

Supporting Dyslexia

Introduction

Throughout this presentation, I will be discussing and critically evaluating the barriers young children may face in educational settings with Dyslexia and discussing appropriate strategies to support their development. Typical signs that practitioners may witness in a child with dyslexia include 'showing confusion with numbers, difficulties with concepts such as time, easily distracted, difficulties understand multiple instructions as well as trouble reading, writing and spelling' (British Dyslexia Association, no date).

Strategy one- Multisensory Activities

Multisensory included activities that require children to use more than one sense at a time in order to complete a task. The department for education and skills (2004) explains the act of multisensory as 'using visual auditory and kinaesthetic modalities, sometimes at the same time.' Gardner theory of multi-intelligences suggests that dyslexia children may struggle with mathematical and linguistic intelligences but thrive through body-kinaesthetic (Wood, 2006). Jean Piaget agrees stating that children's development starts with sensori-motor, exploring through the senses (Wood, 2006). Taking a multisensory approach such as making words from play-dough allows the child to not only understand the letters but also develop their hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills (Taket et al, 2014). Practitioners may also find the movement of dance and songs helpful, including writing words in the air, singing songs about words and letters and using gross motor skills to create letters. On the other hand, the Dyspraxia Foundation (2013) conducted a study that found 52% of children with dyslexia are also likely to show signs of dyspraxia. This suggests that practitioners should be well educated on the additional learning need as a dyslexic child may struggle with kinaesthetic learning.

Strategy Two- Technology

Another strategy that may be supportive for children with dyslexia is technology. According to Glazzard et al. (2015) 'Pupils can document their learning visually, orally and practically as well as using ICT.' The British Dyslexia Association (2013) expresses the benefits of using technology for dyslexic learners enables them to have information read out loud multiple times, gain independence, aids with spelling and may demonstrate work at a quicker pace. There are a range of materials that may be used included interactive whiteboards, iPads and tablets as well as computers and laptops. Underwood and Farrington-Flint (2015) suggests 72% of apps available are aimed at early years and educational reasons; however practitioners must be aware of the sites being used by children and decide if they are appropriate for schools use (Gorse, 2013). A disadvantage of technology is the expenses. Some settings are now relying on children to bring in their own devices due to budget cuts preventing them for providing them (Carroll, 2013). However, this may not be possible with 4.1 million children in the United Kingdom living in poverty (Bulman, 2018). It would be unfair for a child to be affected within their education due to schools relying on families to find the financial aid to provide this strategy.

Conclusion

Educational settings are under great stress and pressure when providing accurate support for children with additional learning needs due to the different levels of help and support a child may require. Practitioners must remember each child is different and although some strategies may work for many, these children deserve individually personalised support. When early intervention strategies are used for a child with dyslexia, the child can develop at a suitable pace without feeling pressure and enjoy there educational experiences.

Further Reading

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(Sources: Renee, 2013)

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