Active Learning Implementation

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This powerpoint covers the following topics:
Participants will be able to:
1. Share basic information about Active Learning with someone else
2. Identify the role of play in learning

It will take approximately 45-60 minutes to present.
As you introduce the session, encourage participants to go to the Active Learning Space website on their phone, tablet or computer. The url is www.activelearningspace.org
What You Will Learn

Participants should be able to:

1. Discuss basic implementation strategies for using an Active Learning approach in school, home and community environments.

2. Share basic information about the FIELA curriculum and how it is used to structure activities throughout the student’s day and week.

3. Describe various ways to organize a classroom or school environment to better implement Active Learning.

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3. Describe various ways to organize a classroom or school environment to better implement Active Learning.
Section 1
Basics of Implementation
Active Learning is a deceptively simple approach to instruction. It is important to learn all the details of the approach, however, here are some basic guiding principles that can help you get started.

**Use the appropriate educational technique** – [Five Phases of Educational Treatment](#).

**Match your pace to the learner** when you interact.

**Follow the learner's lead** in any activity.

**Don't overreact or over praise the learner** - simply move on if the learner is upset or comment on what she has done.
Be aware of the type of skills the learner is working on in the activity or environment.

Select materials that are based on the child's sensory preferences and developmental level.

Arrange materials so the learner has physical access to explore independently.

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• Arrange materials so the learner has physical access to explore independently.
Basics Implementation

*Position the learner* so he/she can move optimally

*Remain silent* during the child's exploration - share simple feedback when the learner takes a break or at the end of the activity.

*Allow plenty of time* for the learner to respond - for some learners this may be minutes rather than seconds.

**Position the learner** so he/she can **move optimally**

**Remain silent** during the child's exploration - share simple feedback when the learner takes a break or at the end of the activity.

**Allow plenty of time** for the learner to respond - for some learners this may be minutes rather than seconds.
Use a wide variety of materials with differing properties.

Change only one feature at a time in the materials or environment.
If you are not clear about the Dynamic Learning Circle or the Five Phases of Educational Treatment, we encourage you to review these pages on the Active Learning Space website before going further.
Stop now and watch Patty Obrzut’s video about 5 characteristics for Active Learning. This information is a very important part of understanding and appropriately utilizing Active Learning.

https://library.tsbvi.edu/Player/13389 – approximately 7 minutes
Divide participants into small groups or pairs. Give them the supplemental handout, Basics of Implementing an Active Learning Approach, and have them discuss these two questions. Have several people share with the larger group. This activity should take about 3-4 minutes.

Use the appropriate educational technique
Match your pace to the learner
Follow the learner's lead
Don't overreact or over praise the learner
Be aware of the type of skills the learner is working on.

Select materials that are based on the child's sensory preferences and developmental level.

Arrange materials so the learner has physical access to explore independently.
Position the learner so he/she can move optimally

Remain silent during the child's exploration - share simple feedback when the learner takes a break or at the end of the activity.

Allow plenty of time for the learner to respond.
Use a wide variety of materials with differing properties.

Change only one feature at a time.
Recognize that the child needs to work at his/her current skill level.
Observe the child and your own interactions.
Section 2

Using the FIELA Curriculum in Active Learning
Using the FIELA Curriculum

Let’s take a look at this page on the Active Learning Space website [Using the FIELA Curriculum](http://www.activelearningspace.org/implementation/using-fiela-curriculum) under the Implementation tab.

Share this page on the Active Learning Space website [Using the FIELA Curriculum](http://www.activelearningspace.org/implementation/using-fiela-curriculum) under the Implementation tab with participants.

Take a few minutes to look at the content together so that participants can come back to this information in the future if they need to review the content. Most of this content is covered in the next slides so you don't have to go into detail.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

**FIELA stands for:**

- **Flexible** because it can be adapted to the child's interests, learning needs and the skill(s) the child prefers to learn at any specific time.

