

MODULE 4: ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUALIZATION

What additional information would help teachers interpret the following anecdotal observation of a 3 year old? (from Roskos & Christie, 2002)

Carmen, perched on the table in the housekeeping corner, is reciting her favorite storybook from cover to cover with amazing accuracy, all the while holding the book upside down.

Modifying Instruction Using Assessment Information

- Use child preferences
- Use environmental support
- Adapt materials
- Simplify the activity. Provide adult support (if child gets frustrated writing name, teacher can model or offer praise and encouragement)
- Provide peer support
- Embed brief learning experiences or teaching episodes for a child within ongoing activities, such as learning centers or classroom routines
- Plan intentional learning opportunities

Some Examples:

- If child does not remain long at the book corner, use books about highly preferred topics
- If child never uses the book area during free choice time, introduce child to area by having the child's small group meet in the book corner
- If child has difficulty with turning the pages, use cardboard books or place bits of Styrofoam in upper right hand corner of the pages
- If child has difficulty operating tape player for audio book, use green tape for "start" and red tape for "stop" on buttons of tape recorder
- If child flips through the books and quickly leaves the book corner, pair the child with a classmate, have the classmate "read" a story, and then switch roles
- Target letter sounds by using alphabet blocks in the block area
- Provide experiences with a writing tool by having child sign up for a preferred activity, such as to use the computer station or on a name card to signify attendance
- Use sound lotto game to enhance listening skills
- Strengthen awareness of environmental print through art projects, including collages from magazines and newspapers

Child-focused Instructional Strategies

- Direct, explicit instruction
- May be particularly appropriate for children with special needs
- Follows same strategies as embedded learning opportunities but with greater intensity
- Generally occurs in context of an adult-child interaction
- Strategies include instructions, prompts, graduated guidance, reinforcement, etc.

Some Examples of Child-focused Instructional Strategies

- Systematically teach a child to look at a book by using prompting and reinforcement techniques
- Teach a child who is making the transition to kindergarten to write his or her name using direct instruction or graduated guidance
- Teach a child to answer questions about a story by using visual support strategies and then systematically fade the prompts

Example of a Staff Team Activity

- Step 1: Review the portfolios of several children (3- and 4-year olds)
- Step 2: Identify goals and strategies for strengthening language development through individualized conversations with staff and/or with older or more language-competent peers
- Step 3: Identify goals and strategies for strengthening the child's alphabet knowledge
- Step 4: Identify goals and strategies for enhancing the child's emergent writing
- Step 5: Assess the strengths and limitations of information available in the portfolio