

Inclusion

is for Every Learner — *Or Is It?*

As presented by Dr. Frances Stetson

Executive Summary

The data is in, and it isn't pretty: despite decades of legislation and a focus on inclusion, the increase in the percentage of students who spend 80% or more of their day in the general education classroom has been negligible compared to the amount of work that has been done to improve this measure. What's more, students of color are disproportionately represented in special education programs and have higher rates of suspension and expulsion than their white peers.

Educators continually tell us that one of their most pressing concerns is finding ways to help every student succeed. It is clear that more work needs to be done. And so, PresenceLearning recently welcomed Dr. Frances Stetson, a leading expert and consultant on inclusive practices, to present a webinar to an audience of nearly 7,000 educators. Dr. Stetson challenged listeners to ask themselves the hard questions about their own attitudes and ideas, and provided strategies for change both in the classroom and systemically throughout the district.

This paper is based on her presentation, which you can watch [here](#). It also includes audience Q&A, and a resource kit to assist you in creating culturally responsive classrooms and to provide you with strategies for working with struggling learners.

—PresenceLearning

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There is ample evidence that shows we have an increasing set of children who are actually disenfranchised from the school experience.

Introduction

Let's begin with a question: Inclusion is for every learner, or is it? This is an interesting question. When we really look at the data, we see that in spite of all of our efforts at implementing inclusive practices and improving our behavioral strategies and climates in our schools, we still find that we are missing the mark. It's important to begin by looking at the basis for why this topic is so important, and to see how far off the mark we are.

The key point of this paper is that inclusion and concerns about disproportionately of minority children in special education — particularly those receiving behavioral services — represent an important civil right: the right to belong and the right to be included rather than excluded.

There is ample evidence that shows we have an increasing set of children who are actually disenfranchised from the school experience. There is a basic concept and need among both children and adults to belong. To what extent have we as educators created those communities? Certainly over the last 20 years, inclusion has come to represent more than the concept of the least restrictive environment, and that it starts with the individual child and making decisions about how we might meet their needs within the general education classroom.

The National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion defines inclusion as providing all students, including those with significant disabilities, equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services. Those two phrases that are very important: *equitable opportunities* and *effective educational services*. In this paper, we'll look at various ways to make certain that educational opportunities are equitable and effective in terms of our actions toward our students, and particularly minority students.

Let's look at two pieces of landmark legislation: *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Brown case determined in 1954 that segregated schools are inherently unequal, and therefore, unconstitutional. Thinking of your own schools or those you've had a chance to visit, do you begin to see some patterns that suggest there continues to be some segregation? In particular, think about classrooms where we are identifying youngsters with disabilities or that may have a behavioral concern. If you look in those classrooms or more segregated classrooms for children with a disability, in many of our districts we will find that the racial or cultural makeup of those classrooms is disproportionate to the general population of the community. Effectively, we are finding more of our minority youngsters in more segregated settings. Do they have, in some cases, a different level of advantage or opportunity for learning? Implementation of the spirit and letter of *Brown v. Board of Education* continues to be a concern of ours today.



IDEA guaranteed a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. However, there are some unsettling trends. First of all, when we look at inclusion and children with disabilities being educated with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate, there has been an enormous focus and push over the last 20 years in particular for more inclusive schools. Yet, from 2004 through 2013, there has only been an 10.3% increase in the percentage of students with disabilities who are educated 80% or more of the day in the general education classroom.

When we look at the impact of race/ethnicity, white students spend more time in the general education classroom. Only 10.9% spent less than 40% inside the regular class. In contrast, 21.1% of Asian students spent less than 40% of their instructional day inside the regular class; Black or African American students (17.6%); Hispanic or Latino students (16.2%).


Source: *37th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, 2015, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2015/parts-b-c/37th-arc-for-idea.pdf>.
Data also available for other racial/ethnic groups.



Disproportionately, children of color are represented not only in special education programs but are also subjected to higher rates of exclusionary discipline practices such as suspension and outright expulsion from school. When you look at inclusion versus exclusion, this whole issue of disproportionality takes our concern about equity to a whole new level. We are looking at inequitable opportunities to learn for youngsters of color who are not only spending less time inside the general education classroom but they're also spending more time in any separate settings and disproportionately spend more time in more punitive options, such as in-school and out-of-school suspension settings. This often removes them from their neighbor school.

The disproportionate representation of children with disabilities has been significant over a period of time. The numbers are high. It's persistent. We haven't shown any progress toward solving this pervasive problem and challenge we are facing.

Let's first try to understand 'why'. We have to go deeper into this question so that we can wrap our arms around the strategies and solutions that we can employ at our schools.



*Becoming culturally proficient
is not only a personal goal,
but an absolutely necessary
professional goal.*

Changing Our Awareness and Attitudes

We each have to attend to our own notions of difference, diversity, and inclusivity, and look at building an entire strata of educators who are culturally proficient. We have to look at our own thinking and the thoughts of those educators that we work with in order to be able to further investigate the environments in which our students are learning. The relationship between teacher and student is particularly important here. If we don't pay attention to our own attitudes and our own notions of diversity, differences in classrooms and their value to us, then we're not likely to make the changes in our practice. So, we have to look at our attitudes first, then our practices, and then our systems.

Dr. Nelson Mandela said, "The first thing is to be honest with yourself. You can never have an impact on society if you have not changed yourself." The challenge is to look more critically at our own practice and the practice of our colleagues. It is easily possible to walk into a classroom in many of our schools and tell if there are students that an individual teacher does not particularly like or may not be responsive to. You can tell that in a number of ways including:

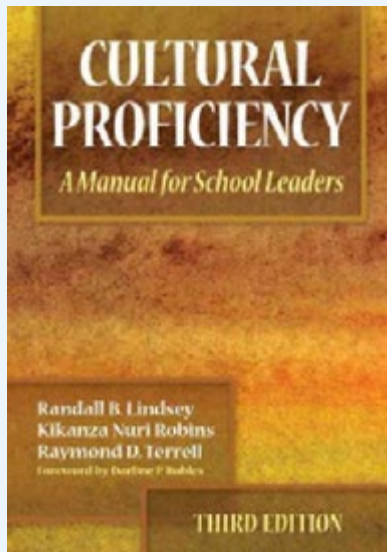
- Body language and eye contact
- The amount of time devoted to the student
- The number of questions asked to that student
- The length of time given to the student to provide a response



If we take on this issue for our schools, some of the questions we have to ask are:

- Is our faculty culturally proficient?
- Do faculty members possess a solid belief that all children have the right and the opportunity to learn?
- Do we have those practices that we want to see in place AND embodied within a set of attitudes that are very positive toward every student?

For more information on this book, click [here](#).



Cultural Proficiency

Cultural proficiency is a way of being that allows individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people who differ from them. We have more and more diversity in our schools, we have rich cultural diversity, we have linguistic diversity, and we have all kinds of societal differences in terms of poverty and advantage. We have certainly studied differences in learning styles and learning approaches, but we now know that these differences that we bring to our role as educators significantly impact how we approach our students and how we interact with them. Ask yourselves as leaders:

- What level of professional development is occurring in your own school or district regarding cultural proficiency?
- Does your district offer quick awareness sessions? 30-minute overviews? An hour? A half a day? Or sufficient time to learn and reflect?
- Is every educator in the school district or school learning about this topic?
- Does everyone possess a deep knowledge of cultural proficiency, its stages, and the impact on learners in the classroom?

