Individualized Meaning-centered Approach to Braille Literacy Education (I-M-ABLE) Case Study: Ajay’s Story

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Getting in Touch With Literacy Conference
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Agenda

- I-M-ABLE
- Who is Ajay?
- Year 1 – First Steps
- Experience Books
- Preparing for Summer
- Starting Year 2
- New Strategies
- Conclusion
I-M-ABLE

- Individualized Meaning-Centered Approach to Braille Literacy Education
  - Functional approach
  - Student-centered
  - Individualized

- Who is the reading teacher?
Who is Ajay?

- 5 years old
- Moved from India to USA in July
- Telugu and English spoken at home (English Language Learner)
- Progressive Rod-Cone Dystrophy (acuity about 20/700)
- Autism
- ADHD (Hyperactive & Attention Deficit)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Sensory Integration Disorder (SID)
- Expressive/Receptive Language Delays

- Educational Placement: Enhanced Autism Classroom (ABA)
Initial Literacy Skills

• Print/Book Skills (alphabet, name)
• Literacy Instruction in Class
• Pre-braille skills
  • Scribbling (HUH & Independent)
  • Tactile Skills (work samples)
    • Textures
    • Tracking Lines
  • Prepositions / Orientation
    • top, middle, bottom, left/right
• Modeling good braille skills
  • hand-under-hand, cognitive modeling
Reading & Writing – Initial Key Words

• Integrated reading & writing instruction
• First Key Words
  • tape measure
  • PE (written pe)
• Growing Vocabulary
  • Recess
  • Like
  • Can
Daily Routines (Videos)

Writing Routine!

1. Get braille writer/paper & set up
2. Finger warm up & crossing midline
3. All keys warm up (1-2 rows)
4. Left hand only
5. Right hand only
6. Student choice (1 row)
7. Instruction
School Skills / ECC
Reading Is a Shared Experience

• Mouse’s First Fall & Planes Book
Experience Books

- My Pumpkin Book
- My I like Book
- My I can Book
- Snow Book (example)
- Year 2 – Snow and Ice Book

experiencing the world & modeling language

(Mid-year samples)
We’re Going On A Bear Hunt!
Reading Letters & Words
Preparing for Summer

• Modeling appropriate hand/finger placement & reading habits for home use.

• Mr. Brown Can Moo

• Little Red Hen
Starting Year 2 - Changes

• Missed the last 5 weeks of the first year of school
• Entered school 4 weeks late
• Retained in Kindergarten
• Included in General Education Kindergarten class 2 hours/day (responsive classroom morning meeting & math)
• Individual ECC instruction (including braille) 45-60 min/day

• Lost functional vision and muscle tone during the summer, spent first 3-5 weeks relearning many skills he previously mastered
Literacy at Home & at School

• Communication between School (TVI) and Home (Parents & ABA Therapist)
• Reinforced skills and taught new skills

• Reading/Writing Samples beginning/mid year 2
Mid-Year 2 – Reading Letters

Letters Read in Isolation

- Extended Absences

Letters

0  13  26

Date
APH Word Playhouse

• I felt stuck – over correcting from mistakes in year 1.
• Introduced a new tool, APH Word Playhouse

• Began introducing more part word contractions & word families
• Further developed his already ready high level of phonemic accuracy
• Spelling with and without contractions

• Video!
Literacy – Inclusion

• TVI trained classroom (autism) teacher
  • Hand positions
  • Interlined text
  • Flash cards
  • Sentence strips
  • Paragraphs
  • Literary & Nemeth

• Independent Work Stations
  • Califone Cardmaster magnetic card reader
  • Folder sorting activity
Writing Videos – Mid Year, Year 2

Student Choice vs. Teacher Choice

• Video 1: Teacher Choice

• Video 2: Student Choice
## Writing Skills Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braille Writing Skills</th>
<th>Consistently Demonstrated Skill</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scribbling</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying the parts of the brailler</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loads/removes paper into brailler</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend writing AND &quot;reads&quot; what was written</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses two hands on the brailler at once</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes &quot;full cell&quot; with good pressure</td>
<td>February 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates finger isolation</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes introduced words/letters correctly</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes words with correct spacing</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes unformatted sentence</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses inventive spelling for unknown words</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes sentence with capital and ending punctuation</td>
<td>February 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes at least 3 connected sentences on one topic</td>
<td>April 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipates end of a line when writing to keep a word whole</td>
<td>May 2014</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I like OT. Daddy is going to pick me up. I am happy for Daddy to pick me up. Daddy is going to pick me up at 1:00. I can play at the slide at OT. I can see the trampoline at OT.
Reading Words

Key Words Read in Isolation

Extended Absences

Words Introduced

Words Mastered
Reading Contractions

Braille Contractions

- Contractions Introduced
- Contractions Mastered

Extended Absences
Two Braille Writers Activity!

Often we are the only model our students have for new braille skills.
Commercially Available Products

- APH
  - Swing Cell
  - Word Playhouse
  - Carousel of Textures / Stickers / Graphic Tape

- Braille Institute Special Collections

- Califone Cardmaster -- magnetic card reader
Conclusion

• Passed district-wide kindergarten literacy assessment
• Planned transition to base school for 1st grade