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Issue 4



Inclusivity Education
BRIDGING GAPS, BUILDING FUTURES

INCLUSION COUNTS

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Introduction



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B.Ed., M.A., Orton
Gillingham Associate

Nazia is an Inclusive Educational Consultant. She is originally from Kenya and is currently based in Leicestershire, UK. While in Kenya, Nazia worked on a 1:1 basis with a range of students with learning difficulties. She also worked as a trainer for local pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. Her modules surrounded special education and inclusion.

Nazia continues to support families and students globally. Specifically, she develops bespoke programmes and provides regular ongoing support. Locally, she works with the students and the school, developing tailor-made programmes and supporting the resourcing of learning activities for each learner.

Hello!

2023 seems to be a busy one for many of us. As life now returns back to normal after an unprecedented two years, it is our hope that children will enjoy reconnecting and forming bonds with friends and family far and wide.

We have a few updates on the latest news as we look to expand ways of supporting learners. I have started to make resources available for purchase through a few platforms which you will read about in this issue.

Also, I am moving deeper into supporting literacy and have completed my Orton Gillingham Associate level. There is more information about this extremely effective approach on page 6.

With students progressing, there may be a few openings available. Read more about it on the update section.

Inclusivity Education is always looking for ways to support and advocate for neurodiverse learners. Please reach out to us on inclusivityeducation@gmail.com

I look forward to hearing from you!

Nazia Ansari



UPDATE

By Nazia Ansari

It has been nearly a year since our last issue and a busy one it has been! We have some exciting updates to share with you.

Orton Gillingham

I have finally completed my Orton Gillingham Associate qualification. I have spent the last 18 months working with a number of students and the results have been astounding. I can confirm that Orton Gillingham works!!!. Read more about it in this issue.

As I look forward to phasing out three students, following successful outcomes from Orton Gillingham instruction, this means that I look forward to having openings for three students.

Please note that the availability is not for consultation and learning plan development and supervision.

Find out more about services and rates on:

<https://inclusivityeducation/services/>

Virtual Training

I have not been able to travel back home in the past year. While I miss the smell of Kenyan soil and the taste of sweet passion fruit, I have still been able to connect with my fellow Kenyans through Virtual Training sessions.

We had an insightful session with a school in Nairobi where we discussed what explicit instruction looks like and how to integrate that in the mainstream setting.

If you or your school would like training on inclusion, please email on: inclusivityeducation@gmail.com



Redefining Inclusion
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Redefining Inclusion

We have been busy with Redefining Inclusion (learn more on page 7). We are in the process of developing a training manual for our first module.

We experimented with a more intense training schedule of 8 consecutive days, this model seems to have worked with teachers who were on holiday. We plan on rolling this out again this year. Look out for more information on this through our Facebook groups:

Inclusivity education page:

<https://www.facebook.com/inclusivity.edu>

Celebrating Diversity page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3888469267949041>



"Writing needs more structure"

Executive functioning plays an integral role to the writing process as it involves planning, sequencing, the ability to self-start and staying on track while also maintaining some flexibility. This is coupled with the multiple demands that are associated with 'good writing' such as using correct grammar, spelling correctly, ensuring neat or legible handwriting while making your written piece engaging and interesting. This can often feel like a monumental task for a student with learning difficulties. There are a few considerations that we need to acknowledge when we place writing expectations on neurodiverse students

Blank pages are scary

A blank page can be extremely daunting for those who struggle with the process of writing. Questions I often hear from my students are: "How do I begin?" and "What do I write about?". The latter may seem bizarre when the student has a topic at hand but it is not always that simple. Blank pages are difficult; there is too much emptiness to fill. It can be likened to a non-painter being given a room of 4 white walls to paint an abstract picture. If you were in that position, you too would be wondering about where to start.

Planning support

The one solution that has never let me down over the past 17 years is planning support. If you can take the pressure and time constraints away and allow your student to spend time planning, it will pay dividends. Do not expect them to know how to plan- support and teach this process.

At the initial stages, planning can take a whole lesson and that in itself is part of the learni. As the student becomes more confident and their executive functioning strengthens, they will then become more efficient and faster. At the initial stages, you may find that your student includes an incredible amount of detail in their planning, almost as if they are writing out the entire piece in the plan, only to rewrite it word for word in the final draft. If this is the case, let it go. Once the student is more automatic with planning, you can then suggest that they write a prompt in the plan and leave all the 'good stuff' for the written piece. Planning strategies can include mind maps, tables and comic strips.