Many district catalogs for professional development allot only a small amount of time for cultural proficiency and there doesn't seem to be any opportunity for reflection and discussion. Therefore, most of the information just tends to slide off.

One excellent resource on this topic is *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* by Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell. This book outlines the six stages of cultural proficiency:



For educators, it is important not only to look at the definitions of each stage, but to be able to self-diagnose where you are on the continuum and what you need to do in order to move forward toward cultural proficiency. Becoming culturally proficient is not only a personal goal, but an absolutely necessary professional goal. Otherwise, it is very likely you will make mistakes in the classroom that reflect more negative feelings toward children or offer them fewer opportunities for learning, specifically for children of color.

The Conflict and Blame end of the continuum is where negative messages are sent to children such as:

- **Destructiveness** - We don't want to hear your language spoken in the school
- **Incapacity** - Because you speak "X" language as your first language, you are less likely to be successful
- **Blindness** - As an educator, I really don't notice any differences in my students in terms of their culture or language

These types of messages cause students to shut down and create a really strained learning environment. If you find yourself in one of these three stages, it is time to understand the harm that it does to children. Then you need to work on Pre-competence, which is just simply realizing what you don't know and knowing how important it is to gain that knowledge all the way up through proficiency.

So let's take a quick look at the definition of these terms. For clarity, know that when we're looking from the bottom part of the continuum, if a student experiences cultural destructiveness, incapacity, or concepts of cultural blindness, they are not as comfortable in their learning environment because it is more conflictive and offers blame for characteristics that the student is not able to change.

Destructiveness - Negating or speaking disparaging of the culture. This is the most damaging behavior on the continuum.

Incapacity - Elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs. You hear this kind of talk particularly in reference to children in poverty where people make assumptions that if a child is from an impoverished home, they are automatically seen as having difficulty learning. This type of assumption about the incapacity of children is simply on the basis of one's own culture, practices, and beliefs.



Cultural Blindness - Acting as if differences in cultures don't even exist. This may have been comforting once upon a time, but the truth is that cultural blindness is one of the more negative behaviors. What is needed is to have a real understanding and appreciation for the differences among cultures.

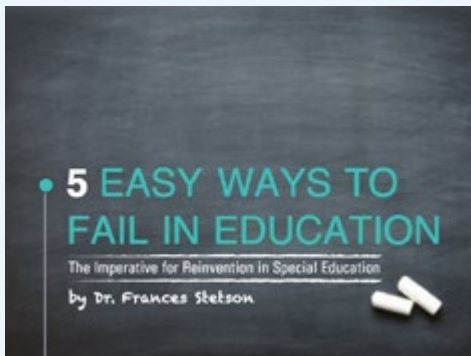
Pre-competence - Recognizing what you don't know, understanding that this limits your ability to be an effective educator, and realizing you need to have skills, knowledge, competencies, and experiences to be much more comfortable in a multicultural, multilingual world. This stage is uncomfortable, yet a very productive stage.

Competence - Interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences, and motivates you to assess and adapt your behavior, expectations, and practices in the classroom.

Proficiency - Honoring differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups. Over time, this stage involves becoming comfortable interacting across a variety of cultural groups. The individuals of other cultural groups recognize that you are respectful and appreciative of what they bring to the group.

It is very important that district leaders ask themselves what they are doing to build cultural proficiency across their faculty, and what options they are offering to those staff members who are less proficient and need to move forward along the continuum.

For a more in depth discussion on white privilege, see Frances Stetson's webinar **"5 Easy Ways to Fail in Education."**



White Privilege

In her essay "Unpacking the Invisible Backpack," Peggy McIntosh describes white privilege as "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks." Her essay is very helpful in understanding that there is an unconscious, and in many cases, unplanned advantage for individuals who are white over those of color in every aspect of our society.

When we are looking at cultural proficiency or white privilege, it is necessary for us as educators to confront honestly and openly that there is a very negative impact for children of color if we are not culturally proficient and do not understand the concept of white privilege.

Some of the negative impacts of cultural bias include:

- Feelings of worthlessness
- Achieving less in school
- Lowered aspirations for the future
- Increasing likelihood of dropping out of school

These characteristics align with triggers for the behavioral problems we're seeing in schools. If we have cultural bias occurring in our classroom, the impacts listed above are the predictable, research-based results for the child of color in our classrooms. If we don't do the work to become culturally proficient, both personally and in our professional development for our faculty, it will be almost impossible to implement what we're going to talk about in the next two sections of this paper with any level of fidelity and authenticity.

"...overrepresentation of Black (or minority) children in special education is a civil rights violation and a major culprit in the school to prison pipeline, with low teacher expectations yielding low quality instruction, which in turn leads to low quality education."

~ Association of Black Psychologists

Changing Instructional Delivery in the Classroom

In this section, we will look at what we need to change in the classroom in order to get better results for our students in learning, attitudes, and behavior. Parker Palmer said, "Teachers (all educators) possess the power to create conditions that can help students learn a great deal – or keep them from learning much at all. Teaching is the intentional act of creating those conditions."

What do we do intentionally that creates the conditions in our classrooms for all students to be successful? There are conditions and strategies that we must purposely use faithfully that significantly improve the chances and opportunities for learning.

There have been countless conferences and professional development sessions on differentiated instruction, but it worries me when I go out into hundreds of classrooms every year, teachers and principals think they are using differentiated instruction but actually they are not. Despite all of the workshops, we still see the same whole group instruction, the same activities, the same way of assessing learning, and so on.

So, let's really implement differentiated instruction. We need to see it in every classroom. We need to see opportunities for all students instead of observing the teacher presenting instruction in the way that he or she is most comfortable. This includes:

- Scaffolds and accommodations
- Culturally-rich curriculum
- Project-based learning
- Collaborative learning
- School-wide positive behavior supports

Following are some resources you can use to think about change in the classroom. You can find these resources in the [Appendix of Resources](#) in this paper.

1. **Components of a Culturally Responsive Classroom**

(Self-Assessment Tool):

- High Expectations
- Supportive Classroom Environment
- Culturally Responsive Curriculum
- Teacher as Facilitator
- Flexible Grouping

2. **Principles and Applications for Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher.**

The second resource is actually a list of actions that teachers and leaders can take to increase the extent to which their classroom and their own actions are culturally responsive. It's very practical and simple, and it also leads to changes of practice. For example, teachers who are culturally responsive use materials and curriculum that reflect the students' backgrounds, and so on. Think about the visuals on the walls of your classroom. Do they truly reflect the demographic characteristics of the school or neighborhood?

One by one, teachers can work in their grade-level groups or their subject area teams to select the one, two, or three strategies to begin to implement, and add more strategies at periodic intervals. If teachers can implement the practical strategies on this list, we should see a major improvement in the of the school for all children.

In the remainder of this section, we will discuss a variety of the characteristics of culturally responsive classrooms in more detail.

Principles and Applications for Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher

Source: Olanoff, R.K. (2003). *Culturally responsive teaching: A primer for K-12 teachers*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Teachers who are Culturally Responsive ...

