

Literacy Instruction for Students with Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD) in Minnesota:



Materials, Strategies and Decision
Making

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Purpose

- To give an overview and discuss aspects of reading instruction for students with DCD based on the results of a survey and a video
 - Tensions in reading instruction for DCD students and what it may mean for paraprofessionals
 - What curricula and other materials and strategies are used to teach literacy to DCD students
 - What your role is in reading instruction for DCD students

Overview



- Your background
- Share DCD Survey results and video
 - Demographics
 - Qualitative and quantitative findings
- Activity
- Put results into context of the work of paraprofessionals
- Video
- Discussion

DCD Teacher Survey

Demographic Information

- 128 DCD teachers from Minnesota
- 120 females, 8 males
- Average of 14 years of being a DCD teacher
- Level of instruction:
 - 4 early childhood
 - 65 elementary
 - 65 secondary
 - 24 transition
- Students served:
 - 81 students with mild DCD
 - 103 students with moderate DCD
 - 77 students with severe DCD
 - 44 students with profound DCD
 - 32 students with autism spectrum disorder
 - 9 students with physical impairment
 - 11 students with other health impairment
 - 11 students with multiple impairment

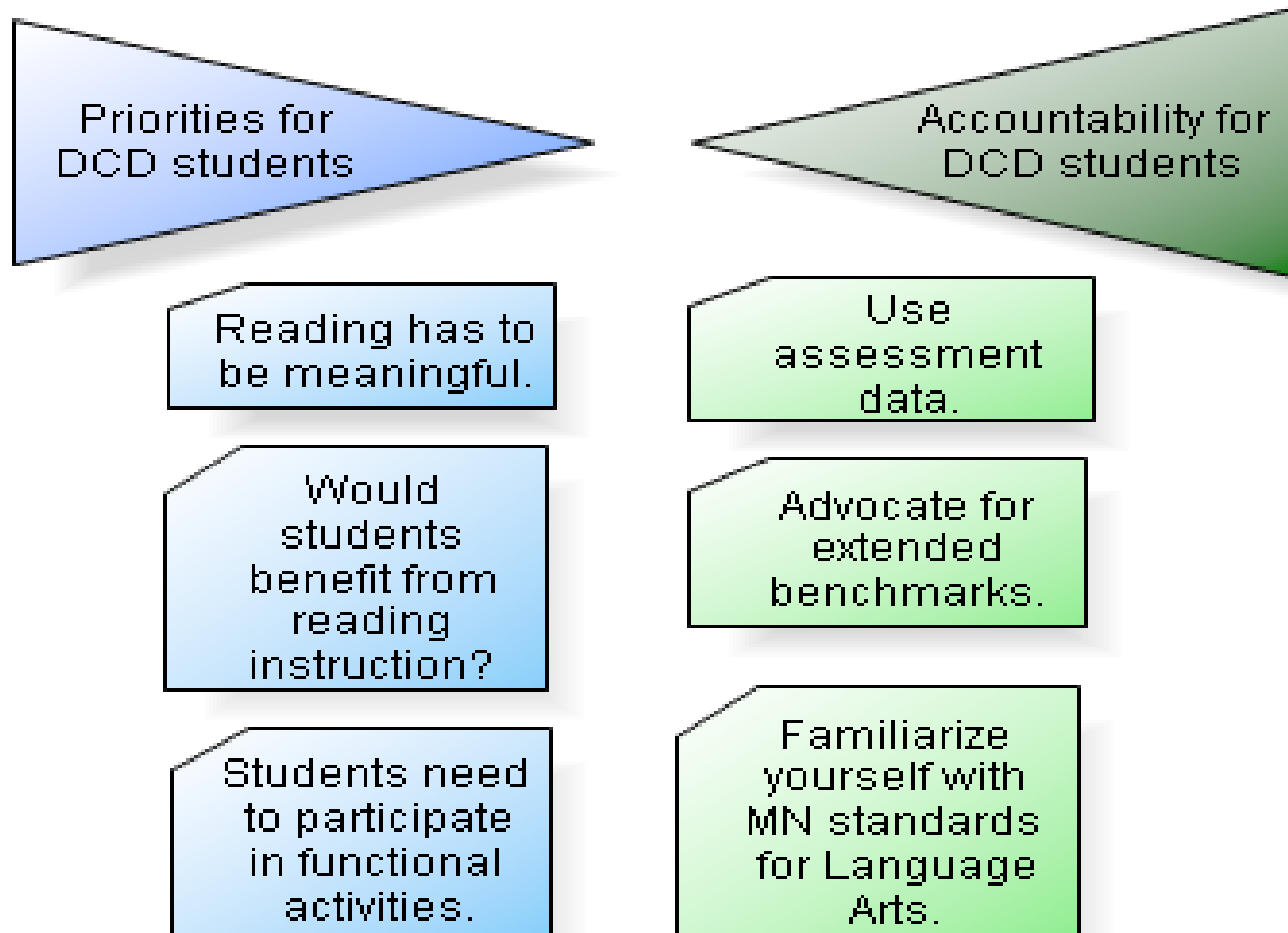


Current Education Trend for DCD Students



- Both Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law require student with most significant cognitive disabilities to participate in state assessments, such as alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards that are based on general education standards
- IDEA requires each students served in special education to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Instructional Tension



Quotes



1. *“My students need to **learn to read at any level. State standards are a bonus** at this point.”*
2. *“Make sure that you take coursework related to how you teach reading to regular education students and participate in literacy workshops/in-services related to Special Education. There is so much to know and **the field of special education has been behind with teaching literacy to students with more significant disabilities.** We can make a difference for them!”*
3. *“Variety, materials that will teach **reading for pleasure and reading for survival.** Make reading fun and interesting.”*
