

RESPONSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
Becoming interested	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• tell stories that relate the lesson to people's lives• establish relevancy and a purpose for learning by relating to previous experiences.• appropriately adjust the conceptual level to make the material either easier (more concrete) or more difficult (more abstract).• provide an experience such as a field trip; then teach the more abstract lesson.• reward often (perhaps with attention) as lesson begins.• shape approximations of desired behavior by providing direct reinforcement such as praise or 1:1 conversation or immediate feedback of correct answers.• read aloud a brief article or story to stimulate interest.• seat student closer to teacher; distance affects interest.
Getting started	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give cue to begin work.• give work in smaller amounts.• provide immediate reinforcers, feedback.• sequence work with easiest problems first.• provide all necessary materials-being careful not to overload.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
Understanding cause and effect; anticipating consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use concrete examples. • use real-life situations; role play. • teach cause-effect directly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ brainstorming ○ role playing ○ simulation • have students use their imagination.
Drawing conclusions and making inferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach thinking skills directly. • draw a parallel to a situation that the student might have experienced in problem solving.
Remembering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide checklist. • provide cues. • have students make notes to self. • teach memory skills. • teach use of acronyms and other mnemonic devices. • introduce assignment clearly so student knows what tasks will be expected. • suggest time to finish each task. • check on progress often in first few minutes of work. • give a checklist for each step of the task (steps; flowchart, etc.). • have student start with a peer or peer tutor.
Paying attention to the spoken word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give explanation in small, direct steps. • provide written backup to oral directions and lectures; provide visual via chalkboard or overhead. • have student repeat directions after you. • when giving group directions; leave pauses between each step so student can carry out process in his mind. • provide other sources of information: buddies, tape record, language master.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
<p>Paying attention to printed word</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shorten the listening time, repeat. • provide a script of spoken presentation, e.g., a filmstrip script. • alternate spoken with written and manipulative tasks. • look directly at student; place hand on student's shoulder when giving directions – make sure this is a natural gesture that doesn't isolate the student from others.
<p>Following directions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select a task with fewer items or instructions on a page. • highlight distinctive features. • highlight, underline, point, number. • cut pages apart or tear out of book. • have student discriminate one part from another; have student identify main headings or unit titles. • require desk to be cleared of extraneous material. • face desk to wall or provide carrel if this would be construed as help, not punishment. • project the printed page of a worksheet on an overhead transparency while giving instructions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limit number of steps in directions. • use fewer words. • provide examples. • repeat. • have student repeat or explain, hopefully in his/her own words. • provide checklist of directions. • put directions on a language master card. • provide a peer tutor. • monitor closely as student begins.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this:
<p>Keeping track of materials or assignments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present both auditory and visual directions. • check notebook <u>often</u>. • keep extra supplies on hand in class. • provide assignment sheet to student. • provide assignment sheet to resource room teacher and/or parents. • have a student carry a mailbag/calendar with list of things to do. • write assignment on board for student to copy. • check and reinforce recording of the assignment. • require envelopes for big projects that have many separate parts such as note cards, pictures, etc. • give reward (grade, points) for bringing book, paper, pencil to class every day. • return corrected work promptly.
<p>Staying on task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce distractions. • increase reinforcements. • provide smaller tasks or sub tasks. • provide checklists. • shorten time. • reduce amount of work. • provide peer tutors. • provide different activities in small class. • provide a reward that is valued by student. • provide quiet alternative activity for a short rest. • provide a timer to set short periods of work.
<p>Completing tasks on time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce amount to be accomplished. • allow more time

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
Working in groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide time cues (i.e., 2 minute warning). • write schedules. • ask for parent reinforcement – calendar at home. • provide check lists. • provide closure at points along the way. • provide positive feedback, e.g., “assignments completed” checklist. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide direct instruction in group processes. • provide a partner instead of a group. • provide student with a responsibility or position of leadership (with clearly-defined role). • prepare the group members to include and help the student. • utilize teacher aide or volunteer in classroom to facilitate the work of the group. • provide more structure by defining task and listing steps. • restate goal and link it to the required activities; provide closure.
Working independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assign a task at the appropriate level, challenging but not difficult. • be certain the student can see an end to the task. • give precise directions. • lower the difficulty (or raise it as the case may be). • give shorter assignments. • reinforce often; praise for concentration but be careful not to break concentration in order to praise. • motivate by providing a goal or using peer pressure.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
Expressing him/herself verbally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • let student see individual work as a sign of personal responsibility and growth rather than thinking the teacher just wants to “get rid of” him/her. • provide a variety of types of work within the assignment instead of all writing tasks (e.g., chart making, maps, flags, pictures, drawing, etc.). • accept alternate form of information-sharing such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ written report ○ art expressive response (drawing, collage, etching, craft, model, etc.) ○ exhibit ○ chart or graph or table ○ bulletin board ○ photo essay ○ map ○ diorama, 3-D display, showcase ○ review of films ○ charade or pantomime ○ demonstration ○ filmstrip or sound filmstrip, U-film-it kit. • ask questions requiring short answers. • provide a prompt, such as beginning the sentence for the student or giving a picture cue. • give rules for orderly class discussion (e.g., hand raising). • give points for oral contributions and prepare the student individually. • teach student to ask questions in class. • teach body and language expression direction.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this:
<p>Learning by listening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wait for students to respond; don't call on the first student to raise her/his hand. 3 seconds is needed, at least, for many to respond. • question at the teaching level – give facts; ask for facts back – <u>What</u> & <u>Why</u> questions are at different levels. • have student “break in gradually” by speaking in smaller groups and then go to larger group sessions. • allow a taped report instead of oral to class if this is perceived to be easier by student. • always leave the student on a positive note – a correct answer, at least something in the ballpark. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide visuals. • use flash cards. • have him close his eyes and try to visualize the information. • spell by visualizing the whole word; don't depend on “sounding out.” • have student take notes, write things down, highlight with colored felt tip pens. • teach the use of acronyms to help visualize lists of names (TEKIN could stand for Truman-Eisenhower-Kennedy-Johnson-Nixon). • provide script of the sound filmstrip. • give explanations in small distinct steps. • provide written backup to oral directions and lectures, such as an outline or filmstrip script. • have student repeat directions. • when giving group directions – leave pauses between each step so student can carry out process in his mind.

If the student has difficulty:	Then try this...
Seeing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide other sources of information: buddies, tape recorder, language master. • shorten the listening time; repeat. • provide visuals via chalkboard or overhead. • alternate spoken with written and manipulative tasks. • pre-teach difficult vocabulary and concepts. • tell him what he's going to learn; provide a reason for listening. • avoid passive voice (Dan hit John. Not, John was hit by Dan.) as more difficult. • remove extra words ("Jane, please sit." not, "Jane, would you please sit down in your chair.") • interject humor at intervals. • provide study guide/worksheets. • tape record directions of differing complexity, length, speed for practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directly point out relationships. • draw arrows on worksheet or text to show that ideas are related. • class discussion – students relate ideas to personal experiences. • teach directly, relations of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ function ○ category ○ opposition ○ sequence • provide headings or a partially filled in chart for an example. • family tree may help relate disassociated historical events.

This resource is offered to promote dialogue about effective strategies for a specific student and to stimulate examination of personal teaching approaches.

This material is paraphrased from Maladies and Remedies: Guidelines for modifications for mainstreamed adolescents with academic difficulties. Developed by the Model Resource Room Project of the Plymouth-Canton Community School District of Plymouth, Michigan. Date unknown.