✓	Practice
	Use materials and curricula that reflect the students' backgrounds and their needs and interests.
	Display images that might be familiar to students.
	Maintain caring relationships reflecting their understanding of the child's difficulties while not condoning bad behavior.
	View each child as someone who can teach others by bringing their own stories and experiences to the class.
	Provide equal opportunities for all students to fulfill their potential regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, class, and abilities.
	Avoid stereotypes and help students recognize that members of the same group frequently differ in many ways.
	Encourage respect for differences.
	Avoid making assumptions about groups of people and the origins of their cultural characteristics and practices.
	View children not as victims but as unique individuals worthy of respect.
	Help students identify how they are different and alike in terms of their past and present experiences and identities.
	Converse with minority parents and other representatives of cultural groups about how they would like to see their concerns discussed and taught in the schools.
	Teach their students about prejudice and intolerance by discussing their meaning and consequences and how they affect all people, not only the victims but those with the prejudices as well.
	Go beyond teaching historical content and respect for difference by modeling such attitudes in their classrooms.
	Show students ways they can actively work to bring about social justice and equal opportunity for everyone within their school and community.
	Encourage students to keep an open mind, to question, to seek the truth.
	Support cultural pluralism, the idea that people can maintain the unique characteristics of their native culture, or microculture, while at the same time adapting to the common practices and values of the United States, the macroculture.

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Building Authentic Relationships

Building authentic relationships is a very powerful interpersonal approach. Elementary teachers do this all the time, but secondary school faculty may see the value but often struggle to model this with 125 students or more per day. Following are some tools that may help.



Who Am I?

The worksheet is a collection of geometric shapes for a student to fill out:

- Self Portrait**: A large rectangle on the top left.
- Full Name**: A rectangle on the top right.
- My ethnicity race/culture**: A rectangle on the top right, below the full name.
- My hobbies/extra-curricular activities**: A rectangle on the top right, below the ethnicity.
- Graduating class**: A trapezoid on the top right, below the hobbies.
- Birthday**: A trapezoid on the top right, below the graduating class.
- My family**: A rectangle on the top right, below the birthday.
- An accomplishment I am proud of**: A rectangle on the middle left.
- Places I have lived**: A rectangle on the middle right.
- I have never:** A rectangle on the middle left, below the accomplishment.
- Where I spend my time**: A rectangle on the middle left, below the I have never.
- Most memorable recent event**: A rectangle on the middle left, below the where I spend my time.
- Qualities of a good math teacher**: A rectangle on the bottom left.
- Favorite childhood memory**: A rectangle on the bottom left, below the qualities.
- FAVORITE**: A large circle on the right side, divided into eight segments:
 - Music/Radio Station
 - Food
 - Class/Subject
 - Movie
 - Color
 - Sport/Team
 - Book/Magazine
 - TV Show

Who Am I? With this worksheet, there are various blocks, and I encourage you to create your own. It's worth noticing that this worksheet is not only just your name but also your ethnicity, race, and culture, because these things are respected and because they are important. Toward the bottom, it asks kids to describe the characteristics or qualities of a good teacher. Understanding what a student thinks are the qualities of a good teacher helps the teacher understand what that student values. Students can work on this worksheet over time or can leave it on their desk or in their materials, or the teacher may collect these forms and sit down with individual students to discuss them. It's an excellent and very simple tool to begin the process.

Student Interest Surveys. The [Appendix of Resources](#) also includes elementary and secondary student interest surveys. The common emphasis in these two surveys is finding out what kids like about school, what they find challenging, what strategies are helpful to them, and what the teacher can do to make learning more enjoyable, more effective, and more efficient for them. These short inventories present a powerful set of questions that teachers can ask in an interview format, in small groups, or however they prefer. Teachers report that by using these student interest surveys, they gain a deeper level of knowledge and appreciation for their students. They know that the answers to these questions will provide them with avenues to develop stronger relationships and better connections to the home.

Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms

- Have students bring artifacts from home that reflect their culture
- Invite community members to speak to the class about issues of interest, or to guest lecture or provide a demonstration related to the curriculum
- Ask students to write about family traditions or research the origins of their community
- Attend community events that are important to the students
- Post photos of students around the room
- Provide sections of the classroom for selection of books relevant to the curriculum in several reading levels
- Provide reference materials in a section of the room and allow students to check them out for home use
- Provide the opportunity for higher and lower levels of movement and conversation in the classroom



Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms. This is a list of strategies for building a culturally responsive or inclusive classroom environment. It includes everything from inviting community members to speak to the class about issues of importance in their community to writing about family traditions. These strategies get more at the heart of some of the challenges we face in reversing the disproportionate identification so children of color as students requiring special education services. They also get much closer to the building of a culturally responsive classroom.

Building Authentic Relationships with Schools and Families.

This tool is similar to the previous one and has some really wonderful ideas for building authentic relationships with both students and with their families.

With all of these tools, there is no need to make things really challenging for educators. There are many simple ways to begin to use a particular strategy. I truly believe that sometimes attitudes change after we have given our teachers or ourselves some practical tools to use, and that with competency and confidence, some of the more complex attitudes will change after implementation rather than before.



Higher Student Expectations

In looking at higher expectations, it is very important for teachers to examine their own values as they dive deeply into their own level of cultural proficiency.

A Center for American Progress study surveyed teachers across the board and found that there was a bias that children of color would be less likely than their white peers to achieve a college degree. If you have that assumption while you're teaching these students, how might you be giving off messages or changing your own approaches that actually make this bias a reality in the community? It's a difficult conversation to have, to question yourself and then look at the options to begin to communicate high expectations.

I love when I go to schools where the teachers actually post information about the college they attended, share pictures from their college, and then try to encourage every one of their students to go to the school they attended. It's a fun and interesting rivalry — a happy rivalry across the faculty — but it communicates phenomenal messages to youngsters. Again, if we can change the practice, we can change the attitude.



TYPES OF SCAFFOLDS | INSTRUCTIONAL SCAFFOLDING

SCAFFOLD	WAYS TO USE SCAFFOLDS IN AN INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING
ADVANCE ORGANIZERS	Tools used to introduce new content and tasks to help students learn about the topic: Venn diagrams to compare and contrast information; flow charts to illustrate processes; organizational charts to illustrate hierarchies; outlines that represent content; mnemonics to assist recall; statements to situate the task or content; rubrics that provide task expectations.
CLUE CARDS	Prepared cards given to individual or groups of students to assist in their discussion about a particular topic or content area: Vocabulary words to prepare for exams; content-specific stem sentences to complete; formulae to associate with a problem; concepts to define.
CONCEPT AND MIND MAPS	Maps that show relationships: Prepare partially completed maps for students to complete or have students create their own maps based on their current knowledge of the task or concept.
EXAMPLES	Samples, specimens, illustrations, problems: Real objects: illustrative problems used to represent something.
EXPLANATIONS	More detailed information to move students along on a task or in their thinking of a concept: Written instructions for a task: verbal explanation of how a process works.
HANDOUTS	Prepared handouts that contain task- and content-related information, but with less detail and room for student note taking.
HINTS	Suggestions and clues to move students along: "place your foot in front of the other," "use the escape key," "find the subject of the verb," "add the water first and then the acid."
PROMPTS	A physical or verbal cue to remind—to aid in recall of prior or assumed knowledge. Physical: Body movements such as pointing, nodding the head, eye blinking, foot tapping. Verbal: Words, statements and questions such as "Go," "Stop," "It's right there," "Tell me now," "What toolbar menu item would you press to insert an image?," "Tell me why the character acted that way."
QUESTION CARDS	Prepared cards with content- and task-specific questions given to individuals or groups of students to ask each other pertinent questions about a particular topic or content area.
QUESTION STEMS	Incomplete sentences which students complete: Encourages deep thinking by using higher order "What if" questions.
STORIES	Stories relate complex and abstract material to situations more familiar with students. Recite stories to inspire and motivate learners.
VISUAL SCAFFOLDS (ALIBALI, 2006)	Pointing (call attention to an object); representational gestures (holding curved hands apart to illustrate roundness; moving rigid hands diagonally upward to illustrate steps or process); diagrams such as charts and graphs: methods of highlighting visual information.

