



Along the Spectrum

Tazewell Mason Counties Special Education Association

So you have a student with autism in your classroom, NOW WHAT?

First: Become a relevant person in the student's life.

- Find out what motivates and reinforces the student. This will help with motivation!
- Build a relationship with the student by: spending time doing activities the child likes, show interest in their life and activities, find reinforcement that the student likes.
- Building rapport with a student with autism may be different than with other students.
- Use special interests to increase motivation to learn. Paula Kluth's book Just Give him the Whale has lots of great ideas for using special interests in a variety of ways.
- Students with autism have DIFFERENT types of motivation, and until you discover it, it will difficult to prompt the student to complete work.
- If there is no reinforcer, there is no lesson!
- Use If/Then visual - not just for task completion, but also for general classroom expectations. Token systems, "I am working for" visual at all different levels (pictures, words, tallies, etc. can be used to help children understand the expectations and the subsequent reinforcer.

Second: Provide structure in the environment and work assignments.

- Students with autism need work and tasks designed with simple structure.
- When giving students with autism work, answer the following questions as specifically as you can:
 - What do I have to do?
 - How much do I have to do (amount, length)?
 - How will I know when I am finished?
 - What do I get or do next?
- Structure the environment with specific "to do" and "all done" locations, which can be very simple for younger children or more complicated for middle or high school students.

Third: Stop the verbal! Go visual!

- Use visual schedules to help the child learn the sequence of the activity or routine.
- Understand the child's representational level - do they require objects, photos, line drawings, or written words?
- Determine a way to show changes to the schedule - KEEP IT SIMPLE!
- Use teacher photos, especially for the beginning of the year. Remember PE, music, library, etc.
- Other visual supports include: calendars, class routines (especially useful for older children who change classes - can they talk with peers when entering the class, or are they expected to read or start work?), checklists, change cards, cue cards (Raise hand, Wait for teacher to stop talking before speaking)
- Provide a warning that a transition is coming. If your student has difficulty ending or changing activities, use a countdown card to help them know that the end of an activity is coming.

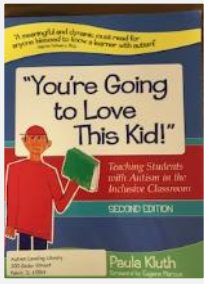
Fourth: Accommodations

- There are a wide variety of accommodations that are useful for assignments, tests, and adaptations for work completion. Some examples include: using a green dot at the start of a worksheet and a red dot at the end, use sticky notes to list the steps of an activity with a check of box next to each, use highlighters to let students know what to read or what work needs to be completed
- Homework: discuss homework options with the child's IEP team.
- Identify the purpose of the homework
- Identify a reasonable amount of time the student should spend on homework (TIME VS COMPLETION)
- Recognize that homework is a family activity and some families cannot do homework
- Para-educator proximity - it is important for students to not become dependent on the para-educator assigned to work with them. Utilize a step in/step out approach to reduce dependence.

Highlights from TMCSEA Lending Library

These are just two terrific resources from the TMCSEA Lending Library. For more information on resources and how to check them out, please visit the TMCSEA website: www.tmcsea.org

The Autism Lending Library is located at Schramm Educational Center, 300 Cedar Street, Pekin, IL 61554. There are over 100 titles that can be checked out to member district staff. Contact Jessica Willoby, Receptionist/Secretary Schramm Educational Center. Visit the lending library website: Autism Lending Library



“You’re Going to Love this Kid” by Paula Kluth, provides concrete examples of how to plan lessons, engineer a safe and comfortable classroom, provide communication opportunities, and support challenging behaviors. Paula Kluth explores pragmatic ways of making schools safe, challenging and accessible for students on the autism spectrum. The book includes reproducible forms, checklists, & photos.

“Tasks Galore” is a series of books using full color photos to help teachers, parents and therapists apply structured teaching techniques to a variety of settings, including group activities, early childhood/ elementary and adolescent/adult programs. View the website for more information at www.TasksGalore.com



Special Education Resource Share Facebook Group From Positively Autism

If you sell your special education teaching materials online (such as on TPT), I'm starting a Facebook group where we can share our products and freebies, as well as our social media pages. I'm a member of some similar groups for general education, but I haven't found one just for special education, so I thought I'd start one. I'd love to have you join us! [Here's the link.](#)

Upcoming Events

Autism Awareness 5K Race and Walk on Saturday, October 21st. For info and registration visit <http://autismpeoria.com/autism-5k-walk/>

TMCSEA is hosting Carol Gray's Not Your Mother's Social Stories in November.
See link below for more information

http://www.tmcsea.org/uploads/1/3/9/8/13988756/carol_gray_flyer.pdf

helpful
RESOURCES

Autism Preparation Kit for Teachers:

www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/Eligibility%20Areas/Autism/autismpreparationkitforteacherspdf.pdf