4. *“There is no one program that is suitable for all students. I pick and use from a variety of materials that I have purchased or created. **Reading needs to be meaningful** especially at the level that I teach.”*

Video 1

Reading Instruction

- Amina
 - In an British girls' school
 - In 10th grade
 - Has personal assistants
- Questions
 - On the previous diagram, where would you place Amina's reading activity? Think about Amina's age.



Commercially Developed Curricula Used to Teach Literacy

Edmark	74	77.1
Reading Milestones	30	31.3
Reading Mastery	25	26.0
Star Reporter	23	24.0
Meville to Weville	13	13.5
Read Naturally	10	10.4
News-2-You	10	10.4
Reading A-to-Z	7	7.3
Corrective Reading	7	7.3



Are Curricula Comprehensive?

- Quantitative
 - 58% yes
 - 42% no



- Qualitative (how or why?)
 - "Yes" category: some curricula or parts of curricula
 - "No" category: lack of individualization, missing reading elements, e.g. comprehension, not enough practice opportunity.

Quote



- *“I think they [curricula] are as comprehensive as I can get now. They all have pieces that really are important. **I still dream of a DCD reading curriculum that provides interesting age appropriate stories and activities, lots of repetition, functional skill work and good methods for teaching writing** which is my most challenging area.”*

Other Materials and Strategies

Sight word instruction	25	19.5
Teacher made	19	14.8
Books	18	14.1
Functional instruction	16	12.5
Phonics instruction	14	10.9
Computer aided instruction	14	10.9
Pictures, symbols, photos	13	10.2
Games	10	7.8
Flash cards	9	7.0
Fluency instruction	9	7
Comprehension instruction	9	7



Are the materials and strategies sufficient to teach reading?

- Quantitative

- 67% yes
- 33% no




- Qualitative (why or why not?)

"Yes" category: strategy and material diversification is beneficial but demanding; teaching experience, repetition and practice as well as accesses to other professionals is important

"No" category: lack of a consistent and comprehensive curriculum that is age appropriate and has an appropriate scope and sequence

Making Decisions about Using Curricula, Materials and Strategies

Basis	Frequency	Percent
Student data	89	76.7
Consultation with other educators	86	67.2
Research evidence of effectiveness	73	57.0
Cost and budget	55	43.0
School/district recommendation	36	28.1
Catalog	22	17.2
Other	14	10.9



