

- [Moderator] All right, and with that I will turn it over to our presenter, Padmaja.

- Hello, everyone, welcome to this session on Joyful Learning: Engage and Advance Young Learners with Significant and Complex Learning Needs.

Thank you for joining us.

What are we going to be, what am I going to be talking about and addressing? The agenda is I will spend a little bit of time on the introduction, why it is critical and important that we engage the learner as part of this learning process.

And then for that, the most important thing we have to consider are the Universal Design for Learning principles that will be kind of our foundation to think how we can adapt the environment, the instruction and the materials, and also the division for early childhood recommended practices.

And the most of this session will be dedicated to how do we use hands-on activities, how do we use materials? How do we bring that attention and motivation of that learner into what we are teaching them through the materials, through the adaptation, through the instruction, and constructing your environment in a optimal manner.

You are advancing your learner's language, cognitive and social emotional development.

And then we will have a conclusion.

And as was mentioned, please put your questions that you may have in the Q&A box.

I am an author of a number of books and a lot of the material that I'm sharing is from those sources.

I have a number of books as well as many guides, and I'm an educational consultant, also the founder and the president of a nonprofit organization which focuses on empowering families to engage actively with their children, to enrich their minds because the school system, the teachers, educators, and families have to work actively together, collaborate in the success of the child.

So what brings me to this topic as a consultant, I have had the pleasure and privilege of visiting hundreds of classrooms in a variety of states and more specifically in Texas, but be besides that in Louisiana and other many other places, Arkansas and Alabama and all that.

Some of the problems that I have observed in the classroom relates to the environment, the instruction, and the materials that are being used, especially addressing the needs of children with significant and complex learning needs.

Before I even begin this presentation, one thing I would like

to mention because this is April, April is autism awareness month.

And especially for children with autism, we are still struggling to understand fully their characteristics, their communication approaches, their behaviors, and quite often without a full grasp of their needs, we use techniques that do not address their needs comprehensively with the results.

Even to this day, I am reading reports about children with autism being in a closed room as kind of a disciplinary measure.

So with that, I hope in 2023 and onwards we gained better understanding of children with autism as we celebrate the autism awareness month and especially for children with autism, the environment, the instruction and the materials have to match their needs.

One of the things that the problems that I observed is even in as early as an early childhood classroom, which should be vibrant and joyful and highly engaging, it sometimes is pretty dull and the adult constantly directing and the children not being actively engaged, I'm sure none of these things happen in your classroom, but if you do have the position to influence other teachers, please, the environment needs to be very highly engaging.

And then the instruction, which is the most critical element, we want to make sure there is active learner engagement.

We tend to use very heavily prompting, intrusive prompting approaches.

So we need to change that approach.

And also the other thing I found is there is frequently some downtime.

And when there is downtime, many, many children, children especially those who have significant cognitive and behavioral needs, do not know how to adjust to that kind of downtime.

And so we have to make sure there is continuous activity that engages children.

And the other observation that I have seen, if you are in an inclusive classroom and you have a few children with significant and complex needs, frequently these children are having either a one-on-one para educator or one para educator maybe serving to students frequently.

What I have observed is this para educator is assigned to that student and that particular student has very limited opportunity to engage with other children or to engage in the mainstream activity that's going on in the classroom.

And the para-educator is continuously prompting.

So are we promoting self-dependence? Are we promoting social interaction? These are some questions we need to ask.

And how are we going to gauge the progress these children are

making if they are being continuously being supported by an adult sitting next to them? And as I mentioned right at the very beginning, frequently our reactions to behavior issues are much more reactive.

And as soon as we see a behavior issue, we tend to react strongly to stop the behavior and we often send that child away from that group instruction.

Or sometimes the children are sent to seclusion and that doesn't provide any opportunity for that child to be engaged.

And the last important thing in the materials that we use or the materials matched to the specific needs of the student is the student able to connect.

For example, a lot of us use picture symbols, but not all children can connect, especially with those abstract picture symbols.

We should try and use concrete representational materials so that the child can connect quickly with that object.

So these are all some of the things that cause concerns and hopefully some of the answers or some of the slides that you are going to see will help change and modify our materials, environment, and instruction.

So let us look at what the student can do currently that is the first step.

Understanding the learner's strengths and capabilities.

