

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



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WHAT IS IT ABOUT AUTISM?



- Why is autism such a “hot” issue
- Why the development of so many intervention strategies?

TEMPLE GRANDIN, PH. D.,



Ten Minutes with Temple - An Autism Hangout Beyond the Headlines Report - YouTube.flv

HOW TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION

- Children with Autism need to have a **STRUCTURED** day, and teachers need to know how to be firm but gentle.

Temple Grandin, Ph.D.



TEACHING TIPS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH AUTISM

- Avoid long strings of verbal instruction



MORE TEACHING TIPS

- Many children with autism are good at drawing, art and computer programming
- Many people with autism are visual thinkers



A CONVERSATION WITH TEMPLE GRANDIN

- ✖ How to work with children and adults with autism



A Conversation with Temple Grandin - YouTube.flv

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Many autistic children get fixated on one subject...use that to enhance learning



- Use concrete visual methods to teach number concepts



MORE TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Poor penmanship...Allow the use of computer for writing
- Phonics versus memorizing
- Protect children from sounds that hurt their ears
- Plan for visual distractions and fluorescent lights
- Use padded weight vests

AND MORE TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Interact while the child is swinging or rolling
- Allow singing instead of talking
- Consider whispering rather than normal volume talking
- For some, provide ONLY a visual or auditory task

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Use touch for older non verbal children
- Place keyboard close to the screen for simultaneous view
- For non verbal students, use flashcards and pair words and picture
- Adapt the mouse according to the individual's preference and ability

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- For individuals with problems understanding speech, consonant differentiation will be difficult (“D” in dog vs. “L” in log)
 - Stretch out the sound
 - Enunciate hard consonants
- *(Children who talk in vowel sounds are not hearing consonants.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Use closed-caption on television to help learning to read
- Tape a drawing or picture of an arrow on the mouse so they will make the correlation
- Some children and adults with visual processing problems can see the flickering in computer monitors. Use laptops, tablets or flat panels

MORE STRATEGIES

- Escalators and florescent lighting will be a problem for individuals with visual processing problems. Modify
- Reduce contrast for print from black writing on white paper to colored paper. Irlen glasses (irlen.com)

THE IRLLEN METHOD

The Irlen Method uses colored overlays and filters. There are over 4,000 educators in school districts who have been trained, and millions of children use Irlen colored overlays. Helen Irlen discovered and created this method in 1980, and it is now being used in over 42 countries.

This technology can improve **reading fluency, comfort, comprehension, attention, and concentration** while reducing **light sensitivity**. This is not a method of reading instruction. It is a color-based technology that filters out offensive light waves, so the brain can accurately process visual information.

- ✘ Helps children and adults diagnosed with:
 - ❖ Reading and learning problems
 - ❖ Dyslexia
 - ❖ ADD/HD, Autism and Asperger Syndrome
 - ❖ Behavioral and emotional problems
 - ❖ Headaches, migraines, fatigue and other physical symptoms
 - ❖ Light Sensitivity/Photophobia
 - ❖ Traumatic brain injury (TBI), whip lash, and concussions
 - ❖ Certain medical and visual conditions.



INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Generalization concepts must be taught in MANY locations (e.g., street crossing)



- Use artificial and natural cues to train across environments and settings (i.e., toileting at home and at school)

STRUCTURED TEACHING

- ✘ people with autism process visual information more easily than verbal information

WHAT IS STRUCTURED TEACHING

- ✘ Structured is an approach that allows for implementation of a variety of instructional methods (e.g., visual support strategies, Picture Exchange Communication System - PECS, sensory integration strategies, discrete trial, music/rhythm intervention strategies, Greenspan's Floortime, etc.).
- ✘ Structured teaching is based upon an **understanding** of the unique features and characteristics associated with the nature of autism.
- ✘ Structured teaching describes the conditions under which a person should be taught rather than "where" or "what" (i.e., "learning how to learn").
- ✘ Structured teaching is a system for organizing their environments, developing appropriate activities, and helping people with autism **understand** what is expected of them.
- ✘ Structured teaching utilizes **visual cues** which help children with autism focus on the relevant information which can, at times, be difficult for the person with autism to distinguish from the non-relevant information.

