



RESEARCH ROUND-UP

Staff Spotlight **Kim B**

Strategy: Visual Supports for Reading Horizons

- What made you choose this strategy?
The Reading Horizons Reading program is a great program to help children learn how to read and decode words using various marks and rules when looking at the words. I chose to make the visual for Reading Horizons in the clear plastic sleeves for each child because there are so many visuals that are used with this reading program. As a new lesson is taught there is typically a new visual added. Initially we were putting the visuals on each child's desk but there were starting to be too many visuals and too much clutter for the visual aids to be effective. By having all of the visuals needed for Reading Horizons in one place the kids are able to quickly find the visual they need. As the children learn a new skill I add it to the clear sleeve.



An example of Kim's visual support will be available in the PD Google Classroom

Instructional Strategy

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- How have students responded?
The way I have seen the kids respond is that some kids feel they don't need a visual and don't want to show that they are using one. All of the visuals used in Reading Horizons are on the bulletin board near the area where we have reading lessons and they don't want to be obvious when looking up at the board. With the clear sleeve on their desk right next to their whiteboard they are able to subtly look at it and find the answer they need.
- What changes, if any, would you make to this in the future?
The changes I would make would be to find something similar to the clear sleeves that are large enough to hold all of the visuals but not be too large to fit on the children's desks

Is one of your co-workers using research-based strategies in the classroom or school?
Click here to nominate them for next month's Staff Spotlight!

Response Cards

Rationale

Students with ASD and ID in self-contained settings rarely get to participate in whole- or small-group lessons. Without these opportunities, our students do not get to learn from their peers or practice instructional adaptation skills. A strategy that may help with participation of students with disabilities is response cards. Officially defined as “any item that can be held up by every student in class as a means to responding to a question,” response cards are a form of choral responding (Narayan et al., 1990, p. 484). They involve a pre-printed or written card that allows the student to respond to questions during instruction.

Response cards may impact a variety of outcomes such as sustaining engagement and functioning as a formative assessment. When implemented as intended, response cards allow for teachers to ensure participation from all students and identify students who may need extra support in the acquisition or comprehension of the target skill.

Steps to Implement

Before the lesson...

1. Choose response options (e.g., yes/no; 1, 2; red/green)
2. Make cards with corresponding response options. Use note cards or print front to back.
3. Plan for the questions you will ask.

During the lesson...

1. Teach students how to use them
2. Given them an opportunity to practice using them.
3. Prompt students to use them to answer the questions you planned.



Example picture from thinkbiglearning.net

Research Studies

Bondy and Tincani (2018) evaluated the effects of response cards for three elementary students with ID in a self-contained setting. Response card binders were made for each participant and partial physical prompts (i.e., gently push elbow toward binder) were used when the student did not respond within 5 seconds of the question. Using an ABAB reversal design, frequency data, and accuracy data, they found a functional relation between the use of response cards and higher rates of participation and correct responses. The teacher from the study reported that it easily fit into her schedule and that she would most likely continue to use it.

Goodnight et al., (2021) found similar results in inclusive classrooms for general education students with disruptive behaviors. Response cards for this study were preprinted, laminated cards with the options A, B, C, and D. The students were supplied with a clothespin with which they clipped to the answer to hold up their card. Using 10-s partial interval and frequency data, the study's ABAB reversal design found a functional relation between response cards and participation, but it did not impact rates of disruptive behavior in the classroom, indicating that other behavior supports may be necessary. Students in this study reported the use of response cards as fun!

**You can find all studies cited
here in the Research Database
AirTable!**

Positive Language

Rationale

Students with ASD may engage in challenging behaviors. In a systematic review of emotional regulation skills, Cibralic et al. (2019) found that students with ASD rely more on others than their peers and may need more specific behavioral feedback in order to learn the skill necessary to help regulate their emotions throughout the school day. Staff should be prompting students using positively word phrases that reinforce the replacement or alternative behavior, rather than telling them what not to do to avoid punishment (Kern et al., 2013). This strategy has the potential to increase replacement behaviors and reinforce skills taught throughout school.