Is the student at a level where the student can attend and listen to a story for a few minutes, focusing attention to the story.

Is the student able to make choices? Is the student able to respond with a yes or no to questions that you ask? Is the student at a level where the student is able to recall some basic information that you have taught or is the student at a much higher level and able to answer what, where and when question when something happened? Let's say you are relating a story and the student is able to recall this information.

And then once they have learned some rules, let's say in the classroom, are they able to apply it in another place? That's one thing.

Or if they have learned something, can they apply you to something else new that they are learning? They can recall that information and apply that.

And one of the most important things we teach as we teach young children is to be able to draw a conclusion, not just young children but all children, the summary and conclusion.

Are they able to make a kind of a prediction after the story is read to them? These are all things we want to make sure we have the information as we proceed with instruction.

You may have a student with more significant needs who is able

to make a choice between given two choices, not multiple things that they have to select from or to recall the information from low aids.

But given representation objects connected to the topic, can they make a choice? Is the student has some, you know, motor difficulty and is able to use reach for an object with his hands or with her hands or with eye gaze or with a body movement or body orientation.

That is the way the student responds is that the student's functioning level as far as motor needs are concerned, is the student showing joy vocalization in response to the person? Is the student smiling? Is the student showing change in effort? Is the student activating an AT device to respond to something without adult moving his hand and physically prompting? Is the student independently responding to the question using the AT device? So these are all some basic questions we want to ask at the very beginning of planning our environment and instruction.

So as I mentioned at the beginning, one of the important things that should be driving our instructional planning is the universal design for learning.

So the first thing is the why of learning or we providing multiple flexible options for engagement so that it draws, it attracts the student's interest, offers appropriate challenge, but not too much of a challenge that the student gets turned off and it gets the student to focus attention.

And so the student can learn.

Some of the things that I would like to see more of happening in classroom is dramatic play a little bit of dramatic play, storytelling, playing games, using some songs.

instead of a kind of a very dry reading of a story.

How can we make it more interactive? How can we give a role to the children to play so that they gain better understanding and comprehension of what is going on and maybe computer software? And then how do we present that information? In addition to that is the what of learning.

We have to make sure it is in multiple formats and flexible methods.

PowerPoint, presentation, graphic organizers, simulation of activities, storyboards, physical, concrete objects, photographs, manipulatives beyond just the picture symbols.

And then are we providing that student with flexible multiple approaches in how the student responds, the action and expression, the how of learning.

The student may verbally respond, the student may point to something, the student may manipulate picture symbols or concrete objects or respond using an at device without an adult pushing his or her hand.

So we need to think in terms of universal design for learning in terms of the engaging the student, presenting the material and for the student to be able to respond in a variety of ways.

So this is a kind of a pictorial slide showing the application of universal design firm.

Are we using kind of a graphic organizers? Are we using storytelling role play? And when we are teaching math, are we moving a step further and using concrete objects? The same addition picture that this one shows, the student gets to drop maybe one little tiny ball or a puffed ball and then another one and then take both of that one plus one and drops it in the last third one.

They get to feel and that goes to their brain immediately because they are feeling and touching and that is necessary for some children who have difficulty with abstract numbers.

So are we using these concrete items to connect with the learner? Are we using storyboards when they see these pictures and they can patch and remove them and feel them and put them back, then they connect with that concept much more of the story characters and the story events.

And then when they're responding, are they giving them a choice, a choice board? And are we giving them too many choices? Are we limiting the choice to two or three? And once they master then maybe an array of choices or we using some of these tools in order to increase that action and expression, what kind of environmental adjustments can we make? One of the things, first things that I would suggest is to minimize that adult proximity.

So if we have a child who has a para educator usually assign, can the para educator move around and not sit right within three feet of that student so that the student is not always looking to the para educator for all her responses.

And so the para educator does not feel compelled to constantly prompt the student.

Our goal ultimately is self dependence.

And teachers have argued with me that this particular student reaches across his desk and he may disturb others or he may grab things from them.

Can we provide a kind of a visual boundary around that desk and teach the student to stay, keep his hands and feet within that boundary that is kind of created with masking tape or color tape around his desk? And of course it's not going to happen overnight.

We have to maybe teach for a few weeks and remind the student your space, this is your space and teach him that to respect that space and not reach across.

