



# Students with Special Needs

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# Students with Special Needs

## Goals

1. Identify areas you may wish to investigate.
2. Offer information applicable to your studio.

# Your Frame of Mind



How many of us have training in teaching students with special needs?

1. Experiences with past students
2. Needs of current students
3. Hesitation towards teaching students with special needs
4. Sub-specialty of studio

# First Point of Contact

## Text Phone Interview



What should I know about how your child learns? What are your concerns about how your child learns?

*Are there learning challenges? What are they? Does your child receive accommodations?*

The parent's response:

Yes.

No.

I wouldn't know.

# Labels You May Hear



Autistic

ADHD

ADD

Auditory Processing Issues

Sensory Processing Issues

Dyslexia

Dysgraphia

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Anxiety Disorder



## *New DSM V!* Autism Spectrum Disorder

- A. Difficulties in social use of verbal and non-verbal communication
- B. Restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior
- C. Symptoms appear in early development period (masking may hide)
- D. Symptoms cause impairment in current situation

This is a summary only. Please google the criteria for the “DSM V Autism Spectrum Disorder”.



# Common Characteristics

- Attention issues
- Confusion with written or aural communication
- Social awkwardness due to inability to read social cues in differing contexts



# Auditory Processing Issues

- Trouble listening to or following instructions
- Needs to have directions repeated
- Frequently asks “What?” or “Huh?”
- Difficulty differentiating similar-sounding words



# Sensory Processing Issues



- Delay in speech, language, or motor skills
- Hyperactivity or Hypoactivity
- Overly-sensitive to touch, sound, smell, taste, or textures
- Withdrawal or over-reaction to situations
- Craving for movement

# Dyslexia



- Symptoms increase with sickness, time pressure, or emotional stress.
- Learns best through experiences.
- May confuse right/left, over/under.
- Draws letters from the line upward.
- May not test well.



# What You Hear and See in the Music Studio

- Difficulty grasping how hands are built opposing.
- Difficulty saying music alphabet backwards or starting in the middle of the sequence, like on “f”.
- Unable to find or keep a steady beat.
- Recoiling at high pitches or loud sounds.
- Difficulty hearing or singing pitch.
- Difficulty in recalling what learned symbols mean.
- Difficulty in tracking music from left to right.

# Adopt a Plan



- Assess student behaviors during a lesson.
- Design your “difficult” conversation with parent.
- Record a lesson to assess your teaching approach.
- Design a lesson routine.
- Laminate the lesson routine on a non-white visual template.

# Teaching Approach



- Focus on steady beat and rhythm first.
- Deconstruct all aspects of reading music.
- Teach theory through technique at keyboard.
- Construct variety of activities.
- Build motivation. Praise focus, hard work, effort, an accomplishment.

# Lesson Routine



- Welcome 3-5 minutes
- Rhythm (games & keyboard) Review patterns; teach new patterns.
- Pitch and reading note names. Review pitch skills being mastered. Add new skill. Teach part of a song by ear/rote.
- Performance. (Memory) Pretend performance routine. Always have a review piece ready to play.
- Technique. Review technique practiced and add next skill/theory.
- Lesson Book. Review assignment. Add new lesson pages as ready.
- Review assignment book for the following week's practice. (Binder with everything on colored paper.)
- Closing. 3-5 minutes. Play the same rhythm game each week to close the lesson.

# Tips



- Purchase a couple of Irlen colored overlays for your studio.
- Use Kodaly rhythmic syllables for teaching rhythmic duration and rhythmic patterns.
- Use Curwin (Kodaly) hand signals for learning to reproduce pitch.
- Teach lots of patterns and positions/keyboard typography/technique.
- Teach concepts and skills ahead by aural and technique skills so that when student encounters “new” skill in method book, the student thinks he/she is quite successful.

# Tips



- Use short sentences. Enact the “Pirate and the Parrott,” or develop another prop which is of their interest.
- Think “The Song that Never Ends” Repeat information.
- Train and teach through aural skills. If there is a good ear, use it.
- Avoid words like “over” “under” “left” “right”.



# Tips



- Develop physical games, i.e., walk alphabet backwards. Jump skips while saying alphabet or make an alphabet mat. Half/step/whole/step game.
- Teach how to practice. Use a “detective” or “spy” game to find “clues” and “patterns”.
- Add words to melodies without words, or add new lyrics.
- Pay attention to body language. Posture maybe difficult to maintain and look for signs of discouragement.

# Tips

- Make patience a game for yourself. Find a word you can say to yourself to remember patience. Reward yourself.
- Schedule a 45 minute lesson.
- Schedule a 5-15 minute break on your teaching schedule after the student's lesson.
- Remember the parent. (You have the student once a week. The parent has the student 24/7.)
- Address, as an association, how to handle theory tests and festivals.





# Good Teaching is Good Teaching

Present a scenario.

Frame some possible solutions.

Questions