

Writing

Department: Speech and Language

Priority: Core Class with High Priority

Overall purpose of class:

This is a highly diverse and individualized class designed to accommodate students with a wide variety of needs. Tasks are designed to build on language through the graphic modality. The main categories of purposes directly addressed are:

1. Hand dexterity and endurance
2. Writing legibility
3. Reinforcing language skills such as word retrieval both in writing and speaking.
4. Problem solving
5. Thought organization, planning problem solving especially for those with right brain deficits.

Number of classes held per week:

Daily

Optimum class time:

Can be held anytime

Instructor requirements:

One instructor. However, since each student has a folder with graduated individualized materials, interns are utilized to create, maintain and update each student's packet. Packets are updated weekly.

Number of students:

Maximum at the Center is 12, ideal class size is 8

Student ability range and limitations:

This class can accommodate a wide range of abilities. Each student is working at his or her own pace on materials that have been selected for their individual skill level.

Space and Equipment requirements:

Table and chairs with good ergonomic consideration. Posture is very important in the class. Good lighting is essential. Adapted materials are provided including larger pencils and specialized pens with cushioned holders. Adaptations are provided on an individual basis after consultation with the Center's occupational therapist.

Student Needs to be met from the perspective of the instructor:

After evaluation period, the multidisciplinary team recommends that students be placed in this class who can benefit from increased:

- Legibility
- Endurance for hand activities
- Word retrieval skills
- Thought organization and problem solving
- Abstract reasoning
- Flexible thinking
- Attention and concentration

Typical Student Goals that lead to placement in the class:

Students who request this class typically inform the counselor and speech therapist that they want to write fluidly and legibly. Many need to learn to write with the non-dominant hand, while others find that their writing has deteriorated even if their dominant side is unaffected.

Letters, grocery lists and check writing are frequently mentioned as critical needs. Those whose speech is seriously affected, but who have language that can be expressed with written words often request this class to improve legibility and speed.

Suggested Lessons and Activities:

Individualized Packets are assembled for each student in the class and updated weekly. Students come to class, pick up their packet and work individually. Each class always concludes with a group summary experience drawn from what each person in the class was doing during the period. This brings the group together making the activities of the class a universal task experience.

Individual Packets are comprised of materials drawn from four different collections of worksheets:

1. Activities that foster practice in legibility.
2. Basic cognition tasks—easy puzzles and mental challenges that require writing.
3. Advanced cognition tasks and activities.
4. Written tasks designed to facilitate language skills for students with aphasia.