Meeting the Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Communication Disorders

The TEACCH Method

Psychological and Behavioral Characteristics

	Social Interaction	Communication	Stereotypes	Cognitive Abilities
Autism	Little or no eye contact Autistic leading Unawareness of social situations	Little or no verbal communication Repetitive, echolalic, or robotic speech	Inflexible routines Motor repetitions (finger flapping, body rocking)	May have ID or may be savant
Rett Syndrome	Loss of social skills within first few years Lost of interest in social environment	Severely impaired expressive and receptive language	Develop hand movements (hand wringing) between 5-30 months	Often associated with severe or profound ID
Childhood Disintegrative Disorder	Loss of interest in environment but not until between 2-10 yrs of age Lack of social or emotional reciprocity	Loss of language skills between 2-10 yrs of age Repetitive use of language Lack of make believe play	Develop repetitive motor movements (hand flapping/finger waving) Restricted interests and activities	Usually associated with ID as loss of skills in all areas is progressive
Asperger Syndrome	Lack of ability to read social cues Awkward eye contact Interest in social environment- Theory of mind	No clinically significant delays in language Use of language may be delayed (loudness or socially appropriate use)	Restricted areas of interest (one topic) Inflexible adherence to certain routines Repetitive motor movements	No clinically significant delay in cognition

Students with ASD

- Often have severe attention problems
- May benefit from
  - One-on-one instruction
    - In combination with independent work stations using the TEACCH method
  - Reinforcers for attending and responding appropriately
  - Ongoing supervision
- Difficulty with joint attention
  - The ability to coordinate attention between desired object and a person in a social context (e.g., follow adult's eye gaze to an object)

TEACCH Method

- Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children
- Answers three questions:
  - What work?
  - How much work?
  - How will I know when I am finished?
- http://www.teacch.com/

Physical Organization

- Teacher instruction, group work, independent work, play areas, time-out areas, snack area, place for personal belongings
- Establishing areas in the classroom can begin with the natural setting. For example, work areas are probably not good to set up near distracting mirrors or windows.
- It is beneficial to have work areas near shelves or storage cabinets, so work materials are easily accessible.
- Blank walls are also good to build a work area around. Students' tables or desks face the blank walls and some distractions are thus eliminated.
- Areas where students spend some independent time, such as play or leisure, are better off not being located near exits.
- Rugs, bookshelves, partitions, tape on the floor, arrangement of tables, all of these can be used to make clear boundaries.

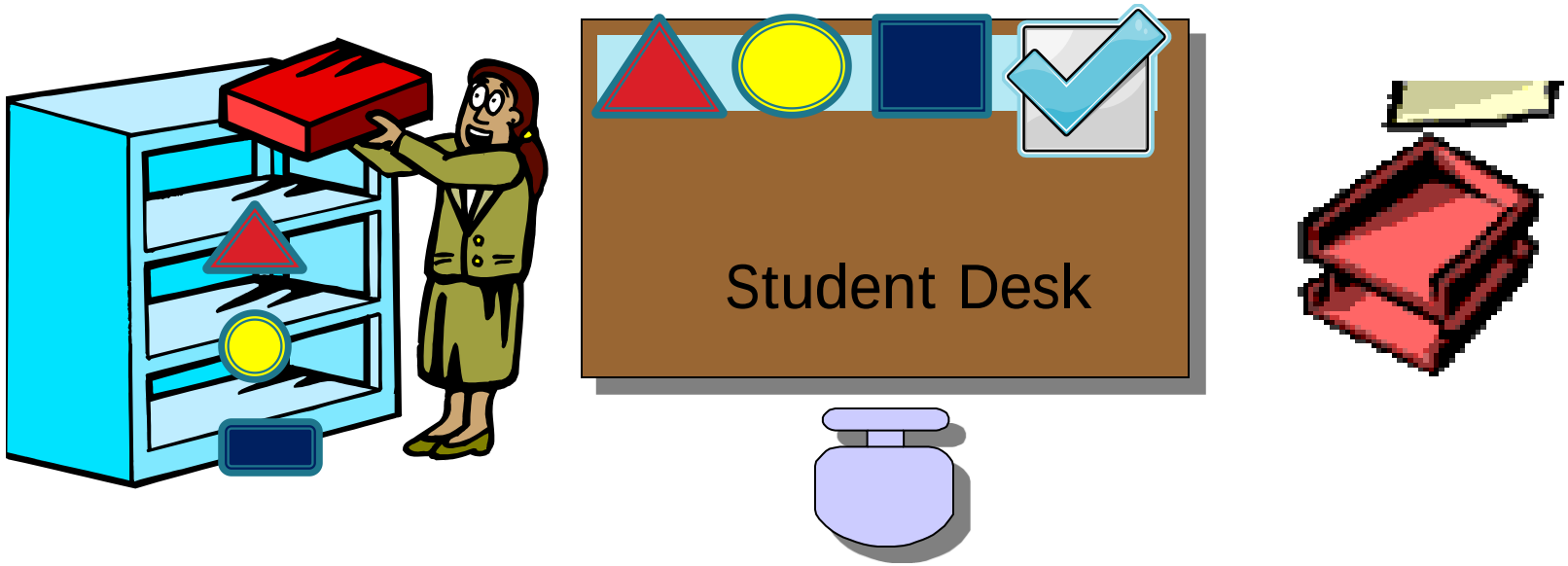
(adapted from TEACCH Website- Educational Approaches)