POSSIBLE TRIGGERS

- Often abrupt onset
- Children with autism may look typical
- False advertising & unsubstantiated claims
- Difficulty with communication
- Investment in strategies and people
- Profound increase in incidence/fear



AUTISM CHARACTERISTICS

Impairments or abnormalities in:

- +Communication
- +Social skills
- +Behavior
- +Sensory



NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

Effective instructional strategies that incorporate the following:

- + Structure
- + Communication system
- + Sensory accommodations
- + Individualized programming
- + Inclusion/social integration /access to the general curriculum



SO...WHAT IS IT ABOUT AUTISM???

- ✘ High needs students
- ✘ No physical indication of impairment
- ✘ History of unsubstantiated claims regarding cause and treatment of autism
- ✘ Inconsistent quality of education



PROMISING STRATEGIES

- ✘ Social stories (refer to Carol Gray)
- ✘ Relationship development intervention (RDI)

CONTROVERSIAL STRATEGIES

- ✖ Facilitated communication
- ✖ Rapid prompting method (RPM)
- ✖ Auditory integration therapy
- ✖ Many, many more...

FROM RESEARCH TO APPLICATION: CAUTIONS AND PITFALLS

- ✘ No “silver bullets”
- ✘ No method is best for everything
- ✘ The method should be matched with the need
- ✘ Goals and objectives should not be written to match the strategy

MORE CAUTIONS

- ✘ Beware of over generalized use of any strategies
- ✘ There are a few effective strategies with MANY different names. The “active ingredients” of “different strategies may be identical

AND...ARE CONSISTENT WITH WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING IN SPECIAL EDUCATION!

However, NCLB may assist in the following:

- + Increase attention to effectiveness of strategies
- + Viewing practice through a sound research “lens”
- + Emphasize the connection between effective practices and accountability

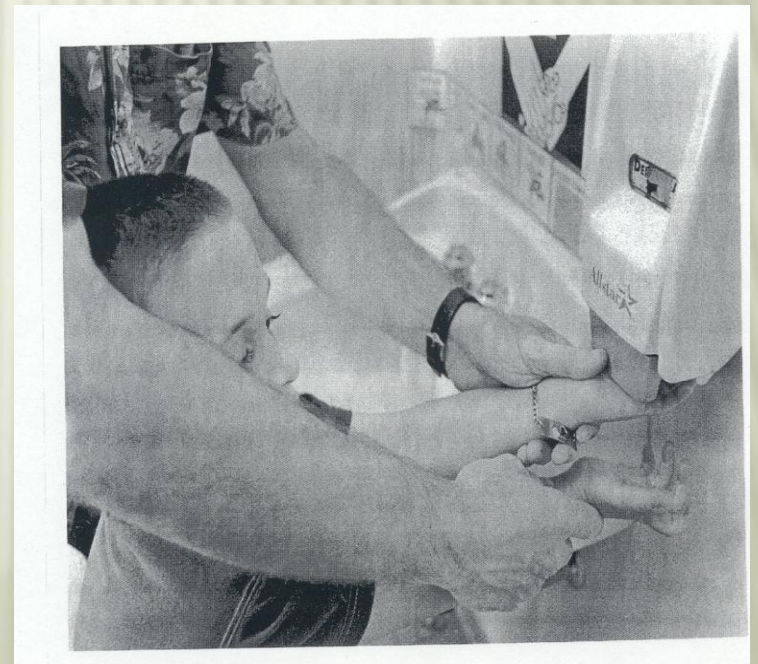
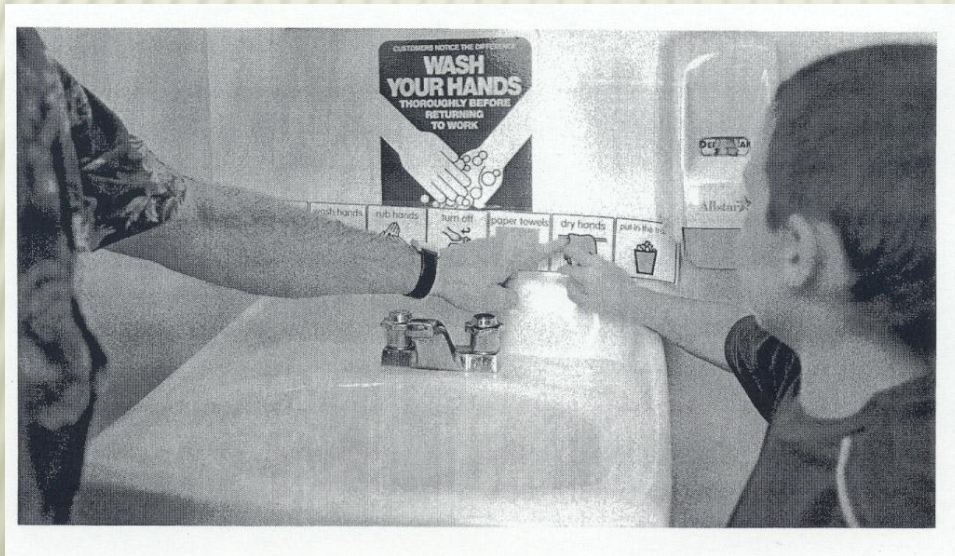
Instructional Techniques

