Scenarios for Collaboration: How Changing the Curriculum Affects Behavior

Austin’s Scenario

Austin is a first grader who has been diagnosed with autism. He functions as mildly mentally retarded. Austin responds to a few basic signs (e.g., eat, drink, sit, want, quiet, done, home), and he sometimes makes these signs himself spontaneously. He makes sounds that are not recognizable as words. Austin is usually fairly passive unless he gets upset. He can match pictures and letter or number symbols, same to same. Austin gets frustrated with assignments that require a great deal of eye-hand coordination.

The school fully includes Austin in a first grade classroom with a paraprofessional to support the teacher. The para can help Austin, the class, or small groups of students. The teacher likes to have peers help each other, and several students are special buddies with Austin.

The class is doing a unit on the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. They are learning the name of our country and the story of the pilgrims coming to America. They are learning about the native peoples and how they helped the pilgrims, the food for the first Thanksgiving, and the idea of sharing. The teacher wants the students to generalize these concepts to sharing and to giving thanks for what they have.

Carol’s Scenario

Carol is 13-years-old and is in middle school. She has a diagnosis of autism and tests with average intelligence. She can read well, but there are often questions about her comprehension, especially when there are abstract concepts or when higher level thinking is required. Carol is a whiz at math calculations, but struggles when she has to apply or to problem solve these skills.

Carol is fully included, but teachers are concerned because she does not take care of her appearance and dresses in ways that make her look odd. Carol often speaks in class at inappropriate times. She often gets stressed because she gets confused about her schedule and assignments. She means to keep up with her work but forgets or loses papers.

Carol’s parents are very protective and have kept her home a great deal, so she has not learned many community living skills that she will need for independence. Students make fun of her, and she does not have many friends. Carol’s teachers are concerned about transition to the high school.

Carol’s class is doing an integrated unit on the space shuttle that involves reading, science, social studies, math, art, and music. The students will do a group project that involves all of these subjects. Every student has to participate in group activities, as well as do at least one independent project and one project with a buddy. General goals involve reading for information and pleasure on their reading level; learning about the space shuttle and why our country sends it into space including some of the scientific results; learning to use fractions; learning about the history of our space program; using art materials to create a space-related project; and singing in small groups.
Proactive
Child Support Plan
Activity for Curriculum

Team Members


Student ___________________________  Date ___________________________

Behaviors:


Determine “set-up” situations or states affecting the behavior:

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Working with Students with Autism in the Schools
Plan for curricular changes that will affect behavior:

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