Stepwise Process to Access Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum

Trainer's Packet

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As many educators struggle with how to effectively teach and help students with significant cognitive disabilities progress in the general curriculum, it may be beneficial to follow a stepwise process that keeps the focus on learning. Four steps included in a process described by Kearns, Burdge, and Kleinert (Innovations, in press) is an effective process for accessing the general curriculum. This stepwise process provides broad concepts which offer educators a practical approach to accessing the general curriculum and has been developed to be used at a classroom level in planning for instructional units. As educators increasingly provide students more meaningful access to the general curriculum to achieve grade level content standards, more detail may be added to the steps to further refine the process. This process may be helpful to adapt for use at a systems level as well; however, it should be noted that as written, it is primarily meant to guide instruction at an individual student level.

This section deals primarily with the observation vertex of the assessment triangle as the learning activities have been designed not only to teach the construct(s) of the standard(s) but also to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and skill regarding the standard through performances. These performances can result in assessment evidence. A secondary connection to the cognition vertex may be made as the student performances are directly connected to what they should know and be able to do – the standard(s).

Four Steps to Access

1. Identify or link to the appropriate standard(s)
2. Define the outcome(s) of instruction
3. Identify the instructional activities
4. Target specific objectives from the IEP
   [Adapted – Kearns, Burdge and Kleinert (in press)]

Page 4   Part IV: Four Steps to Access

Step 1

1. **Identify or link to the appropriate content standard(s).**
   – State/District Standard

   – Grade Level Standard(s)

   – Determine what the standard is about

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Advantages of Collaboration

- High expectations
- Access to the general curriculum
- Same content standards as same age students
- Multiple standards within instructional units
- Breadth of content standards
- Variety of settings
- Embed IEP and functional skills
- Learning of a shared culture

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<u>Activities Introduction</u>
Characteristics of adult learning reinforce the necessity of providing ample opportunities for processing before information can be successfully transferred into long term memory and subsequently into the working memory. Because of this, we have provided several activities which will facilitate this transfer for participants.

Throughout the packet, activities which allow training participants to process information in small chunks are set aside in text boxes. The activities are developed to allow trainers to tailor the training to the training time requirements and needs of the participants. In general, all **a.** activities are very short; **b.** activities take more time; **c.** activities take the most time but allow participants greater opportunities to work through issues which, in the long run, will facilitate the knowledge and skill transfer most effectively.

The activities can be implemented with a mix-and-match approach. For instance, a trainer might, considering training time and participant need, elect to choose **Activity 1.b**, **Activity 2.c**, **Activity 3.b**, and **Activity 4.a**. rather than all **b**. activities.

Step 1 – Identify or link to the appropriate standard

It is important to first identify the grade level content standard towards which instruction will be geared. For schools and districts which have aligned their curricula to standards, this will already be in place. Following the lesson plans of the same grade level general education class in such schools and districts will ensure that this connection is in place. However, in initially learning how standards, curriculum, and instruction are linked, it is helpful to locate the standard that the lesson plan addresses. Lessons planned specifically to address Individual Education Program (IEP) objectives or planned with the alternate assessment in mind typically do not first start with the grade level standard, but instead an instructional activity is developed and retro-linked or linked back to the standard which will lessen the impact on learning. The selection of the standard *first* is essential and leads to the authentic "standards-based" instruction.

Once the broad standard and the specific grade level content standard are identified, it is then helpful to determine what the grade level standard is all about - what is the most basic concept that the standard defines. Familiar special education terms for this concept include "critical function", "essence", or "intent." Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe use the phrase "enduring understanding" and state this "represents a big idea having enduring value beyond the classroom." (1998, pp. 10-11).

While it may appear that the general education lesson plan precedes the selection of standards, in actuality the general education teacher has almost always chosen the activity to meet a grade level content standard. While keeping up with the pace of a general education curriculum may appear difficult for students who traditionally require more time to process information, there are numerous advantages for following these lesson plans for the students with the most significant cognitive disabilities:
- Setting high expectations for the students in terms of content acquisition

- Ensuring access to the general curriculum
- Providing direct instruction on the same content standards as all students of the same age and grade are learning
- Providing ongoing opportunities to learn each standard throughout the school year, since standards are often taught across multiple units of instruction within and across content areas throughout the school year
- Addressing a variety of standards throughout the school year
- Working in a variety of settings
- Embedding IEP skills in instructional activities
- Working on functional skills that occur in the routines that these activities require
- Providing learning of a shared culture

Having students with significant cognitive disabilities work on content standards in the general education class produces the following additional advantages:

- Allowing meaningful, active participation in general education classes
- Working with peers
- Offering opportunities to build friendships/relationships

Experts in the field of moderate to severe disabilities emphasize that academic instructional goals should be selected from the general curriculum and activities. Of course, students with disabilities may have other more "functional" needs as well; IDEA 2004 reinforces that these other functional needs of students must be addressed. However, functional skills should not be taught in an "alternative curriculum" (Jackson, Ryndak, & Billingsley. 2000), but rather in the context of the general education curriculum whenever possible.

To develop and instruct curricula outside of the general curriculum and activities would not only be incongruous with IDEA 2004, but also cumbersome. Selecting a standard that would address an IEP skill and then creating individualized lesson plans to meet the standard requires a different lesson plan for each student and often misses critical instructional elements. With such an approach, the special education teacher has to create lesson plans, as well as develop supports, for each student, thus making this method more time consuming while still not providing learning opportunities within the "hidden curriculum", nor maybe even the "explicit curriculum" which all other students receive.

