

# Tools for Teaching Children with Disabilities



## Visual Tools

**Make the Schedule Visual-** Use pictures or words to show what you will be doing that day.

**Show and Tell-** Use examples or other resources to SHOW students what the expectations are while giving directions verbally.



## Writing Tools

**Seating-** Be sure children are seated in a comfortable position for writing tasks.

**Amount of Writing-** Decrease the amount of writing expected; fewer sentences, etc. You could also have students' fill-in just one word/sentence, answer fewer questions, etc.

**Drawing-** Ask students, who are able, to draw their answer instead of writing it.

**Scribe-** The object of YFF is not to “teach writing.” Asking two or three children to work together and have one person do the writing is a great idea!



## Reading Tools

**Add Color-** Highlighting key portions of the text can often support readers.



**Pre-teach-** Send home the portion of reading you will be doing ahead of time, so students can practice reading a section at home that will be used the following week in class.

**Partner Read-** As with using a scribe for writing, consider having a peer do the reading. This could be done in small groups or as a class. Never require any child to read aloud in class!



### Sensory Tools

**Allow Movement-** Some children need to rock or move in order to focus or stay calm; allow this to happen! God put the wiggles there!

**Fidget Tools-** These are not toys, they are learning tools! We have a variety of fidget tools in the office for your use, but many students will bring their own, or use naturally available tools to seek sensory stimulation (ie. Pencil, eraser, etc.). As long as students are using these items appropriately, allow them to continue in the classroom.

\*\* Whatever tools you choose to use in the class, remember to explain them to the class in a way that makes all children comfortable. Explain that some people need eyeglasses to read, while others need highlighting.



### Social Considerations

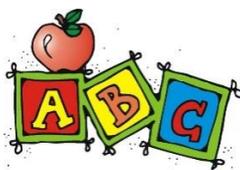
**Avoid Distraction-** Arrange children so they are not looking out the window or into the hallway when they need to be focused on a lesson.

**Take Breaks-** Break up your lesson so that children aren't sitting for long periods and allow for students to take breaks as needed.

**Multisensory is Best-** Use a multisensory approach by varying your teaching... use music, movement, objects you can hold, role-play, etc.



# The ABC's of Working with Children with Special Needs



- A- Acknowledge that the child is unique and a true blessing!**
- B- Begin your teaching time in prayer.**
- C- Challenge yourself to develop strategies to help all students on an individual basis.**
- D- Do not worry!**
- E- Equal and Fair are not the same thing. Strive to be fair.**
- F- Focus on the person, NOT the disability.**
- G- God is your partner! Seek Him first.**
- H- Have faith that you are meant to teach this child, right now, right here.**
- I- Involve the child and their family.**
- J- Jesus asks you to LOVE.**
- K- Keep working on it! Every lesson won't be perfect; learn from it and keep trying.**
- L- Lead by your example.**
- M- Make adjustments.**
- N- Never give up!**
- O- Organize yourself, your lesson, and your learning space.**
- P- Praise and encourage! Look always for the positives!**
- Q- Quietly reflect on your lesson and interactions; ask God's guidance as you evaluate what went well and what changes you can make.**
- R- Reach out to the child and his/her family for advice and to show support.**
- S- Shower all children with love, respect, acceptance, and support.**
- T- Teach in a way the child can learn.**
- U- Use the child's talents.**
- V- Value each and every child.**
- W- What can you learn from them? What can they learn from you?**
- X- eXpect greatness; shoot for the moon!**
- Y- You can do it!**
- Z- This is not the end, but instead the beginning of what we hope is a wonderful, shared, faith journey!**

Diocese of Des Moines Disability Ministry

