

What is Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines SDI as “adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.” (Section 300.39 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations)

SDI is the unique set of supports determined for a student with a disability by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team, and is provided to remove barriers to making progress in the general curriculum that are caused by the student’s disability. Supports are infused throughout the student’s learning experiences and environments as described in the IEP. Teachers certified in exceptional student education (ESE) and related service providers with specialization in the area of need have the primary responsibility, in collaboration with general education teachers, to plan, implement and monitor SDI.

SDI may be implemented through direct service, consultation, co-teaching, support facilitation, co-planning, coaching, monitoring or oversight to other educators who are delivering the SDI (section 1003.03, Florida Statutes). Ultimately, all students with disabilities are always considered general education students first, who receive additional supports via specially designed instruction based on a continuum of services.



Specially Designed Instruction is:

An addition to core instruction (supplemental)	NOT	A replacement for core instruction (supplanted)
A service	NOT	A place
What a teacher provides	NOT	What a child does
Based on specific skills a student needs in order to progress in the general curriculum	NOT	A restatement of the standards being taught to all students
Unique instruction written into the IEP that is provided to allow progress toward annual goals	NOT	A commercial remediation program used for all students
Specific to the child’s needs	NOT	A model or schedule
Provided to close the performance gap compared to peers without disabilities	NOT	An excuse for setting low expectations or teaching below grade level
Teaching specific skills	NOT	Providing accommodations or modifications only

SDI Categories and Examples

Learning Strategies

A learning strategy is a way of organizing and using skills in order to learn content more effectively. Some examples include: STAR, RAP, POSSE, SQ4R, KWL, QAR, and COPS.

Instructional Programs

Instructional programs combine a curriculum component and a teaching procedure. Which can include: Reading Mastery, Wilson Reading System, Saxon Math, and Skillstreaming.

Increased Instructional Intensity

Instructional Strategies

(task analysis, modeling, more practice, multi-sensory teaching, smaller groups)

Specialized Techniques

(chaining, social stories, behavioral contracts)

Integrated Practices

(choral responding, turn-n-talk, cooperative learning, technology-based applications)

The design and delivery of SDI is the core of exceptional student education for students with disabilities, addressing their unique academic, behavioral and functional needs by adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.

Learning Strategy for Math Word Problems:

Search, Translate, Answer and Review (STAR)

- Student **Searches** (reads) the problem carefully.
- Student applies techniques to **Translate** the word problem to a number sentence (e.g. manipulatives, visual representation).
- Student **Answers** (solves) the problem.
- Student **Reviews** the answer to the problem.

https://www.interventioncentral.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/pdfs_blog/MATH_STAR_mnemonic.pdf



https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/508_WWCPG_SecondaryWriting_122719.pdf

Learning Strategy for Reading Comprehension:

POSSE (Before reading - teacher led)

- **Predict** ideas before reading.
- **Organize** predictions (During reading - student led, in groups).
- **Search** for the structure.
- **Summarize** the main ideas.
- **Evaluate** your understanding.

Englert, C. S. & Mariage, T. V. (1991)
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/docs/practiceguide/adlit_pg_082608.pdf



Specialized Technique for Sequencing:

Chaining (requires task analysis)

- The teacher teaches the child the first or last step in the chain.
- When this step is learned, the teacher adds the second (forward chaining) or second-to-last step backward chaining).
- The child practices this step in the routine, attaching it to the prior step.
- The third step is taught in conjunction with the first two steps once the child is able to demonstrate them.
- Additional steps are taught and connected, as needed.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/64CB422A-ED08-43F0-F795CA9DE364B6BE/chaining.pdf>