

Supporting Learners with Special Needs Competencies & Evidence

Participants will:

Identify how the structures of Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTII), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) support all students.

Develop an understanding of general assistive technology, supports and accommodations to support student reading needs.

Develop an understanding of how children learn to read and areas where some children have difficulty.

Develop the ability to use simple diagnostic flow charts to help determine an instructional focus based on data.

Determine district/school needs and next steps.

Evidence of Learning:

Connect key components of RtII, UDL and LRE as supports for struggling students.

List general assistive technology, accommodations, scaffolds, and supports for a variety of student needs.

Explain key components of learning to read and areas where students may have difficulty.

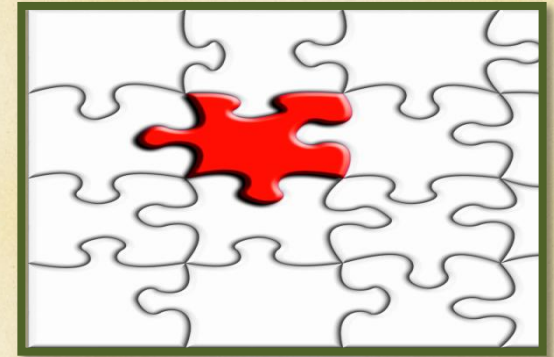
Explain steps through a simple diagnostic flow chart, using sample student data.

Reflect on new learning and complete next steps in an action plan to increase achievement in reading for students with special needs.

Supporting Learners with Special Needs and KtO

As per the KtO grant's *Absolute Priority 1: Improving Learning Outcomes*, an educational priority for Pennsylvania is improving literacy outcomes for disadvantaged students, birth through Grade 12. Children with diagnosed disabilities are included (p. 2).

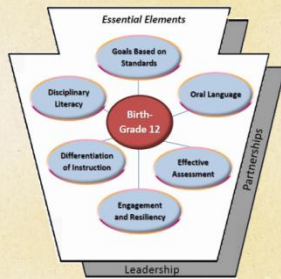
- Sub-grantees are required to link the purchase of technology to specific learning goals or outcomes based on student data (C, p.9). This involves the use of technology as a learning tool, leveling the playing field for all students. (e.g. digital technology to enlarge fonts and/or convert text to speech)
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is used as a blueprint for creating instructional tools that work for everyone (p. 10).
- Training for supporting learners with special needs will focus on UDL as a technique. Research-based strategies that are linked to improvements in student assessment outcomes are emphasized. In addition, research related to inclusion as well as accommodations for various exceptionalities will be explored (p. 23).



Supporting Learners with Special Needs Connections

Students with reading difficulties can increase their ability to read and comprehend text.

- *The framework of Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII), coupled with*
- *instruction from educators with high expectations for all students*
- *in the least restrictive environment,*
- *knowledge of reading instruction and data,*
- *and the supports provided through UDL offer a comprehensive approach to foster students' success.*



The Pennsylvania Comprehensive Literacy Plan

There must be **high expectations** for all learners and a **belief** that all are capable of gaining literacy skills that enable them to be successful as adults. Instruction must address the full range of learners, must be differentiated to meet each child's needs, and requires a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education.

PA Common Core and Supporting Learners with Special Needs

Keystones to Opportunity:

Pennsylvania's Vision for
Sustainable Growth in Reading
Achievement

1.1 Foundational Skills (Pre K – 5).....

Students gain a working knowledge of concepts of print, alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions. These foundational skills are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they apply them as effective readers.

1.2 Reading Informational Text.....

Students read, understand, and respond to informational text – with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence.

1.3 Reading Literature.....

Students read and respond to works of literature - with emphasis on comprehension vocabulary acquisition, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

1.4 Writing.....

Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

1.5 Speaking and Listening

Students present appropriately in formal speaking situations, listen critically, and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions.

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Supporting Learners with Special Needs

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