Mindmaps

Mind maps were and still are all the craze, and for a good reason. They tap into creativity; they allow for flexibility and fluidity.

In its simplest form, a mind map is developed by writing the main topic in the middle of the page and then growing branches of further details. Once the mind map is complete, the student can then write about one branch at a time. Ideally, each main branch would represent one paragraph. This process makes planning fun and as a teacher or parent, you can support the student by questioning and scaffolding.

Questioning can involve asking simple wh- questions: which, who, what, when, where, why, how. Scaffolding is providing support through prompts, hints, modelling through turn taking with the student through an I-do-one-then-you-do-one approach, presenting thinking points, engaging in discussions and helping probe and guide thinking

A simple table

I have worked with students who struggle with mind maps as they feel busy and confusing. We have sometimes resorted to using a simple table. This is especially helpful when students need to apply PEE, PEED or PETER.

Point	Evidence	Explanation

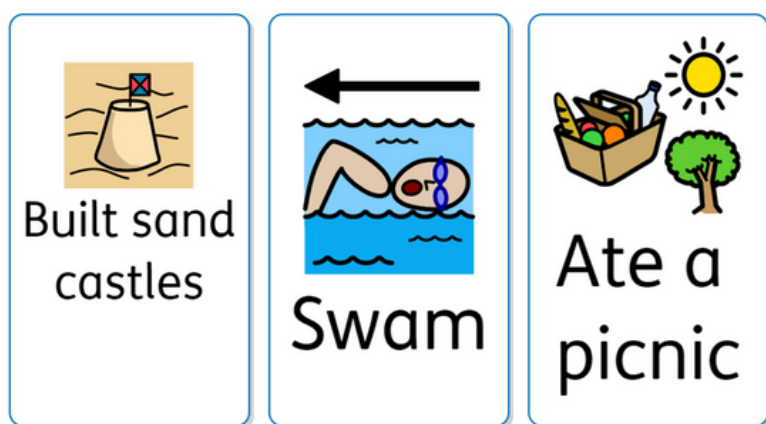


cont...

Comic strips

Using comic strips for writing stories is probably the one strategy that has never failed me when working with younger children and beginner writers. To begin with, you can have the learner build a three part story. The teacher simply draws three boxes on a piece of paper for the learner to sketch the beginning, middle and end. After the drawings are complete, the student can dictate the story if they struggle with writing and spelling. If not, then they can write a sentence or two for each drawing. As the student's confidence and stamina increases, they can develop a 4, 5 or 10 part story- all beginning with a comic strip. These do not have to be artistic masterpieces. We have often used stick figures that have been considerably disproportionate, but they have served the purpose of organising thought and prompting a sentence to be written.

My day at the beach



Questioning

Questioning is an underestimated tool that can unlock writing potential. Find my question prompts [here](#). These prompts can be printed and laminated into flash cards which can be used to guide writing. The cards consider wh- questions, adjectives and sensory devices. Alternatively, the prompts may be mounted on a wall as a poster to allow the learner to access them as needed.



One step at a time

Writing is multifaceted and while it may come almost naturally to the neurotypical individual, it is quite the juggling act for students who struggle with their executive functioning. Writing can trigger anxiety when multiple expectations are being hinged on this one story, book report or letter. The best practice would be to have a 'one task at a time' policy where the student focusses on only one element of writing at a time.

Plan

Allow the student to plan without the expectation of correct spelling and neat writing.

Write

Here the learner would develop their plan into full sentences to some degree. At this point, they express their ideas into their personal voice; we do not consider grammar, spelling, handwriting.

Grammar, punctuation and coherence.

Are all the sentences structured correctly? Is everything in the same tense. Do the sentences make sense? This exercise may require a few look-throughs and that's perfectly acceptable. This can be done once the writer has put all their ideas in the form of a written piece.

Spelling

Here the student scan and correct spelling errors by themselves or we can support them by providing correct spelling.

Word banks and vocabulary

Expanding vocabulary is a continued effort. You may find that your student understands a wider range of vocabulary than what they use in their speech and writing; this may be due to differences between receptive and expressive language.

Word banks can be used to guide emotion words, adjectives and adverbs relevant to the topic. I have also used them for discourse markers.

Another helpful strategy is working on uplevelling writing where we pick words that we are going to improve by using a thesaurus.

