

12 Texts a Day – Art / Science / Cooking (Musselwhite, 2008)

12 Texts A Day: Background Information

Did you know . . . 'good kindergarten teachers' (nominated-effective teachers) read from at least 12 different texts a day!! (Pressley et al, 2001). This is often NOT true in self-contained special education classrooms. This tip will suggest several quick and painless ways integrate text into classrooms for students with significant disabilities.

Making the Most of Instructional Time

One concern for students with complex communication behaviors (CCN) is that less time is available for literacy instruction. Instructional time is frequently lost to other activities such as repairing technology, moving in and between classrooms, toileting, eating, and attending therapies (Koppenhaver & Yoder, 1993). For example, Koppenhaver and Yoder found that three boys aged 10 - 14 years with CCN and found that, during instructional time, the students spent more time involved in off-task activities (34-38%) than they did participating in any single literacy activity (augmentative and alternative communication, 6-9%; writing, 10-16%; listening, 15-22%; reading 23-39%). We must ensure that more time is spent on instructional tasks, while also maximizing 'down time' as much feasible.

Integrating Text Into Recurring Activities

A key strategy for increasing exposure to text is to add text to frequently occurring activities such as:

- art
- science
- cooking

This will differ from class to class, but should be considered as a simple and purposeful way to expose students in special education classrooms to authentic texts.

Art Instructions

One simple way to infuse text into the lives of students with significant disabilities is to provide written art instructions on a chart. This is especially helpful for art activities that are similar from week to week. Below is a sample visual support with text (for more information, see the February, 2008 Tip at:

www.aacintervention.com

Marble Painting

Pick your creature. 

Pick your paint. 

Pour the paint in the box. 

Get _____ marbles. 

Put the marbles in the box. 

Roll the . 

Art 

NOTES:

Language was simplified, with emphasis on high frequency words (your, get, the), and easily decodeable words (pick instead of choose). Nouns that are difficult to decode were symbolized. Font is comic sans, as it is a simple font with easy-to-read letters (a, g). Color coding was used for parts of speech. Students add the # and color symbols to the chart.

Too Much Information??

Try 1-at-a-time!!

Marble Painting
Pick your creature. 
Pick your paint. 
Pour the paint in the box. 

Cooking Instructions

We know that repetition with variation is a powerful support for learning. There are many symbolized and picture-based cookbooks (see the February, 2004, Tip of the Month, *Cooking Up Some Literacy*). Note that some authors (e.g., Mary Buckman) only picture the ingredients, preferring to use TEXT for high frequency and easily decodable words such as 'get' and 'put' and 'in'. Here is a sample of a cooking chart that is quickly made, with a few symbols added for ingredients that would be difficult to read.

Octopus Bubbles! 

Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pineapple juice. 

Add club soda. 

Stir. 

Drink. 

Cooking 

NOTES:

This recipe is from the Alphabet Cookbook by Mary Buckman (currently out of print).

Science Experiment Instructions

Here's another opportunity for repetition with variation! Again, visual supports can help students learn concepts about print (left to right, top to bottom, word point) and gain additional print exposure.

Suspended Slime

Get $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cornstarch. 

Put it in the bowl. 

Pour in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water. 

Stir. 

Add food coloring. 

Roll the slime. 

Science 

Resources & References

Hall, D., & Cunningham, P. (2007). *Month-by-month Reading, Writing, and Phonics for Kindergarten: Systematic, Multilevel Instruction for Kindergarten*. Greensboro, NC: Carson-Dellosa.

www.carsondellosa.com

Koppenhaver, D. & Yoder, D. (1993). Classroom literacy instruction for children with severe speech and physical impairments (SSPI). What is and what might be. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 13(2), 1-15.

Musselwhite, C. & King-DeBaun, P. (1997). *Emergent Literacy Success: Merging technology and whole language for students with disabilities*. Park City, UT: Creative Communicating.

Pressley, M., Allington, R., Wharton-McDonald, Block, C., & Morrow, L. (2001). *Learning to Read: Lessons from Exemplary First-Grade Classrooms*. New York: Guilford Press.

See Also:

<http://www.turnthepage.com/>

(the official website for Bev Bos!)