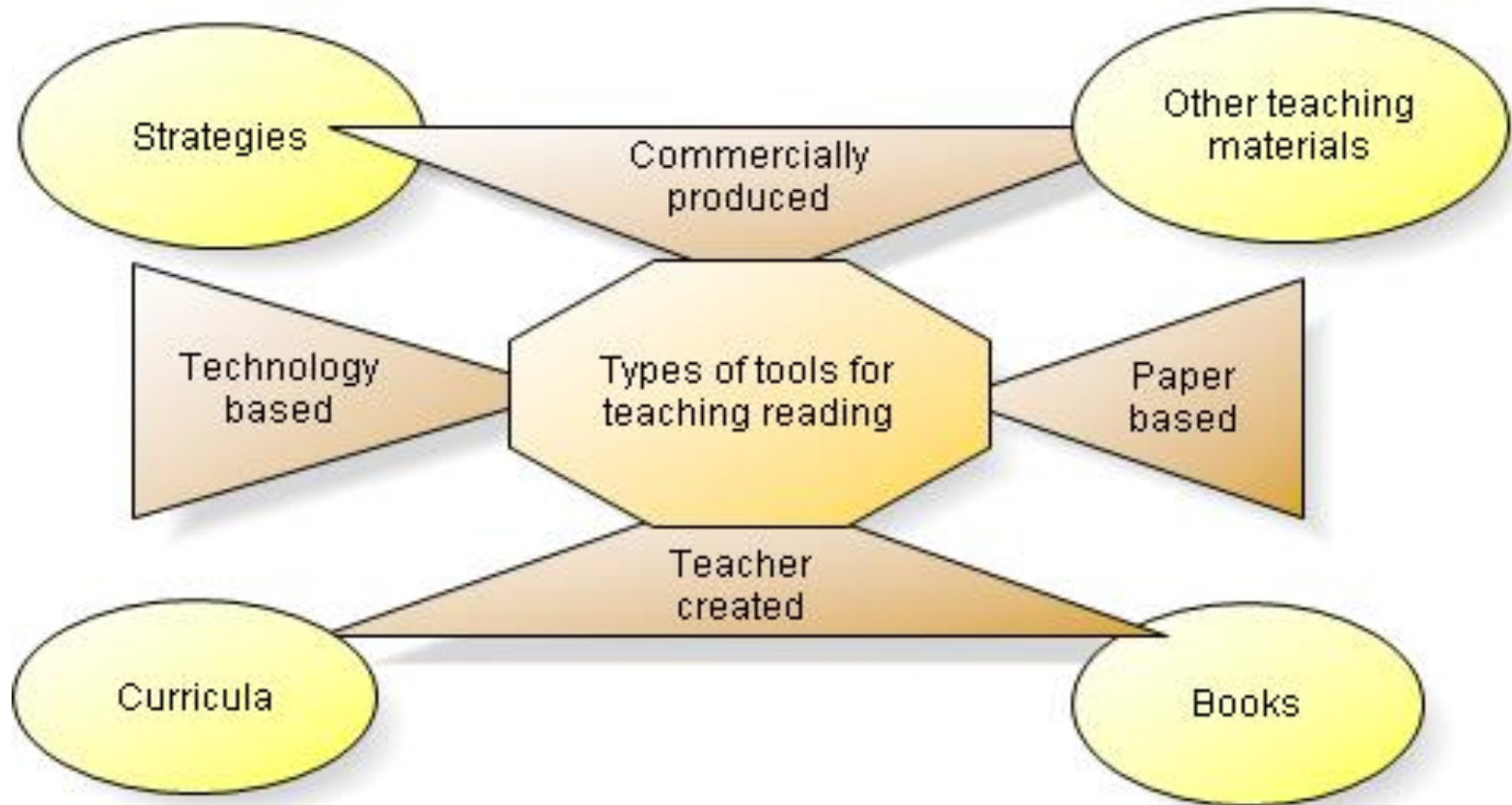


Activity



- In small groups discuss and write down your perspective on the importance of literacy for DCD students
 - How important is it?
 - What aspects are important?
 - What have you observed in your work?
 - In your work – what literacy activities or instruction do you typically assist with?
 - What are you happy about?
 - What would you change?
- Select a spokes person to share the main points you discussed

Facets of Reading Tools



Video 2

Life Skills

- Amina

- In an British girls' school
- In 10th grade
- Has personal assistants



- Questions

- Do you think the activity Amina is involved in is appropriate for her? Why or why not?
- Is there a reading component involved? If so, is the reading component involved effectively?

So What?



- It is important to understand:
 - Under which educational climate we are working
 - Why there maybe a tension in teaching literacy to DCD students (school, parents, etc.)
 - What we are trying to achieve
 - What your role is in this as a paraprofessional