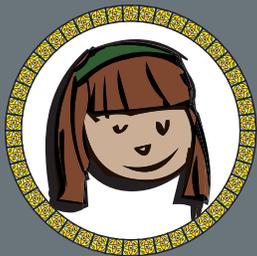


# Some Effective Practices



Good news! Teaching your students with LDs will not require a separate skill-set or additional approach: Teaching strategies that work best for students with LDs also tend to be strategies that work well for ALL students.

## **Embrace Structure**

Like most students, a predictable environment provides a foundation for learning. When the basics of the day are structured and predictable, students can form helpful habits that can take the stress out of preparedness, and allow mental and emotional energy to be spent where it is most needed and useful: in meeting the challenges of learning and growing.

## **Individualize in Good Faith**

Remember, fairness isn't everyone getting the same thing: it's everyone getting what they need. Compare accommodations to eyeglasses: not everyone needs them, but for students who do, they are crucial. IEPs should give clear indications of what supports are needed and fair; parents and prior teachers can also give clues to "what works", so that your teaching can meet the needs of all of your students.

## **Teach in Multiple Modes**

Students with LDs only struggle in certain modes of learning; historically favoured modes such as reading and sitting quietly work well for many students, but you can reach out to other types of learners by using other modes regularly and in combinations.

## **Know What You're Teaching and Assessing At Each Moment**

Pedagogical structure is crucial to the two previous points: keeping an eye on what your precise goals are can help you choose your instructional focus. If narrative structure is the point of a lesson, then students may demonstrate that knowledge in different ways. If you're testing concepts, spelling might not need correcting or grading.

## **Model Learning**

DO what you want to SEE. Students learn more from what they see than from what we say, and students with LDs may benefit from repeated concrete examples. Share your own experiences of learning. Discuss how you deal with your own mistakes. Show your students what an engaged and interested learner looks like.

## **Watch for Assumed Knowledge**

You may have to fill in gaps for students with LDs in the same way you'd have to fill them in for students new to the country. Meeting these surprising gaps with acceptance will go a long way towards encouraging students to ask questions and take risks when they need to. Along the same lines, give yourself credit for these extra lessons you teach, and be resolute in your determination to teach what your students need to learn.

*Some Effective Practices* is an excerpt from the *Some Assembly Required* Teacher's Guide. For more information about *Some Assembly Required*, see the Resources page in this guide.