Work Areas

- Is there space provided for individual and group work?
- Are work areas located in least distractable settings?
- Are work areas marked so that a student can find his own way?
- Does the teacher have easy visual access to all work areas?
- Are there places for students to put finished work?
- Are work materials in a centralized area and close to work areas?
- Are a student's materials easily accessible and clearly marked for him or her?
- Are boundaries of the areas clear?

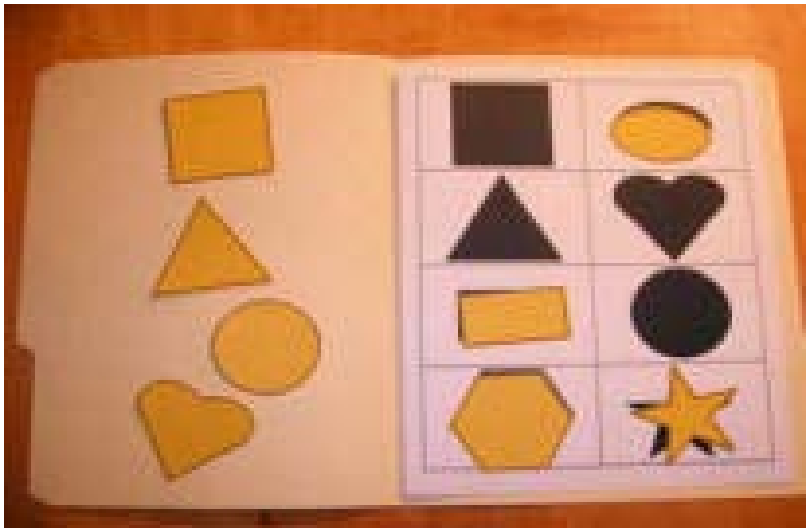
(adapted from TEACCH Website- Educational Approaches)

Ex. Work Area



Tasks

- Require physical manipulation instead of paper/pencil tasks
- Move from left to right or top to bottom (directions/materials on left or top and complete on bottom or right



Schedule Considerations

- Is there a balance of individual, independent, group, and leisure activities incorporated daily?
- Do individual student schedules consider student needs for break times, reinforcement, unpreferred activities followed by preferred activities?
- Does the schedule help a student with transitions -- where to go and what to do?
- Does the schedule help a student know where and when to begin and end a task?
- How are transitions and changes in activity signaled? timer rings? teacher direction? student monitors clock?
- Is the schedule represented in a form that is easily comprehended by the student?

(adapted from TEACCH Website- Educational Approaches)

Sample Individual Schedule

- Student arrival, put belongings away, greetings
- Free time
- Resource room-Teacher table
- Independent Work
- Break; sensory time, computer, etc.
- Transition to general education inclusion
- Teacher table
- Independent work
- Break; prepare for lunch
- Lunch
- Recess/Specials (art, music, PE)
- Resource Room-teacher table
- Independent work
- Break ; sensory time, computer, etc.
- Dismissal

IEP Progress Data Collection Sheet

Mathematics				
IEP Goal	Task (s) Assoc. w/Goal	Date Task Intro.	Date Task Progress Monitored	Percent Mastery
TEKS 4.9(C) use reflections to verify that a shape has symmetry	Placing lines of Symmetry			
TEKS 4.4(C) recall and apply multiplication facts through 12 x 12	Complete Mult. table			
TEKS 4.2(B) model fraction quantities greater than one using concrete objects and pictorial models	Match fraction to picture			