to the questions in each of the boxes below.

When do student interactions occur the most during the day?

Are there certain classes or activities that allow or promote more student interactions?

Where are students "hanging out"?

When and where do students with disabilities interact with other students?



Unit Summary: How to Interact? Student Relationships

What We Teach and How We Teach Directly Affects Students

**Why is this
important for
student learning?**

Students learn most when —

- They have relationships to meet their human needs of belonging and feeling cared about.
- They have positive peer interactions because they feel good about themselves and want to be in school.
- They have effective ways of interacting with peers, and are able to do so in a variety of social and instructional situations.
- They participate in social and instructional situations that allow or promote student interaction (such as small groups).
- They are in the same places, at the same times as other students, and they know how to participate appropriately and effectively.

**What does
this mean for
your role as a
paraprofessional?**

To support student learning —

- Model respectful interactions with all students and adults. This includes not talking in front of students as if they were not there.
- Realize that learning to interact successfully with peers frequently requires instruction from adults. Focus on supporting student interactions and friendships across the school day.
- Act as a bridge between students with and without disabilities. You influence where, when and how students spend time together.
- Practice using the facilitating interaction strategies described on Handout 8.
- Be aware that adults can sometimes unintentionally block interactions between students, especially as students get older, just by being present.



Follow-up Activity: Enhancing Student-to-Student Interactions

- Identify one student during a general education class or activity.
- Jot some ideas in response to the following questions.

Student: _____ **Class or Activity:** _____

- What are the students without disabilities doing? What are the students with disabilities doing? Where are they sitting or standing?
- Do student interactions typically occur during this activity or class?
- Thinking about the range of ways kids interact, what types of interactions are occurring between the student you are supporting and his/her classmates?
- What kinds of supports might the student with the disability need to support his/her interactions?

After you complete the follow-up activity, share your findings with the student's special education teacher to talk about how, when, and where student interactions might be enhanced.