

Support in the Classroom for Students with Learning Disabilities in Mathematics

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Have you ever had students you just couldn't seem to help? Maybe you thought they were unmotivated or stubborn. Here are some classroom techniques that I have found benefit all types of learners, especially those students who seem to have mathematics learning disabilities.

Create easy to read worksheets and tests

- Create lots of white space on the paper.
- Separate directions from questions, using bold font.
- Use copies with easy to read fonts.
- Allow students to use an index card or sheet to avoid visual overload.

Read directions aloud when written and write directions on board when spoken

- Write large and legibly on the board.
- Use color to focus attention on key points.
- Stay on topic and speak slowly.
- Instead of asking students if they understand a concept, have them explain it back

to you.

- Provide lecture notes, when applicable.

Use grading as an opportunity to teach

- Grade tests with an eye on both computation and comprehension.
- Do not require students to show work unless you give thoughtful partial credit.
- Hand out copies of correctly solved homework problems.
- Have students grade the effort they put into their homework.
- Encourage students to use their mistakes as a chance to discuss their reasoning.

Provide highly structured time

- Maintain a consistent routine with varied activities on a daily basis.
- Administer weekly quizzes that review content from that week.
- Announce tests well in advance. 📅

Problem-Solving Practices

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Problem solving provides a context for applying concepts and skills as well as stimulating discourse. For problem solving to be effective, one needs to prepare adequately as well as facilitate the discourse when solutions are shared.

Smith, Hughes, Engle, and Stein (2009)

have identified five practices to increase the likelihood of getting the most mathematics out of each high-level task that students work on:

1. anticipating students' responses to challenging mathematical tasks;