Special Education Strategies

**Co-Teaching Strategy**

This SPED strategy involves two teachers working together to incorporate their skills and time to monitor students together. In order to do this, one teacher can teach while the other walks around the class and monitors the students as they work, parallel teaching, station teaching involving one general education teacher and one special education teacher, and alternative teaching.

**How to Use:**

1. **Work with IEPs and 504 plans**

Special education teachers will address the needs of students with IEPs and 504 plans.

1. **Participate in regular activities**

Students will still partake in regular classroom activities but will benefit from two teaching styles by receiving specialized instruction. This encourages all students, including those in special education, to participate in activities, and ultimately, improving students’ performance.

1. **Work together**

The teachers will work together to teach each lesson to the students but will use different approaches and teaching strategies to do so.

\*Students may be at different learning levels, but special education teachers have the capability to work in small groups. This allows for closer instruction and monitoring in a quiet environment for students, avoiding the distractions from a bigger classroom environment.

**When to Use:**

Use the Co-Teaching Strategy to help students who may have a disability and may benefit from being exposed to different teaching strategies.

* Help students with ADHD focus with less distractions from a small group environment
* Implement individual IEPs and 504s
* Assess students at different learning levels at one time
* Provide special tutoring/extra practice from the special education teacher while the general teacher works with the rest of the class
* \*Any time a student may need it.

\*All students can benefit from this strategy and can learn from each other. Students in the special education program can increase their comprehension and benefit from complex learning while interacting with other students. Other students who may understand the content are able to move on without having to stop to catch struggling students up.

**Variations**

* *Team Teaching:* The teachers will work together as a team to teach new material to the class at the same time.
* *Parallel Teaching:* Two teachers will divide the class in to two groups and teach the same material with the same level of skill and teaching style. This will allow for a smaller student to teacher ratio.
* *Drifting:* One teacher will drift around the room to help students while the other teacher leads the lesson.

**Peer Tutoring**

This instructional strategy is used to engage students on different skill levels, allowing students to interact with their peers while learning. This will pair a higher learner with a student who may need assistance in learning.

**How to Use:**

1. **Check students for understanding**

Have students complete a pre-test to check for understanding on the material to determine what level of learning students are at.

1. **Create study areas**

Set up different study areas around the room to allow students to work in a variety of learning zones. This will allow students to work in the zones that work best for their needs.

1. **Present class expectations**

Post the basics of peer tutoring around the room, as well as the class expectations and outcomes.

1. **Partner students up**

Partner students who may be struggling with the material with a higher learning student. Pairs will be determined by the administered pre-test. Students will work together for 25-30 minutes a day. During the first 15-20 minutes students will work through the material together. The last 10-15 minutes will allow students who need extra practice time to show-what they know and check for understanding.

1. **Reflect on learning**

Have students complete a daily reflection journal stating what they learned, what concepts they have learned, and what concepts they understand and haven’t grasped entirely.

1. **Check for content mastery**

Have students test over the material again to check for content mastery.

**When to Use:**

* Close the gap between students on different learning levels
* Test different skills of students at different learning levels
* Aid students with behavioral issues
* Team building
* Build social skills by allowing students to work with their peers
* Closely monitor students in a smaller environment
* Help with problem solving

**Variations:**

* *Group tutoring:* Have students work in small groups of 3-4 to work over new concepts and help their peers with any they may struggle with.
* *Educational games:* Provide interactive educational games that allow students to become engaged in the learning process.
* *Self-Monitoring:* Allows students to keep track of their own behavior and progress in class.

**Self-Monitoring**

This SPED instructional strategy allows students to keep track of their own behavior and progress in class. Students with disabilities can rely more on themselves rather than on their teachers. This can be used in general and special education classrooms.

**How to Use:**

1. **Identify behavior issues**

Identify specific student behavior issues. Students are not always aware of their behavioral problems.

1. **Meet with students**

Have a one-on-one student-teacher conference during class to establish/determine behavioral issues and areas that need work.

1. **Teach good behavior**

Inform student what appropriate replacement behaviors are. Remind students what their behavior goals are.

1. **Create a self-monitoring chart**

Create a self-monitoring chart to allow students to track their progress. Post the student’s goals at the top of the chart as a reminder of good behavior.

1. **Monitor student progress**

Review student’s charts with them to determine remaining areas of need and to monitor their progress.

**When to Use:**

* Increase social skills
* Reduce conflict among students in the classroom
* Allow students to become more self-aware
* Create effective behavior modifications interventions
* Encourage higher order of thinking

**Variations:**

* *Journaling:* Have students keep a journal to record their choices throughout the school day.
* *Verbal feedback:* Have students provide the teacher with verbal feedback about their progress.
* *Peer tutoring:* Allow students to monitor their behavior and interactions while working with their peers. This can also help other students who may be experiencing their own behavior issues.