

High Incidence Educational Disabilities

Specific Learning Disability	
<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May see letters and numbers in different positions • May confuse left-right • May have difficulty distinguishing important objects from their backgrounds (leads to skipping words or confusing lines) • May be able to decode but have trouble with comprehension • May not be able to initiate or sustain conversation • May have difficulty communicating their thoughts through speech • May not be able to answer specific questions • May have difficulty understanding what others say to them and following directions • May have difficulty storing and retrieving information • May have difficulty distinguishing subtle differences in sounds • May hear something different from what a speaker actually says • May confuse sounds from several sources • May take longer to process the meaning of what is heard 	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May utilize auditory or kinesthetic/tactile to support instruction • May increase understanding with the accompaniment of verbal, written, and visual instructions and cues • May experience success with technology • May attend to lectures and progress when given visual supports (outlines, graphic organizers) • May increase understanding through the utilization of manipulatives when learning abstract concepts • May have strong receptive skills • May exhibit excellent responses to timely and structured speech interventions • May experience advancement when learning is coordinated between school and home environments • May experience gains with modeling, rewards for approximations, and meaningful praise • May progress when communication skills are combined with visuals and technology such as interactive white boards and word processing programs that include graphics • May understand better when allowed to intermittently paraphrase • May exhibit increase auditory responses when eye contact is established with the speaker • May make progress when metacognitive strategies are learning and applied
Speech or Language Impairment	
<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have trouble understanding directions • May have trouble understanding lengthy and/or complex language • May have trouble expressing and/or organizing thoughts and ideas • May have trouble formulating questions • May have difficulty understanding curriculum vocabulary • May have trouble clearly articulating speech or speaking fluently • May have trouble modulating speaking volume • May be reluctant to speak or participate in oral discussions/presentations • May have difficulty engaging in conversation/chit chat with peers • May be reluctant to ask for clarification or assistance 	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May experience gains with visual support for orally presented information • May respond better to instructions that are broken down into smaller steps • May respond better to instructions with simplified syntax • May respond better to small group discussions than large group instruction • May be more responsive when provided with time to formulate thoughts or ideas • May be more successful with teacher modeling • May participate more successfully with opportunities to respond in short phrases

Autism	
<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be resistant to change • May have difficulty in expressing needs • May have difficulties with social and pragmatic language • May laugh or cry for reasons not apparent to others • May prefer to be alone; display an aloof manner • May display anxiety and agitation • May have difficulty with reciprocal social interactions • May have hypersensitivity to sensory input (touch, noise, lights, etc.) • May have little or no eye contact • May display idiosyncratic play or leisure activities • May have obsessive attachment to objects and interest in specific topics • May have over-sensitivity or under-sensitivity to pain • May have no awareness of danger • May have noticeable physical over-activity or extreme under-activity • May have difficulty with written expression • May have difficulty responding to verbal cues and novel directions 	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have focused interests • May be able to continue ongoing tasks • May respond to directed social play through structured group play • May follow routines well when there is consistency in scheduling • May achieve understanding through concrete experiences • May have an affinity for tactile stimulation such as differences in texture • May benefit from step-by-step explanations • May benefit when academics are related to life skills • May benefit from additional time to process verbal input
Other Health Impaired (e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)	
<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have trouble controlling muscle or motor activity • May be constantly on the move • May flit from task to task without finishing anything • May persevere on one task in which they have found success, ignoring other responsibilities • May be unable to differentiate between important and unimportant stimuli • May be disorganized • May not be able to follow process in an orderly fashion • Attention may be diverted from task 	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be responsive to immediate teacher feedback • Most often has the ability to move and learn • Usually thrives in a non-threatening environment • Usually possesses good cognitive levels • May benefit from guided practice and modeling of appropriate behaviors • Usually can multitask in a well-organized environment • May learn well with kinesthetic activities • May benefit from color coding or notebooks and texts

Adapted from:

Winebrenner, Susan (1996) *Teaching Kids with Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom, Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Challenge & Motivate Struggling Students*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Free Spirit Publishing.

Karten, Toby J. (2007) *More Inclusion Strategies That Work! Aligning Student Strengths with Standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.