



The Coastline Newsletter

holiday 2006
volume XXVI #2

Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System/East serving Brevard & Volusia Counties

Low Tech COLOR

By Judi Sweeney

Onion Mountain Technology, Inc.

The most important lesson I share during my presentations on color involves the simplest “truth” behind color use – **incorporating color into your student’s program doesn’t have to be expensive or high tech.** We can use and adapt with color with some very simple accommodations. Colored notebook paper, colored ink, highlighters, highlighting tapes, light pens, colored copy paper, colored light bulbs (often called party lights), colored saran wrap or cellophane, report covers or overhead transparencies – all can work and make a difference. A number of creative and color conscious regular education teachers start working with a rainbow selection of colored copying papers. They copy the daily worksheet on all the different colors and allow the students to choose whichever one they want. Many students start by choosing their favorite color, but then they look over to a neighbor’s paper and find that it is much easier to read. Within a few weeks, even young children know which color works best for them. The teacher knows to copy by the numbers – 5 blue, 6 white, 3 pink... We ask them to remember that the issue is not the material but the use of color.

Color can also be involved with color-coding for helping students organize and find the correct materials or information. With different color highlighters, page markers, highlighter tapes, folders, pencils, and book covers, students have the ability to match a color to a category. We know this works because research indicates that people have better memory for color than for text. One student might assign a color to each course – all notebooks and supplies for math are red, everything needed for science is green. Another student might color code their note taking. Something highlighted in yellow is unknown vocabulary, red indicates important concepts, and blue signifies vital names or dates. What is most important is consistency with the colors and meaningfulness to the student. If you want to learn more about this topic, you might enjoy an article explaining a very sophisticated color coding system for note-taking developed by a college student with an acquired brain injury.

(http://www.oswego.edu/~mregan1/color_of_learning.htm)

Color and You

Still having trouble believing that color can make such a tremendous difference? Before you walk away in doubt, take a look at one more example showing just what a difference a different colored background can make when you are trying to read text. The following link takes you to several pdf screens from a color presentation I do. (Click on the Color Filter Comparisons link at this web page from our website: <http://www.onionmountaintech.com/assistive/php>). When you have looked at the texts through all the different color filters and have found the one (or two) that make the text hardest for you to read, stop. Imagine just for a second that this is what black text on a white background might look like to one of your students. No wonder that student is having problems learning how to read! Don’t you owe him or her the chance to experience reading through simple color change?

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How to Capture Student Attention

Source:

Secrets of the Teenage Brain: Research-Based Strategies for Reaching and Teaching Today's Adolescents
by Sheryl Feinstein

By introducing novelty, engaging the senses, and arousing curiosity, any teacher can capture his/her students' attention. Vary the pace and inflection of your voice, dress with varying style, circulate around the room, use different colored chalk, bring something from home to decorate your desk, or add a scent. Change where students sit or surprise them with a hands-on activity.

Be aware of annoying or repetitive manners that you may have. For example, throat-clearing, injecting "um" in your lecture, or fidgeting with your jewelry or clothes. Videotaping yourself presenting a lesson provides invaluable insight into your style of teaching. You would not want your students to spend their time focused on how many times you said "okay" or tapped your pen on the desk.

Things to Try

- Show a comic strip or a few minutes of a television cartoon to put a smile on their faces.
- Tell a riddle: How many teenagers does it take to screw in a light bulb? (One answer is: One to screw in the bulb, one to shake the ladder and one to order a pizza. You could have students take a minute or two to write their own punch lines, too).
- Play a song from a popular CD and ask them why they like it – inquiring about their interest will capture their attention.
- Show a video of a Gap commercial – it's the last thing they'll expect!
- Have every one of your students find a place at the board and start listing all the words that describe what they learned that week.
- Share a story from your own middle school or high school days. Students will connect with you on a personal level and, if told well, the story will draw emotion into the classroom.



- Bring in candy as a writing prompt. You could have students create metaphors for the candy out of class content while they munch and chew.
- Pass around clay, feathers, or pieces of packing foam; hands-on objects arouse curiosity and activate the tactile senses.
- Move the location of your desk periodically. In fact, move everything periodically. Change not just students' seats but also the actual desk arrangement a few times a year.
- Read a poem by Shel Silverstein or Emily Dickinson to set a mood and engage emotions.
- Start a service project for immigrant adolescents in your community. The opportunity to contribute directly towards helping a peer is meaningful, specific and unique. The idea will pique their interest at the very least.
- Surprise them with a celebration for work done well. Make popcorn or roller skate on the blacktop!