Discrete Trial Training (DT)

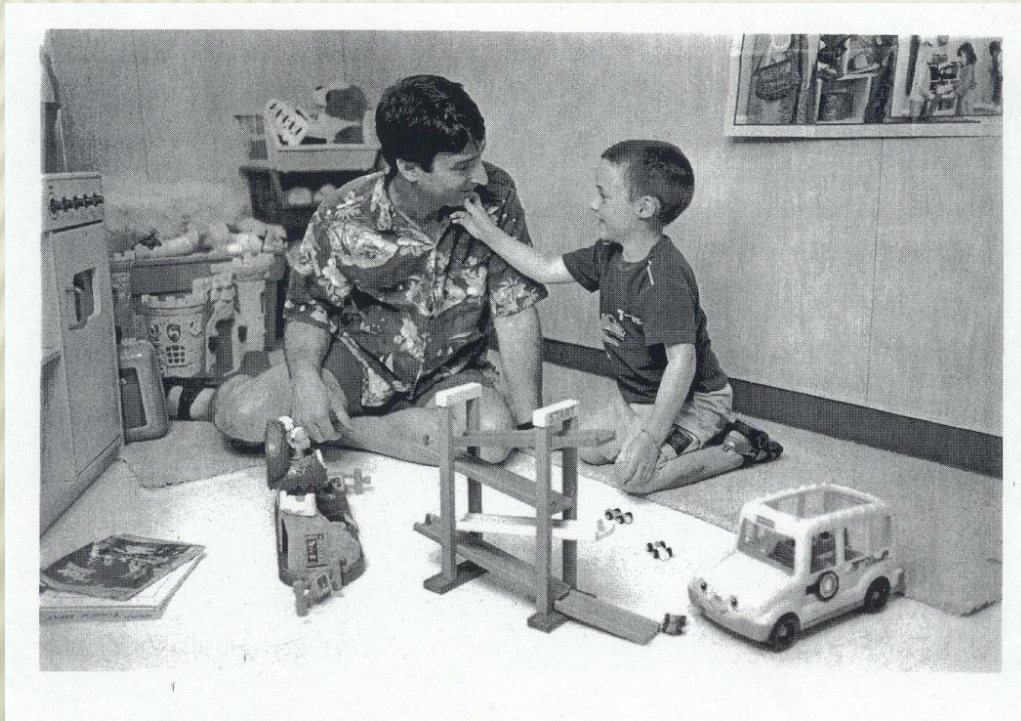


Instructional Techniques

FUNCTIONAL ROUTINES



Instructional Techniques



Pivotal Response
Training (PRT)