And then the other thing is sometimes when you walk into a classroom, you find that there are so many displays on the wall,

which can be overstimulating, especially for a child with autism.

So can we limit like in there is no need to have multiple number or math number walls, number displays.

Vocabulary.

You need just one maybe rules that's required posted and vocabulary words paired with concrete items or pictures, real pictures and not just picture symbols.

And then changed every three weeks or four weeks as you change teaching the new vocabulary.

So limit the number of items that are displayed on the wall and remove the clutter that may cause more confusion and overstimulation.

That's something easy to accomplish.

And then making sure that we provide the instructional supports during the activities and the routines, multi-sensory techniques, concrete representation to build concept knowledge.

And then in between we some movement activities.

We don't often think about it, but when we are making a change, a transition from one activity to another, that's a great time.

If they are very young children, we can say, we just had the story of the "Are You My Mother" They can say, oh, can we fly like a bird? What do birds do? What do they have? And you're building the .

They have wings and what do they use the wings for? They fly.

Can we fly like a bird that maybe, or can we crawl like a bird? Can we walk like a dog? So you can infuse that for a slightly older children, that's a great time to build in some calming breaths.

Oh, let's do yoga posture and then let's take some calming breaths.

So that that transition is made into an activity.

It's not, oh, you need to sit down, you need to stand up.

You are not doing this.

We tend to be, oh, you need to get your mac.

No, instead that kind of transition is you have some kind of a movement activity.

You are a calming activity.

And then they are ready for the next activity because they have had the opportunity to relax, to engage in a kind of a joyful movement or a quiet calming activity.

So that, and the other thing is role play.

I mean the pretending to be like birds is role play or use some kind of a music, calming music, these are things, even if it is just used for three or four minutes, it increases the focus and attention for the next activity.

And the other thing that I often do not see, there are a number

of words on the word wall, far too many words.

So if we can limit the number of words, and especially for students who need that additional level of support, match some concrete objects or photographs next to that.

And then one of the things that I often recommend is as the children are walking out of the classroom for recess or at the end of the day, that's a great time to have that vocabulary world practiced.

I mean, if you have a para educators standing in front of the children as they're walking out to the bus or to the playground, that's a great time to review those words and you can post it right close to the exit and then make sure the personalized adaptations are matched to the individual child's need.

One of the things that I have found is sometimes we do not begin with an assistive technology communication device was that is matched to the communication level of that child.

It's has far too many things for the student to be able to handle.

And usually I find the adult takes the child's finger and presses that.

The child continues in that dependent mode and is really not learning how to use that.

So we need to begin with something simpler, with fewer icons and then something, a storyboard.

And then child, every child has an opportunity to participate, touch, feel, come to the front, and point to what you are talking about during the story.

These are ways to build their attention and involvement and make it joyful.

And the division for early childhood has a variety of suggestions for child-focused strategies on environment, instructional practices, adult child interaction, and also how to involve the family and practitioners.

The teachers work with the family and other adults and you can visit their websites to get the more information.

So let's take the poll.

Okay.

This is going to take a while.

We have a lot of people.

Okay, it looks like everybody has answered.

And we do have a lot of assistive technology specialists and not any special education.

Oh there is, there are some special education teachers and a lot of paraprofessional, lot of speech.

Okay.

And you can all make a difference in communicating about the division for early childhood practices and the universal design

firm.

Thank you.

And we have another poll immediately and let me see if I can pull that poll.

Okay.

Which environmental and instructional supports do you routinely use to engage learners with significant needs? Okay, wonderful lot of you use the UDL, universal design for learning.

And nice to see that a lot of you do have a designated calming space rather than the timeout and seclusion area.

That's very heartwarming.

We have a great team here who have joined us the physical prompts and 43% of you say you ensure intrusive prompts are not used and you pay games and I'm gonna share the results.

What is great is you do use different tasks to meet different needs.

Yes, that's great.

76% of you and 47% that is, as I said, it's very fulfilling to see you do use a calming space.

As I said, the people who have joined are already people who are dedicated to making a difference for children.

Okay, we will go onto the next slide.

So here are some examples of how we adapt our environment and instruction.

One, the thing is at the beginning of instruction, we need to make, draw the student's attention by using hands-on activities and multisensory with multisensory features.

And this is all based on research use of real life activities and then helping the student to familiarize herself or himself with touching, looking, listening, and smelling a variety of ways to engage the learner.