- **Individual** in that it recognizes the impact of the unique combination of disabilities on the way the child goes about acquiring psycho-social and cognitive-motor skills.

- **Enriched** because it maximizes varied neuronal activity.

- **Level Appropriate** because it meets the learning needs of the child at a specific point in time according to his or her assessed level in all of the developmental areas.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

Dr. Nielsen suggests that activities with the learner alternate between fine and gross movement activities throughout the day.
Remember being ACTIVE is the key to all learning.
Learners should also have a **minimum of 45 minutes of adult-child interaction every day.**
They also need time for independent play and exploration.

Dr. Nielsen suggests that activities with the learner alternate between fine and gross movement activities throughout the day.
This does not have to occur in any specific order from one day to the next. For example, on Monday you might start with a fine movement activity and then on Tuesday start with a gross movement activity.

**Remember being ACTIVE is the key to all learning.**
Learners may need brief break periods, but keep them to less than 5 minutes if possible between activities.

**Learners should also have a minimum of 45 minutes of adult-child interaction every day.**
This does not have to occur all at once. Some children, especially early on, may not be able to tolerate that much time. Play with them until they show signs of wanting to end the play or if they leave for a time and do not want to return. Some learners may take a brief break of their own initiative, but then return in a minute or two to play again along side the adult.

**They also need time for independent play and exploration.**
Independent play means the adult backs off and lets the learner play alone. For some children you may have to get them started and then gradually move away from them leaving them to play on their own. Other children will prefer playing on their own all of the time. This is why Dr. Nielsen plans for both independent and interactive play each day.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

The FIELA Curriculum manual comes with a full FIELA Curriculum set or can be ordered as a separate item from Lilli Works.

In the manual is a description of the FIELA curriculum and a list of all the activities contained on the individual cards included in the curriculum set.

There are two ways to order the manual.....
A manual comes with a full FIELA Curriculum set or can be ordered as a separate item from Lilli Works.

In the manual is a description of the FIELA curriculum and a list of all the activities contained on the individual cards included in the curriculum set.
If you order the set of materials from Lilli Works you get:

• Binder of activity cards
• Manual
• Schedule board

This can save you time in organizing the student’s schedule.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

A schedule board is included with the days of the week across the top and 6 sessions top to bottom on the left. This flannel board allows you to attach activity cards with Velcro in each time slot. It shows an individual child’s schedule of daily activities for the week.

A schedule board is included with the days of the week across the top and 6 sessions listed top to bottom on the left.

This flannel board allows for the activity cards to be attached with Velcro in each time slot.

It shows an individual child’s schedule of daily activities and can be set up for the week.

Each student would need a similar board so activities are appropriately individualized.
Other activity cards are included under Alternative Learning Environments to the right of the board.

These may replace a scheduled activity if the child does not want to complete the planned one, allowing the child to make a choice.

This allows the child to make a choice.

The cards are swapped out so the rejected activity can be offered at another time.
Within the large binder that accompanies the curriculum manual, color-coded cards are provided to organize daily and weekly activities for the student. These cards are selected based on the child's functioning level.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

A card marked F.6+ targets fine movement is appropriate for a Learner at 6 months or higher developmentally in fine movement.

Appropriate activities can only be selected after the learner's gross and fine movement skills are determined with the Functional Scheme.

You must know the developmental level of the learner to target activities.

For example, a card marked F.6+ targets fine motor skills for a student who is at 6 months or higher developmentally.

Appropriate activities can only be selected after the learner's gross and fine movement skills are determined using the Functional Scheme.

You must know the developmental level of the learner to target activities.
For example, you would not use an F.6+ activity with a child who is at a 0-3 month level in Fine Movement.

You COULD use this activity with a student who is at 6 months or higher in her Fine Movement assessment.