Adapted from: Spectrum Newsletter - Fall 2008, Northern Illinois University.
<http://www.niu.edu/spectrum/2008/fall/scaffolding.shtml>

Scaffolds and Instructional Accommodations

One of the most troubling things I see in hundreds of classroom observations that my firm conducts every year is the lack of accommodations or scaffolding in the classroom.

Graphic organizers, word banks, tasks lists, timers, and so on are very powerful for students, yet we see everyone performing the same activity with the same level of expectation and in the same manner. That just defies what we know about good teaching and learning. Scaffolds make it easier for each student to achieve his or her learning objectives. They do not water down the objective or change it, but rather make it easier for the student to achieve an objective on their grade level or beyond.

To that end, the following list describes some simple tools that are included in the [Appendix of Resources](#).

Types of Scaffolds. This list describes and defines some of the types of scaffolds that can be used in the classroom. The [Appendix](#) also includes some one-page resources that you can distribute either one at a time or as a group. Perhaps ask your department or grade level chairs to engage a study of each of these. For example, you can discuss whether graphic organizers are being used, to what extent, and when. It is important to identify difficulties that occur when using them. Are we teaching students to develop their own graphic organizers so they reach higher levels of independence?

If a Student Has Difficulty, Try This. When using scaffolds, it is wise to identify the area of difficulty the student is experiencing, and then provide a list of scaffolds and accommodations that can be targeted to that area of concern. For example, if the child has difficulty becoming interested in the task or completing the task on time or drawing conclusions or making inferences, you can find a number of very good practical suggestions.

Student Responsibility for Learning

This area was an ah-hah moment for me several years ago. I was working with a low performing high school very concerned about their student performance scores. They were a really discouraged group. We kept peeling the onion to see what they could change, what they could do differently. Suddenly it occurred to the group that they didn't have a lot of confidence that their students possessed the process skills needed in order to learn the content. Maybe it wasn't the difficulty of learning the content itself. Maybe students didn't know how to study. Maybe they didn't know how to pull reference materials together. Maybe they didn't know how to prepare for a homework assignment.

Think not only about what you're teaching but also consider questions such as:

- What process skills do students need in order to be successful in this grade or subjects, and do our students possess them?
- What process skills does each student have?
- Are we teaching, monitoring, and reinforcing process skills?

This following table shows an example of what educators can do, given the content and grade level they are teaching, in order to identify the specific process skills required. Ideally, teachers should share this list of skills with the prior grade level staff to determine the extent to which the students actually have the needed skills.

Process Skills	Student Skill Level		
	High	Medium	Low
1. Note Taking Skills			
2. Organizing Materials for Learning			
3. Test Taking Skills			
4. Writing Short Essay Answers			
5. Creating Graphic Organizers for Clarity			
Add Your Own!			

Positive Behavioral Supports

When thinking of positive behavioral supports, let's take a little left turn and tie this back to the cultural competence of the teacher in the classroom. By looking at the teacher and looking at the behavioral standards in his or her classroom, what are acceptable behavioral norms? For example, what are acceptable levels of noise and physicality? When can students self-direct some of their instruction versus being directed by an adult?

These kinds of questions are important when we determine which are valid behavioral concerns from those that are not. We must ensure our own objectivity! Referrals based on bias can easily result in a spiral from the classroom to "behavior" classrooms to dropping out of school to incarceration. It is very powerful to see how much is one's own attitude and own cultural background can impact our perception of acceptable behavior in the classroom.

Now think about what to do to eliminate, adjust, or substitute the inappropriate behavior. Are our referrals designed for us to eliminate the child from the classroom, are they designed to send them further down the hall, are they designed to have us look for another adult who'll be responsible for this child and his behavior? Or are our in-classroom behaviors as teachers and principals designed to actually apply a good problem solving process that's objective and student-centered, and has a very good chance of eliminating or changing those inappropriate behaviors? Are we putting the burden on the child, or are we putting the burden on the system?



The Texas study called the Cradle to Prison Pipeline has been a career and life perspective changing study for me. I would hope that as leaders, we make certain that everyone has not only read the original study but also the recent update with its new statistics.

From the study by the Stand for Children-TX Network in 2005:

- Black males have a 1:3 chance of going to prison
- Latino males have a 1:6 chance of going to prison
- Texas spends 2.3x per prisoner as per student

The notion here is very well articulated by the Association of Black Psychologists in a 2012 position paper: "...overrepresentation of Black (or minority) children in special education is a civil rights violation and a major culprit in the school to prison pipeline, with low teacher expectations yielding low quality instruction, which in turn leads to low quality education."

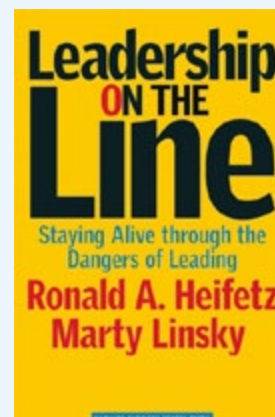
Notice the phrases above that follow mirror the five characteristics discussed in this section. Low teacher expectations yielding a low quality of instruction, which then lead to a low quality education. We need to remove negative or culturally destructive adult attitudes and focus on the student and appropriate interventions!

Acknowledge adult responsibility for establishing practices that promote positive student behavior. The burden is not on the child – it is on the system.

Changing Leadership and Systems

In the previous sections, we've looked at changes in attitudes and changes in the classroom. Now we're ready to look at changes in leadership and systems. As leaders, it is our sacred responsibility to protect children and provide them with equitable and quality services. As an educator, this means, as Ronald L. Heifetz and Marty Linsky stated, "mobilizing people to make progress on the hardest of problems. This requires courage and leadership. We have to be willing to state some non-negotiables. We have to be willing to say to our faculty that it is non-negotiable that we all serve all students; that we must provide each student what they require in order to be successful; that we're going to be culturally proficient as a faculty, and that we're going to call each other out if we are not. Leaders must also pay heightened attention to referrals in terms of where they come from, who they come from, what issues are typically embedded in those referrals, and did the referrals instead reflect a need for additional and more aggressive professional development?"

For more information on this book, click [here](#).



There are some things that individual teachers (and in some cases, individual schools) cannot address or change by themselves. There has to be a system at the district level that provides:

- Intensive professional development about cultural bias, privilege, and prejudice, and the opportunity for people to have very courageous conversations. Otherwise, we're not scratching the surface.
- Facilitation of group discussions that address individuals and small groups directly when their attitudes or behavior is counter to the expectations that we have for culturally proficient educators. We have to sit down and say, "What's at work here? This is what I am noticing. These are the behaviors. These are the referrals. These are the comments that do not match that of a culturally proficient educator."
- Consistent external supports to the teacher, the classroom, and to the student around behavioral issues. We need to look at smaller communities of service options so that we have consistent service providers who know the students and their histories.
- A debriefing process that explores successes. There are many educators who are doing beautiful work. We need to begin using them as examples, citing them, recognizing them, and rewarding them for the kind of initiative and clarity they have around their own culturally proficient practices in the classroom.

