

Strategies and Accommodations for Teaching – Marti Kensworthy

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) - A traumatic brain injury (TBI) refers to a brain injury that is caused by an outside force. A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body can cause it, but not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI (www.ninds.nih.gov)

- Teaching Strategies
 - Chunk Information - Break complex instructions into manageable parts
 - Teach away from distractions
 - Use multi-sensory input - visual aids, hands-on learning, written instruction,
 - Memory Aids - cheat sheets, checklists,
- Accommodations
 - Multiple breaks, fatigue may set in quickly
 - Allow extra time to respond or answer questions
 - Limit the amount of information at one time
 - Be patient and direct
 - Encourage peer interaction/partner play

Parkinsons - a progressive neurodegenerative movement disorder that occurs when brain cells, specifically dopamine-producing neurons, die, causing motor issues like tremors, stiffness, and slowness (bradykinesia; Mayo Clinic).

- Teaching Strategies
 - Use cueing techniques - patients may freeze up, and using a cueing technique may help them (“big steps” to combat shuffling or feet freezing; you may need to figure out what works for individuals, larger tiles may be easier to hold)
 - Focus on repetitive, intentional movements
 - Break down tasks
- Accommodations
 - Keep instructions short and concise
 - Use cues like sitting tall to improve posture
 - All frequent breaks to help with fatigue
 - Encourage purposeful movements

ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) / **ADD** (Attention-Deficit Disorder) is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects attention, focus, organization, impulsivity, and emotional regulation. Common traits may include difficulty staying on task, forgetfulness, disorganization, restlessness, and challenges managing multiple pieces of information at once (www.nimh.nih.gov).

- Common Symptoms that may affect play - Inattention, restlessness, impulsivity
- Multisensory learning - visual aids, hands-on practice, written instructions,
- Practice with repetition
- Chunk information and focus on a small bit at a time, especially with the card

Dyslexia - a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition affecting language processing, reading fluency, spelling, and organization, despite having normal or high intelligence.

- Explicit instruction - speak slowly and break down complex instructions, allow for repetition
- Multisensory approach - auditory, visual, and hands-on learning



Autism - a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition that affects how a person communicates, interacts with others, and experiences the world. Since it is a "spectrum," its impact varies widely; some individuals are completely independent, while others require significant daily support.

- Be direct and concrete - avoid sarcasm and complex verbal instruction, provide step-by-step instruction if possible
- Use visuals
- Allow processing times
- Minimize visual and auditory distractions
- Give clear feedback
- Use a hands-on approach

Stroke - a medical emergency that occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked by a clot or interrupted by a ruptured blood vessel (Mayo Clinic)

- Minimize background noise
- Use an adult tone of voice, speak clearly
- Give one instruction at a time, allow time for processing
- Use visual aids- large bold print, pictures
- Hands-on approach
- Allow extra time to process and respond
- Manage breaks
- Chunk material

Dementia - an umbrella term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life. Key types of dementia:

- Alzheimer's Disease - caused by abnormal protein buildup in the brain
- Vascular Dementia - caused by restricted blood flow or microscopic bleeding in the brain
- Lewy Body Dementia - abnormal protein deposits that affect thinking, movement, or behavior
- Frontotemporal Dementia - characterized by the breakdown of nerve cells in the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain.

Teaching (reteaching) would best be accomplished by a player who previously played mah jongg to trigger recognition. Learning new, complex skills may be frustrating for someone with dementia.

- Errorless Learning- don't force guessing, break down tasks to one instruction at a time
- Remove distractions
- Be patient and speak slowly; use short sentences, ask yes and no questions
- Use visual/sensory aids to help players trigger memories of the game.
- Be consistent with the game and modify as needed.

Macular Degeneration - an eye disease that blurs or destroys central vision. It affects the macula—the part of the retina responsible for seeing fine, sharp details. While it rarely causes total blindness, it significantly impairs tasks such as reading, driving, and recognizing faces (Medline Plus).

- Use bright, task-oriented LED lights, but be cognizant of direct glare in learners' eyes
- Use black text on white or yellow background, avoid shiny glossy paper, which causes a reflective glare
- Use of magnifying glasses or handheld magnifiers may be helpful
- Use audio instead of handouts if possible

