

Activities for the Classroom

Facilitator's Notes

The following is a list of strategies and activities, which can enhance the participation and learning for the student with severe multiple disabilities within regular classroom activities.

1. ___ **Object Cues:** Pair familiar objects prior to and throughout an activity. Place it in the finished bin/box at the end of the activity. This builds familiarity for choice making.
(Refer to the information on Calendar Box or Sequence Box in handout)
2. ___ **Verbal Input:** Talk to the student about upcoming activities as well as what he/she is currently doing. Label activities and objects the student is engaged with to also continue to build receptive language; keep language simple and don't bombard with instructions or prompts
3. ___ **"More" Concept:** Periodically stop activities, which the student is enjoying and ask student if he/she wants more. Reinforce any vocalizations, gestures or facial expressions your student may use to indicate wish to continue.
4. ___ **Choice Making:** Incorporate choice making for familiar activities and objects at some point in the activity. This may involve single or multiple object or picture choices. We all need to have choice in our lives. (Refer to the sample Choice making list and data collection handout)
5. ___ **Backward Chaining:** For students who are learning new skills, involve them in the end of the activity for their partial participation; in this way, they will experience the success of completing the task; gradually move backwards with expectations for the student to do more of the task.
6. ___ **Multi-sensory Feedback:** "Beef up" or increase the variety of sensory feedback for the student by combining interesting visual with tactile and auditory experiences, within routine activities.
7. ___ **Switch use:** Build in opportunities for the student to use a switch with the AbleNet Powerlink and for voice output (Refer to the handouts for using the BIGmack or Step-by-Step Communicator: "Let The Switch Do The Talking" and for switch use "Using A Switch In Elementary School").

Activity: Demonstration of a fun and functional activity using the BIGmack/Step by Step and for the Powerlink.

8. ___ **Time To Respond:** Give the student time to respond by counting silently and slowly to 10. Your student needs time to process directions as well as get his/her body to do what he/she wants it to do.

9. ___ **Vision:** Provide expectations for some use of the student's vision within real and functional activities rather than in isolation (e.g., looking at objects in his/her hands.)
10. ___ **Peer Involvement:** Involve a peer in a one-to-one situation by having the peer reinforce at least one of the skills the student is working on. Share the skills sheet with peers.
11. ___ **Functional Hand Use or Participation:** Build in opportunities, where possible, for the student to grasp an object at some point during the activity (e.g., grasping the tangible symbol.)
(Refer to the "Functional Arm & Hand Activities" handout)
12. ___ **Graduated Prompts:** How to prompt students with the least obtrusive prompting (both verbal and physical); how to avoid hand-over-hand assistance while still assisting.
(Refer to the "Graduated Prompt Sample" in your handout)
13. **Motivators:** Try to build in some of the following motivating components into activities where possible:
- music?
 - favourite people?
 - vibrations, sounds, colours?
 - movement?
 - praise (with animated voice)?
 - humour (with animated voice)?
- Activity: share with a partner something you enjoyed doing as a child that you do now.
(Refer to the sample motivators with age appropriate activities in your handout)

Conclusion

Encourage participants to develop their own "Excellent Activity Checklists" for specific students, with input from their OT, PT, and S-LP therapists and any itinerants (e.g., vision or hearing). These checklists should be student-specific and can be a great tool to share with assistants and new classroom teachers.

Note: for switch and voice output handouts that have applications for middle school, secondary, or adulthood go to the Curriculum & Strategy section on the Inclusion Outreach website <http://www.inclusionoutreach.ca>