To close, I'll end with a phrase that is my own mantra "Acknowledge adult responsibility for establishing practices that promote positive student behavior. The burden is not on the child – it is on the system."



Clay Whitehead

Co-founder and Co-CEO
of PresenceLearning

CW

Q&A With Dr. Frances Stetson

Co-Founder and Co-CEO of PresenceLearning, Clay Whitehead, sat down with Dr. Stetson after her webinar to discuss questions from webinar participants. Below is a summary of their discussion.

What criteria could indicate that a student with special needs is better supported in an all-day segregated program or an inclusion model? Is there research that shows when it is most appropriate to keep a learner in the self-contained setting?



Dr. Frances Stetson

President of Stetson
& Associates, Inc.

FS

That's a really great question because today's classrooms reflect increasing diversity of students and their needs. I see why educators want a clear answer, but there really isn't one. However, this is actually to the student's advantage. Every decision a teacher, a therapist, or a parent makes in special education must be individually determined based on the student's need, so deciding if a student should be in a segregated or inclusion program should be based on a few considerations.

First, ask yourself if you have exhausted all options and strategies inside the general education classroom. Have you tried all of the instructional, behavioral, or personal support tactics that are appropriate for the student in order to make the general education classroom the most successful environment? For example, let's say a student has one or more progress goals they need to meet. If possible, a suitable solution may be to work with them for a brief time at the beginning of instruction one-on-one or in a small group instead of pulling them out of class.

Third, if a student does leave class for segregated work, ask yourself if the intervention is worth the time outside of class. Is it very focused and specific? Is it possible to address the student's learner objective in the context of the general lesson? For example, can the student learn about recycling while most of class is learning about decomposition?

Additionally, I think all educators need to be trained to look at the grade level, standards-based objectives and scale their lessons. Teachers should ask themselves if it is possible to create a lesson based on a learner objective, but also modify it for students who may be a grade level or two below the rest of the class. This flexibility on the teacher's part could save the student from leaving the general education classroom.

FS

An educator's goal is to create a classroom that is appropriate and beneficial for all students, but honestly, if a student needs some targeted help outside of the general education classroom, then the teacher and parents should feel good that they made this decision on the basis of what that individual child needs.

CW

When thinking of at-risk students, is there something that stands out to you as to why students of color are more likely to be at-risk?

FS

I really want to make this point very clearly: the difficulty that a student of color may be experiencing at school is not related to some inherent limitation in his or her race, culture, or language. It is related to limited access to resources and opportunities. Over time, the cumulative effects of differential access to resources can significantly impact a student's academic performance. Again, it's not the child's burden. Educators and therapists need to help them overcome this.

CW

What is the most important thing administrators and educators can do to reduce instances of inappropriate identification of students of color for special education or disciplinary action?

FS

I've been speaking a great deal recently to principals about this subject, and one of the things that I would say is first, teachers must be equipped with knowledge of social issues and acceptance of cultural differences. Do they understand cultural proficiency and white privilege? Do they understand that if they have a negative or biased attitude toward a student, that the child will recognize this and feel a sense of dislike or rejection from their teacher?

Schools also need to keep better records, analyze data, and drill down when necessary. For example, administrators and therapists should be analyzing data to determine if there are particular teachers or grade levels submitting an inordinate number of referrals for students of color. If this is happening, administrators and therapists should talk to these teachers or grades and have an honest conversation about their referral patterns. Ask them the reason why they are referring these students and then provide them with the support they need to change their practices, such as individual coaching.

FS

Our field is finally at a point where educators and administrators have to call it out and ask, “What’s happening here? What is leading to these referrals that truly are not representative of student needs?”

CW

Let’s talk more about behavior. Behavior seems to be our largest barrier to inclusion. How can our teachers become more responsive in the ever growing world of accountability?

Every school should have bedrock practices in place that mediate the incidences and severity of behavior issues. For example, positive behavioral supports need to be in place in every school. I still go to many schools that have totally different behavior rules from classroom to classroom. Or, there may not be any behavior rules in the cafeteria, but there are in the hallway. Positive behavioral supports have been around for a long time and when implemented with fidelity, can make a real difference.

FS

Also, teachers cannot assume students already know these school-wide behavior expectations because very often, students don’t. Educators and administrators must specifically identify behavioral expectations, explicitly teach them, and consistently reinforce them on a schoolwide basis.

The second part of the question mentioned “the ever growing world of accountability.” There is definitely a direct connection between behavioral issues in the classroom and the quality of instruction and student engagement, which of course is our measurement for accountability. When teachers offer better, more engaging instruction, students demonstrate better behavior.

CW

How can schools change general education teachers’ mindsets that students with special needs should be segregated from the general education classroom?

FS

First of all, I think all educators want what’s best for their students, but general educators may see the implementation of inclusionary practices as a challenge, which may make them somewhat resistant. Some teachers question if they are prepared for it, which makes them more reluctant, and for some, inclusionary practices may be against their core educational beliefs so this adjustment takes time. However, I think the biggest reason why general education teachers are reluctant about inclusion is because they are not given the opportunities to develop authentic and meaningful relationships with students with special needs. We need to facilitate this.

FS

Schools need to create these opportunities for general education teachers. When teachers see students with special needs as individuals with different personalities, interests, and needs, their attitudes often change. They stop asking themselves if they have the proper training to teach someone with special needs and start to see them as students who need to learn. Schools just have to increase teachers' comfort zone for diversity in the classroom.

CW

How can educators ensure students are prepared for job interviews, the workplace, and upper mobility when there may be social stigmas attached to the way they speak, for instance if their language reflects their culture and not standard American English?

FS

During the webinar, an attendee asked, "As a speech language pathologist working on deficits in syntax, semantics, and morphology with my students, is it appropriate to teach the students how to adjust, or switch, their oral formulation of language to the audience to which they are speaking? Many of my students will say they speak differently in "the hood" than they speak while presenting in class."

I think that's a beautiful answer. Some students may use two or even three of these different languages, but we don't want to denigrate any languages they use. Educators have to understand this is part of the culture, but should also help students learn to use a different language for the workplace, the classroom, and the community.

CW

Is inclusion appropriate at any age level, even preschool? Is there evidence that this works?

FS

Absolutely! One of the phrases I love to use in my training is, "We're no longer arguing whether we should include young children. It's not a matter of IF we get it done, but HOW do we do it well."

CW

In a perfect world, what would special education services look like? Do you think what you describe is possible?

FS

Let's take out the word, "perfect." Let's just say in a world in which we're following quality, research-based practices that are backed by promises of equity and excellence for all students. I see wonderful teachers working toward this every day, but to be candid, striving for this ideal special education model is one of the most challenging things happening in schools today. I think it takes every ounce of administrators' and teachers' creativity and commitment to students, and I believe that schools are already seeing changes in practice and commitment. Principals are sitting down with teachers and really looking at individual student needs and teachers are assessing the quality of their practices.