One of the things, let's say if you are using a little blank board, is there a way to put some pictures there for that particular student's attention and tap on the picture or use a flashlight to shine on it? That's another way to engage the students.

We may have a larger teaching area, but we also, that is where the para educator may be able to provide that extra attention if needed.

And it's extremely critical that we draw the student's attention.

If the student is looking here and there and not involved, then either our activity is not engaging the attention or we need to do something more for that student to draw that attention.

So can we give that student a role to play in that story so that the student is not touching another student, is not looking at something on the floor, is not wandering up, getting up from



his seat and wandering around.

So can we provide that student with a role to play? He holds something, he turns the pages of the book or he holds a kind of a story prop related to that story or to that lesson.

And these are all variety of tools, storyboards and things that you can use to draw and make the student involved in that lesson.

And what would creative instruction look like? Rethink and switch to a preferred option from maybe a current situation that you find is not effective enough to engage and sustain the focus and attention of that.

Can you begin your lesson with a kind of a magic bag and what do we have in the magic bag? Do we have a little puppet? Oh, what's this puppet? And maybe that, or it may be something like a slinky, of a grouchy ladybug.

Can we do that so that, oh they all, especially that student who is likely to be wandering around, could that student hold that object and show it to everybody? Unfortunately, our tendency is that child who wanders around or the child who engages in inappropriate behavior tends to be sent to timeout or moved away from the group.

But instead, let us begin with giving that child a role to play.

Maybe he's the one who is holding the magic bag and you take out the items or he's the one who is holding the story prop.

And the other thing that I have often suggested is to have a dycem mat when the child is not able to control and the things keep sliding off his paper, can we have a dycem mat and put that paper on there.

Build up the hand, you know, the handles of tools that they use so that with Play-Doh or with foam so that the child is not struggling to hold that adapted brushes, slant bulbs, considering seating options.

Sometimes we have students sitting in their wheelchair.

Is there a wedge that we can use so that the student is also sitting at the same level as others instead of sitting? Or I have even sometimes seen students just kind of lying on the floor.

We shouldn't be having that.

Is there is a way for at least 15, 20 minutes of that instructional lesson, can we have that student sit alongside others so that the child feels part of it? Is there a way if the child has engages in inappropriate behavior prior to that? Can we have the child hold maybe a fidget toy, something like this? Or if the child is completely out of control, is there a calming space we can use a timed amount of time which is timed, pre timed, so maybe three minutes and then made sure the student is

back joining.

And this may require several attempts in the beginning.

So we have to role play and act out stories, use finger play, or puppet play, movement activity.

It'll be fantastic if we are doing, let's say a story about animals and then immediately following that story to build that concept of that particular, how does a peacock.

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What about a peacock? We are learning about a peacock.

What does the peacocks do? Do they dance? Can we dance like a peacock? Oh, what do frogs do? So immediately that imagination is captured and they have a joyful activity following that story, the actions and the animal names and the vocabulary has a better chance of staying in their brain because they performed a movement related to that.

For example, in math, instead of just counting at the table or counting at the desk, can you have like three or four hula hoops? And in for children who are very high functioning, who are doing let's say addition or subtraction, you have that math item and you have students throw little bean bags into that.

And for a child who is just learning to count to three, instead of throwing 10, we will begin with three and then advance to five, advance to seven.

Can you throw two bean bags into the hula hoop and how much fun that would be compared to always looking at the number and then trying to count blocks or balls.

This would be there throwing their engaged in action.

And then when they're responding to questions, can we limit the choices to two, three? And then during transitions, when we have difficulty with the students lining up or staying in place as they're walking, can we pair them together so that one child who is generally following the rules has another child and the child who has maybe difficulty connecting with other children can hold or walk with another child and then play pretend games.

These are always, we influence children's thinking, build their focus and attention and make learning joyful and fun.

So they look forward to learning a lesson next time.

For example, this is a storyboard that you can think of, same in the same manner with other stories as well.

But building literacy and language, you create a storyboard.

This is for the story of "Are You My Mother?" By Peter Eastman.

What is the story about? What is one thing that happened in the story? And then pair that with either, the children make in art, they may not draw the pictures but you have the pictures and they may make it kind of the head band for that.

They may attach it, they may help you, they may help color it.

