



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Outreach Programs

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Active Learning Study Group

September 9, 2014

3:00-4:00 PM

Facilitated by

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Developed for

Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

Notes for Active Learning Study Group – September 2014

About the Study Group

- *Early Learning Step by Step* from www.lilliworks.com
- Read assigned Chapter(s)
- Come prepared with questions, comments, ideas, concerns, etc. or send them to katehurst@tsbvi.edu in advance of webinar
- Participate by commenting or using chat pod

Syllabus

September 9, 2014

- Study Group Introductions
- Chapter 1 – Considerations on Methods
- Chapter 2 – Sequences of Early Learning

October 7, 2014

- Chapter 3 – Movements

November 4, 2014

- Chapter 4 – Learning Coordination of Movements

December 2, 2014

- Chapter 5 – Materials and Toys

January 6, 2015

- Chapter 6 – Learning to Chew

February 3, 2015

- Chapter 7 – Learning to Eat

March 3, 2015

- Chapter 8 – Learning to Undress and Dress

April 7, 2015

- Chapter 9 – Learning to Play

Active Learning Page

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/outreach/=3415>

Purpose of Book

1. Review certain sequences of learning
2. Suggest approaches and environmental interventions to facilitate learning
3. Means of preventing delays
4. Remedies for delays created by disability

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think students may become aggressive or withdraw in response to traditional "training" techniques? If these methods are continued, what impact can they have on the child?
2. When is a skill a "real" skill?
3. What skills do you have that have become part of your personality?
4. Do you think the conditions Lilli sets out in 1.3 The Concepts for Learning and 1.4 Conditions for Learning are valid? Why or why not?

Chapter 1: Considerations on Methods

1.1 The methods of training and teaching

Traditional method

- Developed from the philosophy that since children with disabilities do not spontaneously perform basic skills, they must be taught or trained
- Guiding hands, feet, body to perform necessary movements
- Persuading child to look or listen and then imitate
- Pushing the child to continue a task if he/she can't complete
- Important to concentrate on task
- Don't confuse child with too many objects
- Often unsuccessful and in some cases negative
- Blame is placed on the child's inability to learn rather than on failure of instructional strategies
- Can result in prompt dependency, behavioral problems, learned helplessness, lack of expectations for success
- Training splinter skills results in lack of connection for the child in his/her abilities, development of self-identity and independence, and tendency not to be able to generalize skills

What is a skill?

- Something that becomes part of the child's "personality"
- Loss of skills when one is not continually requiring skill to be used – is that really a skill?
- Should a child be expected to achieve age-appropriate skills without having learned basic skills other "typical children" need to commence more complicated activities

1.2 The Approach of Active Learning

- Observed that children without disabilities (infants and toddlers) learn from doing
- This way fits poorly into typical educational approaches
- Until age of 30-36 months or about age 3 child without disabilities is unwilling to be trained or taught.
- Lilli asks:
 - Do VIMD/DB children learn in the same way as typical peers?
 - Would they learn more typically if they were allowed to experiment and explore in their own way?
 - Could /should something be done to facilitate this type of learning?
- Philosophy of Active Learning: if given opportunity to learn from own active exploration and examination, the child will achieve skills that become part of his personality, and so are natural for him to use in interaction with others and for fulfillment of his own needs, and will gradually make him ready to react relevantly to instructions and education, be as independent as possible.
- Starting point in teaching and training a skill seems to be the final skill as a whole.
- Starting point in active learning is letting the child learn the basic steps that lead to mastering the skill in question.

1.3 The Concept of Learning

- First pre-requisite is the ability to move and have objects within reach, at least until the child is mobile and can go to the objects easily.
- He is given the opportunities to learn from the level to which he is developed.
- He can discover, experiment, and explore with many ways of performing an activity and thus learn the most practical way for him to perform a skill successfully.
- He has sufficient time to experiment, and the opportunity to repeat as many times as necessary in order to store the information gained and to confirm that a specific way of acting gives the same result, and so comprehend the reality of it.
- He has the opportunity to compare his experiences, thus becoming able to discover similarities and differences, to recognize specific experiences, to associate a new experience with others already stored in memory, to link experiences with each other and later on to categorize and generalize experiences.
- He is given the opportunity to establish the best possible evenness of the development across the levels of various learning processes, thus avoiding the missing links in one learning process that would have a negative or arresting effect on another learning process.
- He has somebody with whom to share his interest and experiences, thus learning to initiate interaction.
- Infants learn in several areas of development simultaneously.

1.4 Conditions for Learning

Three main conditions:

1. The child's level of development, his readiness for learning and the skills he has already achieved.
2. The quality of the environment from which the child is given opportunity to learn.
 - Utilize already achieved motor ability, arouse interest and curiosity, and give opportunity to achieve at the next developmental level.
 - Provide opportunities to learn in all areas: gross and fine motor, daily living activities, communication, cognition, socialization, and independence.
 - Based on information from parents, teachers, child observation and use of developmental checklists.
3. The adult's co-operation and attitude.
 - Build appropriate environments.
 - React to signals/vocalizations by sharing interests and interacting at his level of development (emotional, social?)
 - Adult needs to know the learning sequence

Chapter 2: Sequences of Early Learning

- Do we know when the sequence of learning has to be different for a child with disabilities and when they need to be the same as a typically developing child?
- Need to know pre-requisites necessary for any activity we want the child to perform.
- This book is an attempt to help us recognize steps in learning, though Lilli knows it is incomplete, but offers suggestions to solve problems observed in children with disabilities.
- Sequence of learning described affected by the culture Lilli is familiar with, but should be able to be adapted.
- Never forget to ask "why" or ask questions about what we see the child doing?

Notes:

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Figure 1 TSBVI logo.



This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Special Education Program (OSEP). Opinions expressed here are the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Department of Education.

Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.