FS

I do believe it will be a reality at some point, but first, I think there has to be a shift in those core beliefs about general and special education in order to put strategies in place. If teachers don't want to implement inclusion because they don't value it or because they inherently believe that some children shouldn't have access to opportunities to be with their peers even at a social level, then that teacher's willingness and ability to implement great inclusionary teaching practices is diminished.

It was predicted years ago that the least restrictive environment or the inclusion piece of the Individuals with Disabilities Act was going to be the most difficult one to implement, and that's certainly been true.

CW

Let's follow up on that legislative thread. What do you think will be the impact of the new ESSA legislation?

I think ESSA is giving more latitude back to the states and school districts about the accountability measures and timeframes. As much as I supported No Child Left Behind, I did not like the level of tension and stress it created. Educators and therapists were leaving the field because there were some fairly tough and arbitrary standards that were very difficult to meet.

FS

I hope things calm down a bit so educators, administrators, and state departments can really focus on the work to be done, but the one thing I really love about ESSA is that it does not take away the education system's accountability to close the achievement gap for all students. It's still accountable for good teaching, being inclusive, and all of those practices we've come to understand through the previous accountability system. Also, it gives educators some belief that they are not asked to meet certain standards within seemingly impossible timelines.

CW

We've got one more question. Is disproportionately a regional issue or is it a concern across the entire U.S.?

FS

It's a concern across the entire country. I have looked at a state-by-state analysis and we must do it better: North to South, East to West! I urge you to access the latest annual report to Congress on the Individuals with Disabilities Act. It reports on disproportionately by state.



Appendix of Resources

The following resources are shared with permission from Stetson and Associates and provide educators with resources to create culturally responsive classrooms and with strategies to help struggling learners.

Components of a Culturally Responsive Classroom

Check the items that apply:

High Expectations			
	Common Practice	Developing	Needs Assistance
All students have an opportunity to lead a classroom activity			
Teacher has mentors to support learners			
Teacher has posters and/or evidence of minority role models posted around the room			
Teacher recognizes effort and progress in an on-going manner			
Other:			
Supportive Classroom Environment			
	Common Practice	Developing	Needs Assistance
Student artifacts, pictures and relevant cultural materials are displayed all around the room			
Struggling students have mentors from school or community			
Teacher hosts guest lectures from the community to speak to the class			
Student origins, family traditions are rituals reflected in assignments around the room			
Other:			
Culturally Relevant Curriculum			
	Common Practice	Developing	Needs Assistance
Assesses students prior knowledge			
Connects learning to student interests and important events			
Uses visual aids to make explicit key concepts, etc.			
Uses analogies etc., to promote additional links to learning			
Other:			
Teacher as Facilitator			
	Common Practice	Developing	Needs Assistance
Teacher uses a variety of teaching styles (lecture, activity-based, hands-on, etc.)			
Students are seated and working in cooperative groups			
Groups are flexible – students work with new partners for different activities			
Teacher allows students to work using their preferred learning style			
Other:			
Flexible Grouping			
	Common Practice	Developing	Needs Assistance
Teacher has made explicit the learner objective or outcome expected from each group			
Students work in a variety of groups with a purpose			
Teacher has clearly taught behavior expectations for group work			
Teacher is up and around actively monitoring group work			
Other:			

Principles and Applications for Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher

Source: Chartock, R.K. (2010). Culturally responsive teaching: A primer for K-12 teachers. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Teachers who are Culturally Responsive...

✓	Practice
	Use materials and curricula that reflect the students' backgrounds and their needs and interests.
	Display images that might be familiar to students.
	Maintain caring relationships reflecting their understanding of the child's difficulties while not condoning bad behavior.
	View each child as someone who can teach others by bringing their own stories and experiences to the class.
	Provide equal opportunities for all students to fulfill their potential regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, class, and abilities.
	Avoid stereotypes and help students recognize that members of the same group frequently differ in many ways.
	Encourage respect for differences.
	Avoid making assumptions about groups of people and the origins of their cultural characteristics and practices.
	View children not as victims but as unique individuals worthy of respect.
	Help students identify how they are different and alike in terms of their past and present experiences and identities.
	Converse with minority parents and other representatives of cultural groups about how they would like to see their concerns discussed and taught in the schools.
	Teach their students about prejudice and intolerance by discussing their meaning and consequences and how they affect all people, not only the victims but those with the prejudices as well.
	Go beyond teaching historical content and respect for difference by modeling such attitudes in their classrooms.
	Show students ways they can actively work to bring about social justice and equal opportunity for everyone within their school and community.
	Encourage students to keep an open mind, to question, to seek the truth.
	Support cultural pluralism, the idea that people can maintain the unique characteristics of their native culture, or microculture, while at the same time adapting to the common practices and values of the United States, the macroculture.

Who Am I?

Self Portrait	Full Name	My ethnicity race/culture
	My hobbies/ extra-curricular activities	Graduating class
	Birthday	My family
An accomplishment I am proud of		Places I have lived
I have never:	Where I spend my time	FAVORITE
Most memorable recent event		
Qualities of a good math teacher	Favorite childhood memory	
TV Show		
Music/ Radio Station		
Book/ Magazine		Food
Sport/ Team		Class/ Subject
Color		Movie

Student Interest Survey

Elementary Version

1. What do you like about school? Why?
2. What don't you like about school? Why?
3. What is the easiest thing for you at school? Why?
4. What is difficult for you at school? Why?
5. I learn best when I _____.
6. In my family, I am best at _____.
7. I enjoy school most when _____.
8. What is your favorite thing to do after school?
9. What do you want to be when you grow up?
10. What should your teachers know about you that would make it easier for them to teach you?

Student Interest Survey

Secondary Version

The following worksheet is a very pragmatic tool to help you find out and understand what interests you, what makes you tick, and more specifically, to appreciate yourself as a unique person. Just be honest and have fun!

1. Three words that describe me are _____.
2. Things I like to do when I am not at school are _____.
3. The subject I do best at in school is _____.
4. I would like to learn more about _____.
5. Someday, I would like to _____.
6. Learning is fun when _____.
7. If I could do anything I wanted at school, it would be _____.
8. I like to get praise for _____.
9. At school, when I had done something well, I like to be acknowledged by _____.
10. I wonder a lot about _____.
11. I like people who _____.
12. Sometimes, I worry about _____.
13. I learn best when _____.
14. One thing that really bothers me is _____.
15. Something that really challenges me is _____.
16. One thing I know about myself is _____.

Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms

- Have students bring artifacts from home that reflect their culture
- Invite community members to speak to the class about issues of interest, or to guest lecture or provide a demonstration related to the curriculum
- Ask students to write about family traditions or research the origins of their community
- Attend community events that are important to the students
- Post photos of students around the room
- Provide sections of the classroom for selection of books relevant to the curriculum in several reading levels
- Provide reference materials in a section of the room and allow students to check them out for home use
- Provide the opportunity for higher and lower levels of movement and conversation in the classroom

BUILDING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

HOW DO YOU RATE YOURSELF ON ...	IN PLACE	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
Letting students know that you are aware of and interested in them as individuals?		
Conveying your experiences and confidence that each student can meet well-defined standards of values and demands for competence and can follow guidance toward solutions or problems?		
Enhancing the academic expectations and evaluations that parents or guardians hold for their children's ability?		
Serving as a model of sensitivity and high ideals for each student?		
Taking every opportunity to establish effective private or semi-private communications with students?		
Encouraging students to express their opinions and ideas?		
Conveying to students concern and interest for their needs?		
Making certain the classroom climate is inviting physically and emotionally?		
Exhibiting enthusiasm for learning tasks and for the students?		
Interjecting humor into the school?		
Making a concerted effort to interact with each student?		
Encouraging student to praise their peers?		
Setting realistic but challenging expectations for students?		
Showing a desire to learn more about the various cultures represented in your school?		
Providing opportunities for all students to shine?		
Working with each student to establish goals, develop strengths, and overcome weaknesses?		
Listening actively. Recognizing each response and question?		
Using self-disclosure appropriately. Carefully considering what you post.		
Letting your students interview you at the beginning of the year.		