And you make all this or you make kind of little puppets using paper bags.

So you teach the concept but you also act out the story.

You move and pretend like various animals and you do not have to have a different story every day.

Taking one story, extending it for a week and demonstrating different activities associated with that.

And then practicing the moment.

By the end of the week, they would have a good concept of what's a dog, what's a cat, what's a hen? What's a boat? What's the mama bird and the baby bird? And the whole stories concept.

And what happened that is the baby bird going and searching for the mother bird.

And then you act out the story, you role play the different characters and that firmly is planted in their mind.

And then they get the story concept because of the role play, because of the pretend games, because of all the associated activities like the storytelling.

And then their vocabulary increases.

They may not be able to actually name, but they were able to make a choice given was the baby bird looking for mama bird, mother bird? Or was the baby bird looking for a tiger? Given those two choices they will make clearly, did the baby bird see a cow or did the baby bird see a penguin? So making that clear choice so that at least their thinking skills now are developing and gradually be able to use an assistive technology device assuming they have communication difficulties to respond to the questions.

And then you can create a word wall pairing the vocabulary associated with the story and connecting some concrete items or a three-dimensional kind of a picture or a headband or photographs.

And I'm going to share with you another story that's popular in the early charter with the young learners.

But this is a story even though it's meant for younger children, you can adapt it to slightly older children to "The Carrot Seed".

Because it's a great story for teaching persistence and handling challenging kind of responses from others.

It's a beautiful story about a little boy who found a seed and he's so persistent that despite everybody telling him that this character is not going to grow into a plant, he does and he succeeds.

So this is a great story to illustrate visual activities, tactile activities, they can patch the book, they can plant a seed, they can watch the character grow, you can grow carrot in our idea ways as a seed or as a mini carrot and seed the, you

know, plant growing and they can hold and touch a carrot.

They can taste a carrot if they are allowed to eat carrots.

And then they can make their own little book about growing something else, growing a flower.

And there are some other books, Eric calls the tiny seed or something like that.

And you can combine various books and connect it with this and they can taste and smell a carrot and they can do a role play and drama.

It can be about the concept of family, father, mother, child, brother, maybe even a sister you can make up.

And all of these things can be done in a much more joyful, playful, motivating manner.

And so when you are reading a story, instead of reading it in a kind of a very flat manner, can you show that emotion and the action and the expression, and you can have your students illustrate, demonstrate maybe, oh do you want to come Brian, do you wanna come and show everybody how a bird flies? Do you want to show everybody the carrot that we have for this? Do you want to show everybody? And so especially that child who is somewhat fidgety, you give that opportunity for that student to come and stand up and show everybody.

And then as you are reading, have a little bit of drama your voice and use storytelling techniques that pair with, let's say you are doing the hungry caterpillar, can you have an can you have a caterpillar image? And when you are doing let's say a math activity, can you use dice like this and can they throw the dice or toss the dice? And then can they tell you how many dots on that? So when you introduce and embed a little bit of play, it becomes more fun.

It is not thought of by the brain as more work but much more play.

And then as I said, incorporate music and movement as part of that.

And one of the games I love and we had a learning fair recently for families and we demonstrated this that families can do this even while on the go.

And that is, can you think of all the things that go on the pizza and give every child an opportunity to name an item that they would like to have on the pizza or on a sandwich or an ice cream.

And then for that child who is not able to generate a name or generate the vocabulary word, can you show two pictures? One that would go on a pizza and then one something like a crayon.

Can you put a crayon? No, but can you put mushroom? Yes.

So they may be yes or no answer, but you have given and they're all playing as a group game.

So, and then of course you can also pair it with alternates spinner and put the pictures there and the children can have activating it.

When you are doing that, is there a way you can create a pattern? Of course you can use blocks or you can use one of these things and then the child makes a choice and then when you are teaching math for the child who needs an additional level of concrete item, can we'll have belt.

So number five or number two.

And then again that makes it fun.

And then have a graduated number line on the for older children where you can have just the dots as is shown on this picture here.

Or you can attach small items, buttons maybe and glue it on.

And for a child who is struggling with recognizing, identifying, recognizing numbers and does not yet have that idea of the total number counted, can we a reduce it to five and just attach five items maybe in a little mini bag with some balls inside it? Can we use a sorting tray? Can we use dice to teach math concepts? One of the things that I have often observed is we usually have the para-educator working with the child and the child para-educator has maybe a number of little blocks or usually bears with younger children.

