



Rock Your Classroom

Focus on
Differentiated
Instruction

Observation Guide
Professional Development Tool

Guide to Evidence-based Practices



Focus on Differentiated Instruction:

- Teachers conduct ongoing progress monitoring to inform instruction.
- Scaffolding/Universal Design for Learning practices are demonstrated.
- Accommodations or modifications are used as needed or indicated on IEP's.
- Varieties of group sizes and length of activities are used.
- All children have opportunities to participate with peers in activities.

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4. Differentiated Instruction

4a. Teachers conduct ongoing progress monitoring to inform instruction.

Quality indicators:

- Teachers refer to information from progress monitoring to develop differentiated instructional strategies and include these strategies in the lessonplan books. **They develop progress monitoring forms and refer to the forms for gathering data related to the three Child Outcome areas.**
- Teachers recognize children’s different levels of participation **and differences in their functional use of skills.**
- **Teachers are familiar with and understand the use of the district-approved informational tool.**



Questions to ask:

- ✓ *What resources do you use to support scaffolding of instruction?*
- ✓ *Where do you address differentiated instruction in your lesson plans?*
- ✓ *How do you include all children as active participants in the lessons or class activities?*
- ✓ *How do you use progress monitoring data to inform your instruction and guide you in providing practice to children in the functional use of skills?*



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

*Links to Additional Information
Right click to open in new window*

Universal Supports

- **Employ use of Student Progress Monitoring and District-approved Informational Tool to inform instruction, goals, and COS data.**
- **Observe children’s use of functional skills across situations and settings** and incorporate progress monitoring into daily routines.
- **Collaborate with staff, related service providers, and family members to gather data about children’s functioning in multiple situations and settings.**

[Resources for Progress Monitoring - TATS page](#)

[Progress Monitoring Tips for Teachers \(Head Start Inclusion\)](#)

[Examples and Definitions: Assessments for Progress Monitoring](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Use skill assessment checklists **that focus on functional skills in the Child Outcome areas.**
- Develop a planning matrix based on goals as they relate to the daily routine. Use the matrix to determine which progress data to collect at varying parts of the routine.
- Gather information related to IEP goals, as well as information related to classroom performance throughout the day **in varying situations and with varying people.**

[Skill Assessment Checklist](#)

[Progress Monitoring - Tips for Teachers of Children with Disabilities \(Head Start\)](#)

[Teacher Planning Matrix](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Break down goals into smaller steps (task analysis) to show both progress and continued needs accurately. **Use this data to inform instruction that emphasizes children’s ability to use skills in functional ways.**
- For children with highly individualized needs, collect data more often so that needs are evaluated frequently **and that practice in multiple settings is provided.**

[Monitoring Behaviors during Routines](#)

[Child Assessment Worksheet - Head Start](#)

[Progress Monitoring Flow Chart](#)

4b. Scaffolding/Universal Design for Learning practices are demonstrated.

Quality indicators:

- Teachers differentiate instruction for children based on individual needs.
- References to differentiated instructional strategies are included in the lesson plan books.
- Teachers recognize children's different levels of participation and make changes **as needed to assist children with functional use of skills.**
- All children are active participants in lessons **and lessons emphasize functional skills.**
- **Teachers plan times in the schedule to provide opportunities for practice of skills across varying settings, situations, and people.**



Questions to ask:

- ✓ *What resources do you use to support scaffolding of instruction?*
- ✓ *Where do you address differentiated instruction in your lesson plans?*
- ✓ *How do you include all children as active participants in the lessons or class activities?*



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

*Links to Additional Information
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Universal Supports

- Establish acceptance of special needs and special talents among children in the classroom.
- Provide accommodations such as additional time for activities, specialized materials, and specific feedback.
- **Facilitate the practice of skills throughout the activities of the classroom and in settings throughout the day.**

[*Resources for Universal Design for Learning - TATS page*](#)

[*Embracing Inclusion in Early Childhood*](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Provide environmental supports the **support independent functioning** by using visual cues throughout the classroom.
- Provide picture, photo, and objects that **support lessons with real-life examples.**
- Provide support with materials regarding placement for access and stabilization. **Use specialized materials and provide practice in functional use of materials.**
- Present curriculum in manageable segments and **relate information to functional use of skills.**
- Employ the use of peer buddies for social interaction and mild assistance with activities.

[*Individualizing Instruction in Preschool Classrooms*](#)

[*A Guide for Inclusion - Individualizing Instruction \(Head Start\)*](#)

[*VPK Teacher Activity Cards*](#)

[*Overview of Individualized Supports and Accommodations*](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Prompt and assist children in making responses while following their lead to **encourage their communication in a variety of settings and for multiple purposes.**
- Provide accommodations such as reducing the number of steps in an activity, presenting picture sequences of activities, and increasing opportunities for practice.
- **Collaborate to share and gather information from family members and service providers to provide consistency and increase opportunities for children to practice the use of skills across multiple situations and settings.**

[*Characteristics and Breadth of Child Outcomes Areas Domains*](#)

[*Embedding Individualized Instruction, Modifications, Adaptations*](#)

[*Tips for an Integrated Therapy Approach Disabilities*](#)

4c. Accommodations or modifications are used as needed and/or indicated on IEP's

Quality indicators:

- All children are active participants in activities and **lesson plans indicate practice of skills across multiple settings.**
- Activities are modified to accommodate the needs of children and plans address the **same standards and use of skills** as their typically developing peers.
- Accommodations or modifications are in accordance with IEPs, documented in lesson plans, and **methods of practice are shared with families and service providers.**



Questions to ask:

- ✓ *What types of modifications are used to ensure participation of children with special needs in all activities?*
- ✓ *What types of accommodations are used to ensure the participation of children with special needs in all activities?*
- ✓ *How are you documenting accommodations or modifications?*
- ✓ *Are you aware of, and implementing, accommodations or modifications for children with IEPs?*



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

*Links to Additional Information
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Universal Supports

- **Collaborate with families related** to family goals, instructional plans, and IEP goals and objectives and develop plans needed to address those goals.
- Be aware of your role in the discussion of children's needs **and progress and facilitate the participation of family.**

[Visual Supports Checklist](#)

[Tools for Inclusion - Head Start](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- **Goals should be functional and meaningful.** Be aware of each child's goals and consider the goals when planning instruction.
- Provide supports, adaptations, and accommodations in environment, materials, curriculum, and **activities in various settings throughout the day.**
- **Consider various ages, developmental levels, interests, and modes of communication and response when planning lessons.**
- Consider needs for assistive technology as well as needs for prompts and supports during all activities.