BUILDING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

HOW DO YOU RATE YOURSELF ON ...	IN PLACE	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
Understanding that parental involvement should encompass more than at-home responsibilities?		
Relating to parents with an attitude that conveys respect?		
Making positive telephone calls with good news on student behavior?		
Helping parents to understand that your role is to help the child grow in many ways?		
Educating more parents about the school's expectations of them?		
Sharing information with parents that will build understanding, knowledge, and trust?		
Encouraging parents to become a part of established parent organizations?		
Pushing for annual "Family Nights" in your school?		
Finding and using other resource in the community?		
Making use of community role models and mentors?		
Creating partnerships with community businesses and other youth-serving organizations, agencies, or institutions?		

Adapted Reproducible from: Kuykendall, C. (2004). *From rage to hope: Strategies for reclaiming Black & Hispanic students*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

TYPES OF SCAFFOLDS | INSTRUCTIONAL SCAFFOLDING

SCAFFOLD	WAYS TO USE SCAFFOLDS IN AN INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING
ADVANCE ORGANIZERS	Tools used to introduce new content and tasks to help students learn about the topic: Venn diagrams to compare and contrast information; flow charts to illustrate processes; organizational charts to illustrate hierarchies; outlines that represent content; mnemonics to assist recall; statements to situate the task or content; rubrics that provide task expectations.
CUE CARDS	Prepared cards given to individual or groups of students to assist in their discussion about a particular topic or content area: Vocabulary words to prepare for exams; content-specific stem sentences to complete; formulae to associate with a problem; concepts to define.
CONCEPT AND MIND MAPS	Maps that show relationships: Prepare partially completed maps for students to complete or have students create their own maps based on their current knowledge of the task or concept.
EXAMPLES	Samples, specimens, illustrations, problems: Real objects: illustrative problems used to represent something.
EXPLANATIONS	More detailed information to move students along on a task or in their thinking of a concept: Written instructions for a task; verbal explanation of how a process works.
HANDOUTS	Prepared handouts that contain task- and content-related information, but with less detail and room for student note taking.
HINTS	Suggestions and clues to move students along: “place your foot in front of the other,” “use the escape key,” “find the subject of the verb,” “add the water first and then the acid.”
PROMPTS	A physical or verbal cue to remind—to aid in recall of prior or assumed knowledge. Physical: Body movements such as pointing, nodding the head, eye blinking, foot tapping. Verbal: Words, statements and questions such as “Go,” “Stop,” “It’s right there,” “Tell me now,” “What toolbar menu item would you press to insert an image?,” “Tell me why the character acted that way.”
QUESTION CARDS	Prepared cards with content- and task-specific questions given to individuals or groups of students to ask each other pertinent questions about a particular topic or content area.
QUESTION STEMS	Incomplete sentences which students complete: Encourages deep thinking by using higher order “What if” questions.
STORIES	Stories relate complex and abstract material to situations more familiar with students. Recite stories to inspire and motivate learners.
VISUAL SCAFFOLDS (ALIBALI, 2006)	Pointing (call attention to an object); representational gestures (holding curved hands apart to illustrate roundness; moving rigid hands diagonally upward to illustrate steps or process), diagrams such as charts and graphs; methods of highlighting visual information.

STRATEGY

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

DESCRIPTION

Graphic organizers are visual representations (pictures, colors, words, and connectors) of content, which enable students to better process, remember, organize and demonstrate understanding of information. Graphic organizers:

- Assist visual and kinesthetic learners to better acquire and retain information.
- Requires less writing for students who struggle with written output.
- Can act as an alternative method for note taking.
- Serves as a “memory” mnemonic for remembering information.
- Teaches abstract concepts with more ease, by offering a concrete representation.
- Can act as an alternative assessment tool for students who struggle with essay or short answer problems

EXAMPLE



STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Describe the concept by discussion: the importance of organizing information, the various ways people organize information, the benefits of using a visual organizer.
2. Introduce a specific graphic organizer by describing its purpose (i.e., Venn Diagram for comparing/contrasting) and form (i.e., overlapping circles).
3. Explain and demonstrate the use of the selected organizer with familiar information and then with new content.
4. Let students apply the organizer to familiar information, then to relatively easy new material.
5. Have students reflect on the use of the graphic organizer by sharing their examples and evaluating the effectiveness of the organizer.
6. Provide multiple opportunities for students to practice using the graphic organizer.
7. Encourage students to construct their own organizers.

EXAMPLES

1. Descriptive
2. Time Sequence
3. Process/Cause Effect
4. Episode
5. Generalization/Principle
6. Concept



CAUTIONS

- ➡ Completing graphic organizers should be explicitly taught to students and modeled by teachers.
- ➡ Organizers can be global or very detailed.
- ➡ Organizers are typically a one-page form with blank areas or shapes for the student to fill in with related information.
- ➡ Organizers should increase in complexity as the subject matter becomes more complex.
- ➡ Encourage students to complete the organizer with pictures, words and/or simple connectors that illustrate the relationship of the various parts.

STRATEGY VISUAL SCHEDULES

DESCRIPTION

A visual schedule is a set of pictures or words that communicate a sequence of activities a student is to do independently. The sequence of pictures or words lets the student know the tasks to complete. Visual schedules teach independence and choice making by allowing students to work without having an adult provide continual prompting.

EXAMPLE



CREATE THE SCHEDULE

1. Determine what level of visual symbol the student understands: Object, Photograph, Color Drawing, B&W Line, Symbol, Words
2. Select a format for what it will look like. Ex: Written out, object shelf, picture sequence (vertical/horizontal).
3. Select the tasks that will appear on the student's schedule.
4. If using pictures, create two sets that represent each task. One copy of each picture will go on the student's schedule and the other copy is placed on the activity so that the student can match the pictures.
5. Place a small piece of Velcro on the back of the pictures that will be placed on the student's schedule. The other side of the Velcro is placed on a piece of poster board, cardstock, or other material. The student is expected to move the pictures.
6. Place an envelope or other small container at the end of the schedule board. This is an example of where the student could put the pictures when they finish the tasks.



HOT TIPS

- ➡ Give students choices by letting them select the order of the activities.
- ➡ If a student can read, use words on his/her schedule.
- ➡ If a student can't match pictures, you will need to teach this skill before starting.
- ➡ Visual schedules can also be used to structure the school day so the student always knows what is coming next (like an agenda).