And then as soon as the child has countered say gimme five and the child gives you four and the child is looking at the para educators face and then the child gives one more and you close the hand, what it is is really a prompted response because if you keep your hands open and the child keeps on giving after five, that shows the child has not yet developed the cardinal principle.

So we need to also make sure that we don't close our hands and we don't inadvertently prompt the child.

And in terms of social emotional, how do we strengthen social emotional? There are variety of books, but I just, I'm sharing with you three fantastic books.

One is the "Grouchy Lady Bug", that's a great book.

I'm sure many of you are think it may be for preschool and kindergarten children, but it also is we can take the theme from the story and create our own little story based on that to teach the grouchiness and why that doesn't work and how it is important to be friendly.

And that's one opportunity to teach the feelings.

The other great book is on Monday when it rained, it shows a variety of feelings and fantastic photographs, even though it may be for younger children, but the photographs and the text that goes with that in that book to me is kind of almost used, can be used at practically any age, except you may not want to

show the little boy's picture, but you may want to show it as an example of different kinds of feeling because it even uses words like proud and embarrassed and all that.

And that the sooner we begin teaching these different feelings, the better it is for the child because you are using stories, you can combine it with situations.

And one of the beautiful games that you can play is the charades game and have the children display emotions.

Can you make a sad face? Can you make a happy face? Or if they are not able to do that, can they at least hold something that shows a sad face or a happy face? So the other fantastic, another book to calm down is, "When Sophie gets really, really angry".

That's another thing, again, it's for younger children, but you can adapt it to older children as well.

And one of the other things that I think is very important is have a group activity where you are connected.

What is something that makes you happy? What is something that makes you sad? What are all the different things that may make you angry? But when we are angry, we need to go tell somebody, but we don't express that anger in a bad way, in a negative way.

We have to express that emotion safely.

And then when they are scared of something, when there is a fire drill and then they'll get scared, then what do we do? We reach out and get help.

And then to have a calming space in the room.

And the other thing you may be already familiar with that is the total technique that is how to calm down when feeling agitated or angry or upset.

That is available from CSCFEL.

And maybe most of you are already familiar with that.

And when we are addressing problem behaviors, the best thing to do is to examine and evaluate our reactions, our responses, and to be able to redirect.

So I have a guide, mini guide that's available from it at Ed311.

It talks about strategies, how to be proactive, how to be reflective in your approach to the child, how do we enable the instructional environment, the adaptations and the materials to make sure that the child is enabled and that prevents the problem behavior.

And then from time to time, examine and evaluate, verify if your intervention approaches are working and engage the child with motivating and joyful activities.

And then collaborate with others, including the family on preventing the problem behaviors.

And of course you are teaching replacement behaviors for that

problem behaviors.

And you can use talking brick and to teach counting breaths and you can use puppets to teach feelings and how to express them safely.

And I'm sharing with you a variety of options for children to actively respond.

I have already discussed most of them.

Some children may respond in complete sentences, some children may be asked no participation card, some will point to picture cues, some will need objects, some will make a choice, some will touch and manipulate the item, and a lot of them can use an assistive technology device to communicate the responses.

But the most important thing I want you to take away is that choice making is a very powerful thing.

It teaches children that they can exercise control over their environment.

And so that is something we need to focus on and train.

And it'll also make the children feel that they are in charge.

And these are all the different kinds of supports.

For example, if you are doing the "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" story, the alphabet cards make alphabet cards.

And then maybe hide it in different place and they look for it and search for it and make it like a game.

And if you're doing "The Giving Tree" story, you can have a story prop and one child can hold that and another child can pretend to be the little boy.

Another child could be pretend to be the tree and let them express their feelings through holding a puppet in their hand or a emotion card.

Our goal is to enable the students self dependence.

And so make make games a routine, playing games a routine, and make sure the students have an opportunity to be actively engaged.

One of the things I do want to mention, you do have it in your handout and to follow the hierarchy of prompts, to be alert and to be aware that we are not constantly using physical prompting, but we are gradually reducing the inclusive prompt because our goal is independent performance without any assistance.