Differentiating Reading Instruction for Students: Making It Explicit

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services proudly announces the availability of an 8th PDA-ESE online professional development module, **Differentiating Reading Instruction for Students: Making It Explicit**, a 60 hour on-line course. The content of the new module aligns with and extends current Florida reading initiatives and **satisfies requirements for Competencies 4 and 5 of the Reading Endorsement**. The *Differentiating Reading Instruction for Students: Making It Explicit* module is designed for teachers who want to enhance their skills in teaching students experiencing reading difficulties, especially those with significant and persistent difficulties. Targeted Audience: Exceptional Education teachers

The units in **Differentiating Reading Instruction for Students: Making It Explicit** are: Research, Reading Difficulties, and Resources; How to Create a Differentiated Environment and Make Instruction Explicit; Targeting Student Needs and Designing Data-Based Solutions; Differentiating Phonological Awareness Instruction and Phonics Instruction for Students Experiencing Reading Difficulties; Assessing and Building Reading Fluency for Students Experiencing Reading Difficulties; Teaching Vocabulary Explicitly for Students Experiencing Reading Difficulties; and Explicit Comprehension Instruction for Students Having Reading Difficulties. ***For more information on this course, contact Cindy Wickham, Brevard County, (321) 633-1000 x559 or Linda Davidson, Volusia County, (386) 258-4684.***



Reading Aloud to Children and School Readiness by Beth Cady

The years from birth through age five are a time of incredible change and growth. It is during these years children develop the basic knowledge, understanding, and interests they will need to become successful learners, readers, and writers.

In 1985, the Commission on Reading called reading aloud to children “the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for success in reading.” Infancy is the best time to begin reading books with children. Babies as young as six weeks old enjoy being read to by adults. Toddlers and preschoolers are especially ready to learn from adults and books. A recent study found that reading aloud using the storytelling method helps children acquire information, understanding of relationships between sound and print, the meaning of words, knowledge of the world in which they live and the pleasure of reading they need to succeed in school and life.

A team of researchers from The Child Study Center of Yale University has analyzed 126 teenage mothers as they read with their children. All of the mothers had low incomes, were undereducated and most were single. The results, when divided into storytellers and story readers, suggested that instruction and support really matter.

“Different approaches to storybook reading, conversation and problem-solving affect the cognitive and language development of preschoolers in ways that predict their readiness to success”[Reading Research Quarterly, 41 (1)]. In the study, the dominant group consisted of story readers. This group did not talk much to their children as they read a storybook. The storytellers, on the other hand, approached reading as an opportunity to have conversations. They were more interactive, used more decontextualized language, talked about things not present and in the here and now. They also interspersed their discussions around the book before, during, and after reading the text. The storytellers made more requests for information that required their chil-

dren to name, label or point to something in the story. These behaviors had more positive child outcomes encouraging the development of literacy skills. The children of the storytellers, mothers who read books interactively and provided support and guidance as teaching strategies, even developed a better vocabulary.

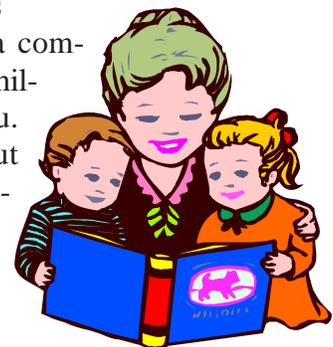
The researchers also provided mothers with a puzzle to gather more information about how they interacted with their children. Almost 28 percent offered little assistance or support to solve the puzzle; 40 percent of the mothers did not provide guidance, but offered their children encouragement and support and 24 percent of the mothers offered support, encouragement, verbal cues and other guided assistance as the children solved the problem. The researchers concluded that the mothers in the second and third groups were more likely to be storytellers, while the mothers in the first group were story readers. This study found that merely providing support with little or no teaching does not appear to be linked with positive child outcomes.

A parent interested in developing language and school readiness skills should provide high levels of guided assistance, be flexible when giving instructions, give clear verbal cues that a child can understand and information that helps a child learn and understand.