USE THE SCHEDULE

1. Sequence tasks on the schedule in logical order.
2. Make sure all necessary materials are easily accessible to the student.
3. Prompt the student to "Check your schedule."
4. The student moves to his/her schedule, looks at the first picture, gets the materials, completes the activity, puts the picture in the "finished" envelope, and goes to the next picture.
5. If the student stops working or needs prompting, say, "Check your schedule" and prompt his/her back to their schedule until all tasks are completed.

IF A STUDENT HAS DIFFICULTY... Try this!

Area of Difficulty Suggestions

AREA OF DIFFICULTY	SUGGESTIONS
BECOMING INTERESTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell stories which relate to people's lives Establish relevancy or purpose Provide concrete experiences Read aloud story or article to stimulate Seat student close to teacher
COMPLETING TASKS ON TIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce amount to be completed Teach student to maintain a calendar of assignments Use time to define work times Have student keep a journal or log of timelines Allow more time Write schedules Provide checklists ~ individual responsibility checklist for personal use in completing and turning in assignments, detailing when and where Provide periodic closure of key information
DRAWING CONCLUSIONS/ MAKING INFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach thinking skills directly Draw a parallel to a situation that the student might have experienced in problem solving
EXPRESSING HIM/HERSELF IN WRITING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept alternate forms of reporting (e.g. oral report, tape recorded report, tape an interview, maps, photographic essay, panel discussion) Have someone dictate work to someone else Have student prepare only notes or outline in subject Shorten amount required Provide practice with story starters, or open-ended stories
EXPRESSING HIM/HERSELF VERBALLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept alternate forms of information (e.g. written work, art work, exhibit, chart/graph, bulletin board, photos, etc.) Ask questions requiring short answers Provide prompts Give rules for class discussions Teach student to ask questions in class Question at the teaching level Break him/her in gradually "by speaking" in smaller groups Allow taped reports
FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use fewer words Provide examples Repeat Have student repeat Provide checklist Use auditory and visual directions
GETTING STARTED: GIVE CUE TO BEGIN WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give work in smaller amounts Provide immediate feedback/check on progress Sequence work Provide time suggestions Peer or peer tutor

KEEPING TRACK OF MATERIALS/ASSIGNMENTS	Use notebook Use large envelope for each subject Keep extra supplies on hand Provide assignment sheets to resource/CM teacher and parents Have student carry a mail bag Write assignment on board Give rewards for bringing assignments
LEARNING BY LISTENING	Use visuals (graphic organizers, mind mapping, etc.) Use file, flash, or vocabulary cards Have student close his/her eyes and visualize the information Spell by visualizing the whole word Teach use of acronyms Give explanations in small distinct steps Remove extra words (highlighting) Provide study guide
PAYING ATTENTION TO SPOKEN WORD	Give explanations in small distinct steps Provide written back-up to oral directions Use prearranged signal to gain attention Make sure student is facing you when speaking Have student repeat directions Use buddies, tape recorder Shorten the listening time Alternate spoken with written manipulative tasks Look directly at student; place hand on shoulder
PAYING ATTENTION TO PRINTED WORD <small>SOURCE: REGION 16 CONTENT MODIFICATIONS/MESQUITE ISD</small>	Select a text, highlight Underline, number Use highlighting tape Keep desk clear of extras Face desk to wall or use study carrel Overhead transparency
READING TEXTBOOKS	Use lower level or adapted text (if available) Tape text Shorten amount of reading material by highlighting key points, concepts and information (reduced readability) Have students read sections or segments of material aloud in small groups and report out to whole group Allow extra time for reading Omit reading assignments Pair or peer share reading load Place main idea, key concepts and information on index cards Oral tests, quizzes Cooperative group work Pre-teach vocabulary with context of developing concept Give take home tests Use larger type
REMEMBERING <small>SOURCE: REGION 16 CONTENT MODIFICATIONS/MESQUITE ISD</small>	Provide a checklist Provide cues Have student make note to self Teach memory skills Teach use of acronyms and other mnemonic devices

SEEING RELATIONSHIPS	Directly point out relationships Draw arrows on worksheets or tests to show that ideas are related Class discussion Teach directly relations of function, category, opposition, sequence, etc. Provide direct practice Provide headings or a partially filled in chart for an example Use a banner with symbols for ideas/events
SPELLING SOURCE: REGION 16 CONTENT MODIFICATIONS/MESQUITE ISD	Dictate word, ask student to repeat it Teacher short easy words in context Have students make flash/index cards Teach words by spelling patterns Avoid penalizing for spelling errors Post words during study time for constant visual cues Provide a tactile aid to spelling
STAYING ON TASK SOURCE: REGION 16 CONTENT MODIFICATIONS/MESQUITE ISD	Reduce distractions Increase reinforcements Provide checklist Reduce amount of work Give time-out Provide quiet alternatives for a short time Use a timer to set short periods of work
UNDERSTANDING CAUSE/EFFECT; ANTICIPATING CONSEQUENCES	Use concrete examples Use real life situations Teach cause/effect directly (e.g. brainstorming, role playing, etc.) Have students use their imaginations
UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS READ	Reduce the language level (readability) Become more concrete (more examples) Reduce amount of new ideas Provide examples and non-examples Provide experiences for a frame of reference Provide study guide Give organizational help Provided alternate media Remove extra words Use "fill-in-the-blank" techniques
WORKING IN GROUPS	Provide a partner Provide a student with responsibility or position of leadership Provide more structure by defining tasks and listing steps
WORKING INDEPENDENTLY	Assign task at appropriate level (student readiness) Be certain the student can see an end to the task Give precise directions Reinforce often Provide a variety of types of work within the assignment
WRITING LEGIBLY	Use formats that are low on writing (e.g. multiple choice, fill in, programmed) Use manipulatives Have student type, use word processor Allow use of tape recorder Use graph paper Save papers for two weeks and then have student read what he/she wrote Teach writing directly



About Dr. Frances Stetson

Dr. Frances Stetson is President of Stetson & Associates, Inc., an educational consulting firm specializing in supporting systems change in schools with a focus on inclusive practices, closing the achievement gap, differentiated instruction and quality standards for instruction and leadership particularly for struggling learners. She is also the Executive Director and sponsor for the Inclusive Schools Network and website that offer free resources, blogs, and articles on emerging topics in education. Previously, she worked for the Texas Education Agency addressing the needs of students with cognitive challenges; conducted research and national training and technical assistance for the US Department of Education on least restrictive environment/inclusion; and Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the education service center in Houston. After forming Stetson and Associates, Dr. Stetson and her staff have supported thousands of school districts in implementing quality education services across the US.

About Presence Learning

PresenceLearning (www.presencelearning.com) is the leading provider of online speech and occupational therapy, behavioral and mental health services, and assessments for K-12 districts and families of children with special needs. PresenceLearning's nationwide network of online professionals and telehealth providers includes hundreds of highly qualified speech language pathologists (SLPs), occupational therapists (OTs), and behavioral and mental health professionals. Treatment sessions are delivered "anytime anywhere" via live videoconferencing using the latest in evidence-based practices combined with powerful progress reporting.

By partnering with PresenceLearning, schools can fill service gaps related to acute and chronic shortages of special education and related services personnel, reduce high caseloads for onsite personnel, reduce their backlog of assessments, improve student outcomes, and improve efficiency. Since 2009, PresenceLearning has delivered more than 1 million live, online therapy sessions to students in public, charter, and virtual schools across the U.S. and globally, proving that online delivery of special education and related services is practical, convenient, and highly effective.