A child at a higher developmental level (12 months) continues to practice previously learned skills.
This provides opportunities to use acquired knowledge and experience success in his ability to accomplish tasks. Slightly changing materials that are used in the activity can provide the novelty necessary to keep the child "curious and active" (Stage 2 of the Dynamic Learning Circle).
Each card in the set is color-coded:
- Yellow for fine motor activities,
- Blue for gross motor activities,
- Green for activities that combine both gross and fine motor.
The examples shown here focus on using hands and fingers and can relate to skills such as exploring with hands and fingers or reaching across midline.

The skill of finger-painting is practiced in prone using a Support Bench in the first activity and in sitting in the second activity.

Lying over a Support Bench. Finger-painting in custard. F6+ - No. 6-29

Sitting in a wheelchair or highchair in front of a tray. Finger-painting in custard. F6+ - No. 6-30
In the first activity on the support bench, you might also be working on increasing neck, shoulder and core muscle strength.

Because the activity utilizes pudding the activity might incidentally work on finger-feeding skills: hand to mouth, exploring different tastes, and experiencing sticky textures, not to mention use of lips and tongue to remove pudding from hands!
Blue Cards indicate Gross Movement activities. In this example the cards target a child that is at 9 months or higher level developmentally. Both activities involve the use of movement with legs.

One is related to an undressing activity when the child is expected to kick-off her pants after they have been pulled down to her heels which might take place in a toileting or hygiene routine or preparing to take a swim.

The other activity involves walking in a HOPSA dress on a track in bare feet. It can relate to skills such as learning to shift weight to balance (PT), moving legs and feet for walking (physical therapy - PT and orientation and mobility - O&M), navigating uneven surfaces (O&M), exploring various textures using his feet (sensory deficiency).

If objects in the bins are based on a science lesson or a story about plants that is being shared during circle time the student might be working on goals related to the science general curriculum and concepts related to language development.
This skill might be used in an undressing activity when the child is expected to kick-off her trousers, in a toileting or hygiene routine, or preparing to change before a swim.

Can you think of some other activities that might include this gross motor skill of kicking?
Using the FIELA Curriculum

Walking in a HOPSA dress on a track in bare feet, can relate to skills such as learning to shift weight to balance, moving legs and feet for walking, or exploring various textures using feet (orientation and mobility).

Objects in the bins might relate to a science lesson on plants or fossils. The concepts the child learns about properties relate to language development (hard, soft, wet, dry).

The other activity, walking in a HOPSA dress on a track in bare feet, can relate to skills such as learning to shift weight to balance, moving legs and feet for walking, or exploring various textures using feet related to orientation and mobility.

Objects in the bins might relate to a science lesson from the general curriculum on plants or fossils. The concepts the child learns about properties relate to language development (hard, soft, wet, dry, etc.)
Green Cards indicate combined Fine and Gross Movement activities.

The activity of playing with shoes can combine both fine motor skills like grasping or scratching with fingers and gross motor skills like lifting, pulling, or banging.
This activity could be done on a Resonance Board lying down or sitting up with fabric placed over preferred objects that make a noise.

If the child is able to sit or stand and reach, objects could be placed in boxes or containers on a shelf.

The student might also explore an area outside with an adult to find things like Easter eggs or toys.
Other codes are included on each card, for example, “a.c.” indicates this is an adult-child activity.

In adult-child activities one of the primary goals is around interaction (emotional, social development) and communication.

In this example, the learner is at the 15 month or higher level in gross motor skills.

The activity is to walk somewhere with the adult.
During this type of activity, the adult must stay focused on the child’s interests and what he is trying to communicate.

The adult must also know which of the Five Phases of Educational Treatment to use at any moment.

Where you are going and what motor skills the student is demonstrating are not the most important part of this activity. Interaction is!
Using the FIELA Curriculum

The learner might be practicing learned orientation and mobility skills such as trailing a wall or using a cane as part of this activity.

The student might have opportunities to make choices about a where to go or what treat to select when he gets there.

The learner might be practicing learned orientation and mobility skills such as trailing a wall or using a cane as part of this activity.

The student might have opportunities to make choices about a where to go or what treat to select when he gets there.
Other sensory efficiency and language concepts can be worked on at the same time. For example, directions, names of objects you find along the way, auditory cues and tactile landmarks.