The suggestions below have been observed in the parents who used a story-telling method when reading to their children. These activities encourage early literacy development and make reading more enjoyable:

Make reading books

enjoyable. Choose a comfortable place where children can sit near you. Be enthusiastic about reading. Use an animated voice and facial expressions when reading aloud.





Read Frequently. Establish a daily routine that includes reading. Start and end the day with a book. Read during snack time or before naptime. Read the same story repeatedly and often.

Help children to learn as you read. Make observations and point out how the pictures in the book relate to the story. Explain words children may not know. Talk about the characters, their actions and feelings. "Oh yes, Max does look very angry. Why do you think he is angry?" Provide high levels of guided assistance to encourage interactions and conversation about the story. Match instruction to a child's needs.

Ask children questions as you read. Try to relate words or the story to what children have been doing at home or in the classroom. Give clear verbal cues that children understand. Help children notice what is in the book and encourage making predictions on what will happen next by asking questions i.e. "Why do you think Max asked his mother if he could play outside?"

Encourage children to talk about the book. Have conversations about the book you are reading. Answer their questions and comment on their observations. Listen to what they say and expand upon their language to build vocabulary and knowledge. Encourage them to tell the story in their own words. Most children enjoy reading the same books repeatedly, so retelling the story is easy and fun.

Source: *Advance* for Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists
Article written by Beth Cady
Teaching Our Youngest: A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child Care and Family Providers
Early Childhood-Head Start Task Force
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Educational Services Facility
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Viera, FL 32940-6601

Palm Terrace Elementary
1825 Dunn Avenue
Daytona Beach, FL 32114



FDLRS/East and ESE Websites:
What's In It for You?

The FDLRS/East, Brevard and Volusia ESE websites have been designed to make your professional life easier by providing resources and information at the click of a button!!!

The FDLRS/East website (<http://fdlrs.brevard.k12.fl.us/east/>) provides information about the four main FDLRS Functions (Child Find, Parent Services, Human Resource Development, and Technology Services). In addition, you can view the Professional Development opportunities offered by both **Brevard and Volusia** offices, find contact information for all FDLRS/East personnel, read current and past editions of the *Coastline* newsletter, get information about PDA-ESE offerings, and perform online searches of the FDLRS/East Library holdings.

The Brevard ESE website (<http://ese.brevard.k12.fl.us/>) provides buttons which link to the following information:

- About Us** - Information about ESE in Brevard
- Programs** - Information about the ESE programs provided in Brevard.
- Staff** - Contact information for district-level ESE staff
- McKay Scholarship** - Information about the McKay Scholarship program and link to online application.
- Working with ESE Students in the Regular Education Classroom** - Includes Chapter 3 (PDF format) of the *Accommodations Handbook* written by Dr. Marty Beech.
- Interagency Council of Brevard** - Includes a directory of members & key agencies, contact information/brochures.
- If You Have a Problem** - Problem resolutions

The Volusia ESE website (<http://www.volusia.k12.fl.us/ese/>) provides buttons which link to the following information:

- Overview of ESE** - Continuum of Services in Volusia
- For Teachers** - Training, resources, printable forms, IEP
- For Administrators** - STARTS Program, Surveys, ESE newsletter, "What's Cookin' in ESE"
- For Parents** - Information about the ESE Advisory Committee, training, IEP and resources
- For Students** - Resources to help guide students transitioning to post-school adult living.
- Staff Directory** - Contact information for district-level ESE staff
- SEDNet** - Information about this statewide network

SEASONS GREETINGS

The Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System is funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Division of Public Schools and Community Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, IDEA Part B, Preschool, and State General Revenue Funds.

*This publication can be made available to persons with disabilities in a variety of formats, including large print, cassette tape, and braille. Telephone or written requests should be made at least two weeks prior to the time you need the material and should include your name, address and phone number. In **Brevard County** requests should be made to Kim Riddle, ESE Lead Teacher, 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, FL 32940-6601, (321) 633-1000, ext. 535 and in **Volusia County** to FDLRS, 1825 Dunn Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32114, (386) 258-4684.

* You can access the *Coastline* newsletter by visiting the FDLRS/East website at <http://fdlrs.brevard.k12.fl.us/east/> OR http://www.volusia.k12.fl.us/ese/fdlrs_east