The student may go through these steps over a number of days. As the student grows in confidence and stamina, this should happen faster and use less effort.



Orton Gillingham



About Orton Gillingham

The Orton Gillingham Approach is a structured literacy approach that is considered the Gold Standard to literacy instruction among students with learning difficulties including but not restricted to dyslexia. This approach was developed in the 1930's and almost 100 years later, having stood the test of time, it has repeatedly helped students learn to read and spell where they have not grasped mainstream approaches.

This approach is grounded in the a number of principles. It is **diagnostic and prescriptive** where an Orton Gillingham teacher structures each lesson based on student observations in the previous lesson. Therefore, unlike popular interactive, virtual programmes, each lesson is specifically designed for each student by addressing errors, difficulties, nonverbal and verbal communication. This **individualised** nature ensures that each lesson is uniquely designed for each student. There is no blanket solution or booklet that students are taken through. Lessons are **direct and explicit** and conducted in a **systematic** manner with students being guided toward independence. The approach encourages the use of **multi-sensory** strategies and prides itself in being **emotionally sound** by building confidence and moving at a comfortable pace for the learner. Read about more the principles [here](#).

My experience with the approach

Working toward my Associate qualification has been an eye opening experience about how direct and explicit instruction is extremely effective. There have been a number of wins across the 7 students I am currently working with and I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

W, aged 6, hardly read 3 letter words. After working together for a year, he walked downstairs a few days before Christmas, only to see the 'naughty Elf' made a mess with flour and left the children a message, "I dropped the flour, no pancakes today" which W read out much to his mum's surprise.

E, aged 10, was preparing for her year 6 SATS with her parents being advised that she may not pass them. Not only did she pass them, but she scored at geater depth in all her tests- after 8 months of instruction.

A, aged 9, absolutely detested writing and now, he has an excited 'yes!' whenever its time to do a writing activity.



Direct and explicit instruction by a trained professional will more than often be a more effective approach than repeating a failed approach. It may seem counterintuitive toward inclusion to pull a learner out and offer direct instruction, but in some cases, withdrawing a child for 2 sessions a week may help them develop areas and ensure successful inclusion further along.



Redefining Inclusion

Back to Basics Course



While working in inclusion, we are always looking for opportunities to:

- Collaborate with other professionals
- Create awareness among teachers
- Empower parents
- Advocate for learners

Inclusivity Education has partnered with Scilla Allen, Efti Enterprises in achieving this. We have run trainings under the joint initiative titled Redefining Inclusion.

Over the past three years, we have been fortunate to train teachers and parents in Malaysia, India, Egypt, Tanzania and Kenya.

We typically open the course to a very limited number of participants as this allows us to support trainees.

The aim of our first module is to inform parents and teacher about how neurodiverse learners learn and all the elements that often go unnoticed such as memory, executive functioning, self regulation, socialisation and communication.

We are value driven and therefore, are particular about ensuring participants receive maximum benefit from our sessions.

Participants will receive:

- Weekly open office sessions
- Membership into a closed Facebook group
- 5% discount on an educational assessment by Scilla Allen
- Certification at the end of the training (Subject to participants completing course work)

Dates: 15th May 2023 to 3rd July 2023

Every Monday from 1:00pm to 3:00pm BST

Fee: £200 (50% deposit payable)

Register on

<https://inclusivity.education/back-to-basics/>

Course outline

Week 1

Orientation and 8 principles of inclusion

Week 2

Academic Progress

Week 3

Fundamental Competencies

Week 4

Academic Achievement

Week 5

Sensory Processing

Week 6

Memory

Week 7

Executive Functioning

Week 8

Changing Mindsets



Resources



As we continue to support neurodiverse students, their parents and teachers; a consistent request that we receive is for help with resourcing. Over time, we have developed a number of resources that are now available Boom Cards, TeachersPayTeachers and TES. For now, our resources are directed toward reading and spelling.

Boom cards are fun and engaging interactive cards that can be used with students. As a teacher, you can set up an account and assign resources to students that they can do for homework or in class. You can find us on Boom cards by signing up and following us using this [link](#).



Teachers Pay Teachers

TeachersPayTeachers gives you access to worksheets, flashcards and posters that you can use in your classroom or at home. Visit our online store [here](#).



TES also gives you access to worksheets, flashcards and posters that you can use in your classroom or at home. Visit our online store [here](#).