Research Studies

This strategy aligns most with Positive Behavior Supports. An alternative school serving students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) use of PBS resulted in a 99.5% decrease in physical restraints (i.e., 233 in the first 40 days of school to 1 in the final 40 days of school (George et al., 2013). PBS has also been proven effective in general education settings. Lassen et al. (2006) worked with an urban, middle school to implement the strategy. Over 3 years, the school significantly decreased ODRs and suspension, while increasing academic performance on state tests. They also gained approximately 659 hours of instructional time back.

Steps to Implement

1. Identify the problem behavior.
2. Determine why the problem behavior exists (i.e., function).
3. Determine the replacement behavior (i.e., what the student should be doing instead).
 4. If needed, teach the replacement behavior.
5. Immediately reinforce when student engages in replacement behavior.

Say This!	Not This!
Sit down.	Don't stand.
Please use your materials appropriately.	Stop throwing things.
Use a quiet, raised hand	No calling out.
Use appropriate language.	Don't swear.
Keep your hands and feet to yourself.	Stop fighting.
Let's use respectful language toward people.	We do not call people mean names.

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Key Points

- People with Autism care about how they are represented.
- Lack of representation can lead to adverse effects.

Considerations

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“Find books that...

- Portray ASD as a characteristic or part of a person's identity.
- Include a character's strengths
- Describe social communication and interaction as challenges.
- Unpack the characteristics through dialogue and inner thoughts of the [represented person].
- Describe the character's restrictive and/or repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities with a balance of communication and social interaction.
- Show wide diversity.
- Students can make connections with.
- Portray all genders.
- Provide authentic awareness.
- Show ways the reader can be an advocate.

Avoid books that...

- Portray ASD as a deficit or as a superpower.
- Include characters that are geniuses only or have extreme behaviors.
- Underplay social communication.
- Include stereotyped depictions
- Overemphasize the restrictive and repetitive behaviors/activities/interests.
- Rely heavily on sensory aspects of ASD
- Use stereotypes about specific populations
- Portray specific populations as lesser.
- Show how to be a savior.
- Focus on 'fixing' the 'problem' (i.e., ASD).”

What Works for Me
Melinda Leko, Associate Editor

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Representation Matters: Integrating Books With Characters With Autism in the Classroom

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Abstract

Increased awareness of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has come with an increase in books that depict individuals with ASD. However, media representation of disabilities could be misguided. To integrate literature in the classroom that helps students better understand the population of ASD, carefully choosing quality books (e.g., narrative fiction) with authentic depictions that do not perpetuate negative stereotypes is essential. The tools and criteria presented for educators help them evaluate and select books for their classrooms or as recommendations to others. The article includes a set of guidelines that help educators facilitate proper consideration for representations of characters with ASD, including the essential and more profound components of their strengths with a positive view of diversity in mind.

Keywords

autism spectrum disorder, ASD, fiction book, literature, representation

Selecting fictional books for students that are authentic and represent a specific population is an important consideration for educators. Educators are also asked by parents, community members, and people in general to suggest books that could help children or adults better understand a specific topic or population. Autism awareness gained momentum in 1999 with the autism awareness puzzle piece ribbon, similar to the breast cancer awareness ribbon; however, the puzzle piece depiction in and of itself causes a rift among people with autism because they feel the puzzle misrepresents autism (Gernsbacher et al., 2018; McGuire & Michalko, 2011). Although the ribbon controversy is beyond the scope of this article, it does bring to light that people with autism care deeply about how they are represented. They are concerned with the intended and unintended messages embedded within a symbol.

Similarly, with the enhanced awareness of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), there was an increase in books that depict people or children with autism, yet many books misrepresent ASD. Each year, there are approximately 3,500 to 4,000 newly published children's and young adult books. Although book reviewers try to review as many books as possible, it may be difficult to find reviews of books and/or

to find reviews by people who are familiar with ASD. As such, the purpose of this column is to provide educators with the tools to evaluate and select books that they can use in their classrooms and recommend to others.

Representation Matters

In the iconoclastic study “The All-White World of Children's Books,” Larrick (1965) verified that there was a shortage of children's literature with African American characters. Larrick argued that the overrepresentation of white characters could have adverse effects for children of all racial groups. More than two decades later, Bishop (1982) found similar results and maintained that children need to see themselves (i.e., mirrors) in children's literature, as well as

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Is there a strategy or practice you want to know more about?

Click the box to the right to submit a recommendation for a future Research Round-Up!