So go through these prompts and see if you are always physically prompting the student or gradually reducing it to partial to gesture prompt, modeling, verbal prompt, and then maybe verbal cue.

Using the appropriate level of prompt is the only way we can make sure we are engaging and involving the student actively in learning.

Now we have another poll.

What would you like to add to your instructional practice

instruction paired with concrete representational items? I think that's extremely important.

I had a lot more materials I wanted to share with you, but always in my presentation I can always, I always find that I exceed the time.

I do not want to exceed the time and keep you too long.

Okay, I see that they're all, many of you want to minimize physical prompting, which is good and you are gonna increase your games.

I think games and role play and storytelling and concrete are all good avenues to increase learner engagement.

As you can see, we have almost similar initiatives expressed by most of you.

Okay, I am going to move on to the next slide.

And so to kind of summarize whatever I shared with you, how do we engage and enrich learners with joyful learning, storytelling, drama, role play and puppets that will definitely strengthen your learners focus and attention.

Play games, charade games, just a few minutes.

And then if you have a mirror and show it to the mirror when show them the mirror when they're showing a sad face or a scared face that will increase their motivation.

Play charades game you know, have a hula hoop and let them toss little dice or little bean bags in there for the counting.

Or you can have an addition statement and they can make the addition using the hula hoop that will change their love for learning from maybe I don't like math to I love math.

Teach self calming strategies, blend in movement, watch your prompts, make effective use of assistive technology so that the student is actually making that advancement in moving from using a more complex device from a very simple one.

And concrete items, photographs and not just picture symbols and team and collaborate for student success.

So these are all the tools or resources, books that I have written that I used plus other research.

And these are all the resources.

Thank you everyone for joining this webinar.

And you will have the handout that maybe give you a little bit more detail than maybe what I share with you.

And the next webinar is on May 2nd.

It is following up on the behavior issues that I touched.

It'll focus on cultivating calmness, concentration, and coping skills.

In order to build that concentration, We really need a motivating environment.

Which is what I talked about, motivating environment, instruction and adaptations and materials.



Next time it's much more on cultivating calmness and concentration and coping skill.

Thank you very much.

Have a great day and a great year.

And there are number of questions I will.

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Okay, one of the questions that I will read, "You mentioned continuous active engagement rather than downtime.

The school day is long for my students with multiple and severe disabilities.

It is hard to have continuous active engagement for 6.5 hours.

How can we fill these times? Does structured choice time count? Blocks Monday, but even with this, how can fill 400 minutes of a day for severe students?" Excellent question.

I'm going to go ahead and answer the question.

And that is when I said active engagement, in other words, the students are involved in some activity instead of turning on a video, which I often have seen, which makes no sense for many of our students.

You can have a video maybe for three minutes.

But what I was talking about was having some kind of a movement activity, maybe listening to some music and maybe waving their arms or shaking their legs or showing facial expressions.

It is possible to have a variety of diverse activities blended into the day instead of the students just sitting there because when they're sitting there not engaged in an activity, what happens is it causes behavioral issue because they're both.

The other thing is a bit of painting.

Maybe you can use adapted brushes.

You can attach it to a glove with a Velcro and you can adapt, use a brush and they can paint or move their hands and color and then maybe if you sprinkle some glue and then they can make a collage out of that.

So you can have art activities, you can have movement activities, they can listen to some music and wave some scarves.

So there are a variety of activities that are engaging, that are motivating, that are joyful, that could be embedded during the day.

It can be role play, it can be storytelling, it can be somebody from a higher grade comes and reads a story or acts out a story.

So there are variety of things.

The other question, I hope I have answered that question, the next question is "Can we please get a link or emailed graduated number line that was shown?" Yes, I'll be happy to send a graduated number line and I find you can adapt it and attach

many objects to numbers and you can reduce it to five.

And for example, in answer to the previous question, you can have a graduated number line that they are working on attaching objects.

Thank you.

I think I have done that one too.

There are no more questions.

Thank you.

- [Moderator] All right, thank you Padmaja for your expertise.

Another wonderful presentation.

For those of you still with us, if you are looking to earn CEUs, be sure to complete that assessment.

I've put the link in the chat.

You'll also receive that in an email tomorrow in about 24 hours there'll be the link there.

You can also email Able U at [ableuinc.com](mailto:ableuinc.com).

Thank you for attending and have a great day.