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A collaborative project of Penrickton Center for Blind Children, Perkins School for the Blind, and Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Points to Guide Teacher Evaluation Discussion

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When beginning an evaluation discussion with an instructor who implements an Active Learning approach for a child under that developmental level of 48 months, consider using some of the following questions to guide the discussion.

Developmental Levels

This approach can be used by all ages, but is especially effective for those at [developmental levels approximately 48 months or younger](#). The answers should reflect these developmental levels in at least several areas. For example, a child with autism might have near age-level motor and cognitive skills but a much younger developmental age for social or emotional skills.

Reflective Discussion

Describe how the developmental levels of your students determine the strategies and materials.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: *(prompt as needed)*

- Evidence supporting developmental levels and specially designed instruction should be presented. (e.g. Active Learning Planning Sheet, FSA, Communication Matrix, Sensory Learning Kit assessment, EMC)
- Look for answers that describe developmental in many areas such as physical, sensory, cognitive, social, and emotional areas.
- Look for information about assessment that has been done to determine these levels.

Primary Learning Pathways

Children with complex developmental needs usually have one or more of their [sensory and motor pathways](#) impaired to some degree, and have preferred channel(s) for learning. For example, a child with visual impairment and hearing loss, might learn best through touch, even if they can use their vision and hearing to support learning.

Reflective Discussion

Describe learning pathways for various students and how they access information.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: *(prompt as needed)*

- Discuss the data and anecdotal evidence used to determine sensory access and learning pathways. *(PLAAFP, reports from the instructional team such as, but not limited to the FVE/LMA, OT/PT reports, SLP reports, audiological report, TODHH communication report, etc.)*
- Provide examples of how you used this information to select **materials**, **equipment**, and activities.

Daily Schedule

*These children need to be **engaged in activities throughout the entire school day**. The schedule should have regularly scheduled self-directed activities to allow time for independent exploration in engaging environments such as time on a Resonance Board with preferred objects, and in therapeutic equipment with equipment like Activity Belts, Wrist Scarves, or Mobiles. Sleeping should be the last option for the child and the team should be utilizing Active Learning strategies to keep the child engaged and build stamina.*

Reflective Discussion

Describe the typical schedule and structure in your classroom.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: *(prompt as needed)*

- Describe time spent in group learning, adult-child learning, and independent learning. *(These children often need more adult-child instruction and independent learning time than that of other children because of their developmental level.)*
- Ask about the number and types of Active Learning activities and environments the child typically works in each day.
- Ask about how related service time incorporates Active Learning.
- Ask about modifications or accommodations made so the child can participate in group activities.

Academic and Functional IEP Goals and Objectives

*At the earliest developmental areas, concept development and the skills development is critical for higher levels of learning to develop. An Active Learning approach can be used to teach any content areas and **align with the standard curriculum**. Children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing should also be working on skills listed in the **Expanded Core Curriculum** areas. Most of these skills are the types of functional skills that any child with significant developmental delays needs to focus on, but some include skills specifically related to their sensory impairments. This might include areas such as orientation and mobility, auditory*

training, or development of tactile skills. (See also [Expanded Core Curriculum under the Implementation](#) section.)

Reflective Discussion

Discuss your students' academic and functional IEP goals and objectives.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: (prompt as needed)

- IEP goals in areas of the standard curriculum that are part of instruction such as reading, math, science, social studies.
- IEP goals that focus on social and emotional development and any behavioral challenges.
- IEP goals that focus on ECC areas such as activities of daily living, orientation and mobility, communication, recreation and leisure.

Developmental Progress

If the activities are at the student's developmental level and the instructors are using the appropriate educational treatment ([Five Phases](#)) there should be progress. If not, the activities and environments should be evaluated to determine if they are appropriate for the child's developmental level and preferences.

Reflective Discussion

Describe the progress made by your students.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: (prompt as needed)

- Does the child have plenty of opportunities to practice skills throughout the day and in a variety of environments?
- How is the team documenting progress? Can the instructor produce observation forms, video clips, or anecdotal records to document progress? (You may want to suggest some of these [forms](#) if they are not.)
- Are there areas where progress is not being observed, and how is the team addressing these?

Training and Support Needs

The teacher should have accessed training via [online](#) or in-person training. Support might include additional training for the teacher, the paraprofessional, or other team members including family members. It might also include support to explain the approach to the [family](#) and gain their buy-in. It might include facilities support, additional space or storage, or funds to purchase assistive technology or materials.

Reflective Discussion

Describe the training and support you have had and what you still need.

During the discussion, the teacher should address these points: (prompt as needed)

- [Setting up the classroom](#) and finding space for using and storing equipment can be a challenge. What support can you offer if this is an issue?
- Completing the [Functional Scheme](#) is an important part of using an Active Learning approach. The [team may need support in completing the assessment](#) and updating it regularly. Does the team have a strategy to complete the assessment collaboratively? (Note: this assessment may take a month or more to complete the first time, but updating the document can happen easily and serve as regular reporting with the Functional Scheme summary page.)
- Time for the team to meet regularly every month to six weeks to look at progress, discuss challenges, and plan collaboratively is important. What amount of time has been set up for this to happen? Is the family kept abreast of these meetings and do they have the opportunity to participate?
- The [purchase of some equipment](#) can be costly, but it should be considered as any [assistive technology](#) need is considered. Materials and [homemade equipment](#) are not as expensive, but take time to build. Can you offer some support to help with these needs?



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