[Overview of Individualized Supports](#)

[Adapting Activities and Materials](#)

[Supporting Various Ages and Developmental Levels](#)

[Supports and Adaptations - Special Education Interventions - TATS Talks](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Provide intensive adaptations, and accommodations in environment, materials, curriculum, and activities throughout the day.
- Provide assistive technology and adaptive equipment as needed. Be sure that you and other staff have been trained on its use.
- Be aware of prompting hierarchy needed during the assistance of each child.

[Individualizing Instruction in Preschool Classrooms](#)

[Embedding Individualized Instruction, Modifications, Adaptations](#)

[Addressing Adaptive Skills in the Classroom](#)

4d. Varieties of group sizes (whole, small, individualized) and length of activities are used.

Quality indicators:

- Groups vary in number and characteristics and children are grouped in ways that expose them to multiple abilities and activities.
- Small group and individual practice are provided as follow-up for teaching skills introduced in whole group lessons.
- Teachers/staff are aware of and plan for shortening the time of activities or breaking activities into short/small components when needed to address needs.
- Teachers are aware of class/group size ratio and vary ratios, activities, people, and settings. Teachers, staff, and families observe children engaged in multiple activities and note their functional use of skills.



Questions to ask:

- ✓ How are group sizes varied and used in the classroom? Are children grouped with different peers on a regular basis?
- ✓ Is the length of time of activities varied or individualized based on learning needs of the children?



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

[Links to Additional Information](#)
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Universal Supports

- Observe and monitor children in various size groups. **Make use of small group sizes to observe children more closely and to observe social dynamics of groups.**
- Provide activities that promote cooperative play. Facilitate various activities during play.

[Grouping Children for Social Growth](#)

[The How and Why of Using Small Groups in Preschool](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Make use of various size groups during the daily routines and schedules in order to meet individual needs for instruction, self-care, and social skill training.
- Individualize lessons, interests, and curriculum adaptations during small group times in the routines.
- **Develop activity matrixes that address small groups as well as individual instruction.**
- **Provide time in groups of various sizes that are based on a variety of traits, interests, and abilities.**

[Collaborative Planning for Addressing Individual Needs](#)

[Using Adapted Books to Encourage Participation](#)

[Sample Group Activity Matrix](#)

[Sample Individual Activity Matrix](#)

Intensive Interventions

- **Develop daily schedules that provide for both group and individual instruction and progress monitoring based on children's IEP's, as well as standards.**
- Incorporate additional guided practice, individualized instruction, and intensive interventions into small group/individual settings during the day.
- Plan for implementation of curriculum modifications during small group follow-up of lessons.

[Curriculum Modification Planning Form](#)

[Ideas to Engage Children with Significant Disabilities](#)

4e. All children have opportunities to participate with peers in activities.

Quality indicators:

- Children are active participants in class activities.
- Lesson plans include notes related to IEP goals, accommodations, modifications or differentiated instructional strategies as needed.
- Materials and activities are varied to accommodate for individual needs in learning styles, attention spans, needs for movement, repetition, and multiple modes of response. Materials and activities focus on children's functional use of skills.
- Teachers demonstrate and encourage empathy and tolerance and teach skills for interacting and problem-solving with peers.



Questions to ask:

- ✓ Are needed accommodations and adaptations readily available to facilitate all children being included in activities?
- ✓ Does an atmosphere of inclusion and friendship exist in the classroom?
- ✓ Do all teachers/staff work to support all children's participation in activities?



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

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Universal Supports

- Determine what kinds of supports each child in the class needs to participate successfully. Develop activities and lessons that are based on skills in the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards.
- Provide the three basics of Universal Design:
 1. Multiple means of representation
 2. Multiple means of action and expression
 3. Multiple means of engagement

[Universal Design for Learning and Strategies for Inclusion - TATS page](#)

[Early Childhood Building Blocks - Universal Design for Learning - Resources for Early Childhood](#)

[Universal Design for Learning in Pre-K Inclusive Environments - TATS and FIN Talk](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Provide support strategies to enhance each child's participation in activities as well as support practice in the use of functional skills.
- Provide social skills instruction and guided practice to enable children with social and behavioral difficulties to participate with peers.
- Develop a program of positive support which includes visuals, routines, social skills lessons, and adapted curriculum instruction.

[Visuals for Supporting Social Interactions](#)

[Developing and Teaching a Social Skills Lesson](#)

[Supports and Adaptations - Special Education Interventions - TATS Talks](#)

[Developing Positive Supports for Social Behavior](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Collaborate with therapists, service providers, and families in providing needed supports and practice in multiple settings and situations.
- Develop IEP accommodations and other plans to provide supports needed for inclusion during activities.
- Use a range of service delivery options including varying group sizes and varying locations.
- Foster communication and collaboration with families.

[Integrated Therapy - TATS Talks](#)

[Tips to Consider: Reflecting on Challenging Behavior](#)

[Essentials for Supporting Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Development](#)