You may want to share an idea from Joe Gibson about making a walk more interactive, read Journey Sticks on the Active Learning Space.
“S.” indicates that this activity requires some sight.

In the example, switched on flashlights could be placed around the child on a Resonance Board or inside a bin for the child to reach, grasp and explore.

If the child also has cortical visual impairment it might provide practice in using vision to notice an object.

“S.” on a card indicates that this activity requires some sight.

In the example, switched on "torches" (flashlights) could be placed around the child on a Resonance Board or inside a bin for the child to work on skills like reach, grasp and explore.

If the child also has cortical visual impairment it might provide practice in using vision to notice an object.
Using the FIELA Curriculum

You will include some caregiving activities each day such as toileting, undressing and dressing, personal hygiene and eating.

It is important to select the appropriate approach ([Five Phases of Educational Treatment](#)) to use with the child during these activities if the child needs adult help.

There will be, of course, a need to include some caregiving activities each day such as toileting, undressing and dressing, personal hygiene and eating.

It is important to select the appropriate approach ([Five Phases of Educational Treatment](#)) to use with the child during these activities.

These are included in the student’s daily schedule as appropriate.
Remember, these cards are **activities not goals**.

Each activity is a lesson much like lessons on addition, reading circle to practice reading aloud, or learning how to play a game in PE.

**You must be clear about the goal(s) your student is working on when using any activity.**

This cannot be stressed enough! If you don’t know what you want to student to do in an activity the design of the activity is likely to be wrong. You cannot be sure you are focused on important IEP goals if you don’t know which ones will be focused on in the activity.
If possible provide participants access to a FIELA Curriculum manual. You may need to share 1 for a small group. Give them about 2-3 minutes to discuss and look at the manual. Have them share their thoughts and questions with the larger group.

What questions do you have about the use of the FIELA Curriculum? 
Do you think you could use this curriculum in your program? 
What are some of the positives and negatives you see in the FIELA Curriculum?
Section 3

Organizing the Classroom Environment
Review the content on these pages of the Active Learning Space website with your participants. If you are doing flipped learning you may want participants to do this before your session.

- Classroom Environments
- Developing My Classroom for Secondary-Aged Students Who Aren’t Actively Engaging with People or Objects
- Classroom Centers
Active Learning is an approach that can be utilized to some degree almost anywhere depending on the nature of the activity. Some arrangements work better than others for the student. If space allows, set up specific areas or centers. If this is not possible, make use of shared areas like a therapy room.

Organizing the Classroom Environment

Active Learning is an approach that can be utilized to some degree almost anywhere depending on the nature of the activity. Some arrangements work better than others for the student. If space allows, set up specific areas or centers. If this is not possible, make use of shared areas like a therapy room.

Not every school can have a set-up like Penrickton Center or Narbethong School.

However, some arrangements work better than others for the student. Therefore we have to be creative in finding solutions to space and equipment needed for Active Learning.

If space allows, setting up specific areas or centers can be helpful. If this is not possible, make use of shared areas like a therapy room.
Parents and educators are some of the most creative folks we know.

You might have an idea for creating an Active Learning “space” or activity that could benefit others. 

Participants may want to share some of the ideas they have with the larger group. Remind them to share their ideas with Charlotte Cushman, webmaster for Active Learning space at cushmanc@tsbvi.edu.

Check out some Ideas from the Field and then consider sharing yours.
Provide participants with paper, pencils, markers, etc. Take about 5-10 minutes for them to talk in small groups or pairs about and perhaps make notes or drawings of how they might “re-organize” their classroom or other school space to implement Active Learning with one of their students. Have some of them share with the larger group.

Take some time and think about how you might organize your classroom or home to set up more opportunities for Active Learning. Get creative! You may even want to sketch out a floor plan or make a list of centers and what would go in them.
Credits

This content was developed by Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired Outreach Program and may not be used without their express permission.

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