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Areas of Confusion for Learning Disabled Students

1. Following Instructions

- a. Reversal tendencies keep LD's from comprehending instructions in a step-by-step sequence.
- b. LD's do not recall information in an orderly sequence unless the instructor takes pains to mark each step with visual, oral, or tactile cues.
- c. LD's nearly always fail when they are expected to hold instructions in mind during interruptions, or when follow-through work is delayed after the instructions have been given.
- d. Some system for presenting instructions in outline form must be taught if LD's are to achieve success in group study situations.

2. Reading Comprehension

- a. Comprehension of factual information, sequence of ideas, and visualizing story action is difficult for LD's in silent reading.
- b. Answering questions over material read independently is difficult because of the tendency to get sequential facts out of order.
- c. Studying for tests is made more meaningful when LD's are taught how to mark or underline pertinent information while reading.
- d. A system of note taking is essential for success at higher grade levels. LD's need to learn how to extract pertinent information, how to condense it on paper, how to study notes for tests, and how to preserve important information for future reference.

3. Arithmetic

- a. Addition and subtraction are often success areas for LD's because their natural tendency is to work right-to-left.
- b. Multiplication tables, division, and complex addition and subtraction are difficult because of the tendency to scramble sequence and to reverse directionality. Fractions and decimals are often impossible for these students to comprehend.
- c. Send for this book: THESE KIDS DON'T COUNT, by F. A. Sharp, Academic Therapy Publications, 1539 Fourth Street, San Rafael, California 94901.

4. Spelling

- a. LD's with poor auditory memory do not hear separate sounds in the sequence in which the sounds are spoken. Therefore, they do not visualize the sequence of letters needed to write words.
- b. LD's with weak visual memory usually hear the sound patterns, but they scramble the sequence as they write from memory.
- c. LD's must combine several channels simultaneously for spelling success: speech, hearing, movement, touch, vision.
- d. Send for this book: BUILDING SPELLING SKILLS IN DYSLEXIC CHILDREN, by Arena, Academic Therapy Publications, 1539 Fourth Street, San Rafael, California 94901.

5. Social Studies and Science

- a. LD's seldom have a functional awareness of time, or chronological sequence. Such concepts as first, next, then, earlier, later, before, and after are not actually functional. These students do not do well on tests that require memory of time relationships, or of steps involved in scientific processes.
- b. History or geography "clotheslines" are usually helpful in illustrating time sequence. Pictorial graphs are important in such areas as the earth's structure, the organization of the atmosphere, planets in space, structure of the atom, etc.
- c. Whenever possible, LD's should be given oral tests with the content of their oral answers graded for accuracy. Whenever the bottlenecks of writing and spelling can be by-passed, these students can be held accountable for information learned through listening and multi-media presentations.

6. Music

- a. LD's often have difficulty reading music scores in band or chorus. Tendencies for reversal and rotation cause them to read phrases backward or from the wrong direction. If faulty eye control is also present, the student cannot keep his place when convergence deteriorates.
- b. LD's should be allowed to memorize music scores whenever they participate in group work. It is virtually impossible for them to watch the conductor and follow a score at the same time.

7. Vocational Subjects: Shop, Homemaking, Cosmetology, Business Courses, etc.

- a. LD's do better in non-academic areas unless there is paper work and text material to handle. Whenever instructors resort to academic measures in these courses, LD's find themselves frustrated.
- b. LD students must be allowed to develop their individual styles in vocational areas. If instructors are too rigid, the students cannot compensate for reversal tendencies and other disability patterns.