Likewise, selecting a standard that will meet the requirements of an alternate assessment and developing corresponding lessons makes the assessment a separate event from ongoing instruction, and makes that assessment an artificial rather than authentic task. On the other hand, having the student work within the general curriculum throughout the year on a variety of standards affords the student a wide range of opportunities to learn and generalize the key concepts of the grade level content standards.

Activity 1 (after Step 1 introduction)
   a. Spend 2 minutes discussing in small groups benefits and challenges in moving to standards based instruction for this group of students. **(3 minutes)**
   b. Spend 5 minutes discussing in small groups benefits and challenges in moving to standards based instruction for this group of students. Identify 1 major hope and 1 major fear from the table and report these out to the large group. Chart these and post. **(10 minutes)**
   c. Have participants write with marker on large index cards their personal hopes and fears. Round robin these and post on chart paper, grouping similar points together. Come to a consensus on how the groupings look and find a blanket statement that addresses the topic of each grouping. **(20 minutes)**

Step 2 - Define the outcome of instruction for all students
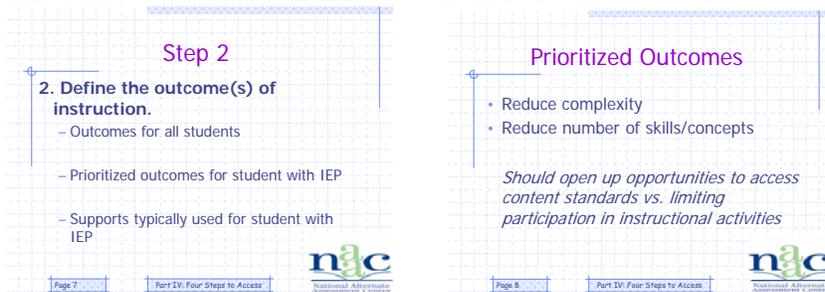
This step specifies the instructional unit and identifies the learning outcomes specific to that unit – what is it that the teacher wants all students to learn. Referring to the unit objectives for all students maintains focus on the desired outcomes of instruction and may facilitate a prioritization of outcomes for the student with disabilities. A casual conversation with the general education teacher will often get at desired outcomes for an instructional unit that can then be adjusted and prioritized to meet the needs of the student with disabilities. This step should not be confused with the identification of the standard(s), but rather represents what the achievement of the standard will look like.

Once the teacher or educational team has identified what concepts, skills, and specific knowledge all students are meant to acquire, a prioritized subset might be selected for the student with disabilities. If the set of outcomes is very complex, lengthy, or highly specialized, it may be helpful to reduce the complexity of what is required for the student with disabilities. This may be as simple as prioritizing a reduced number of skills/concepts to systematically teach the student. This should not serve to limit the participation in the instructional activities (which open up opportunities to learn additional skills/concepts/ knowledge), but should serve to focus instruction and monitoring on the selected skills/concepts.

After selecting the targeted skills/concepts for the student, it is essential to identify potential barriers and missed opportunities that may be created by the interaction between the instructional environment (methods and materials) and student characteristics (strengths, interests and weaknesses) (CAST, 2002). Potential barriers may also be found in the physical arrangement of the classroom, the level of supports available to the student or staff, and inappropriate level of challenge (Zabala, 1996). These barriers and possible solutions may be addressed within the student's IEP through a description of the student's present level of performance and supports that are typically in place for the student (e.g., instructional, behavioral, and assistive technology). Both barriers and solutions will be discussed in more detail (Step 3, Identify the instructional activities) as the instructional activities designed to teach the grade-level standard are introduced. Considering both the supports already identified for the student and the desired learning outcomes will help in identifying the appropriate supports for the planned instructional activities. Decisions on specific assistive technology tools should be made once the learning environment and tasks are determined (Zabala, 1996).

Activity 2 (after Step 2 introduction)
a. Spend 2 minutes in small groups letting participants describe to each other collaboration techniques they have found to work. **(3 minutes)**
b. (1) Have participants in small groups define 1 problem they have had in ensuring effective collaboration. (2) Write this problem on note paper and put in an envelope. (5 minutes) (3) Exchange this envelope with a different table. The receiving table will brainstorm several possible solutions to the problem and write those down on the note paper. (5minutes) (4) The envelope then gets returned to the original table with a review of the possible solutions. (2 minutes) **(15 minutes)**
c. (1) Have participants in small groups number off within their groups. (2) Jigsaw the groups so that all number 1s are together, numbers 2s together, etc. (2 minutes) (3) Within the newly formed groups, have participants discuss collaboration strategies that have worked for them. (4) Each group member writes down all the suggestions. (10 minutes) (5) Re-form the groups back to their original configuration and have group members report out within their group the suggestions they wrote down. (8 minutes) **(20 minutes)**

Step 3 - Identify the instructional activities

In this step, a careful description and analysis of the instructional activities developed to teach the grade level content standards will help to clarify the barriers in the instructional environment that may interfere with student learning and determine if supports typically in place (Step 2, Define the outcome of instruction for all students) are providing appropriate and effective solutions. Solutions to these barriers should ensure that the student with disabilities has equitable access to instruction and curriculum when compared to all other learners. Burdge et al (2001) identify five common instructional activities. The following chart examines the interplay of these activities with the characteristics of a particular student and identifies potential barriers for that student.

Activity	Particular Student Characteristics	Barriers For This Particular Student
Lecture and note-taking	Limited attention span; difficulty assimilating basic information Difficulty with fine motor	Lecture is delivered at a fast pace and does not always clearly identify major points Note taking requires sophisticated paper/pencil skills
Cooperative learning groups	Inconsistent communication skills	Interactions require quick sharing of ideas/thoughts/ opinions; augmentative communication system is not easily nor quickly adaptable and does not always have vocabulary related to the topic
Research	Non-reader	Research information is primarily in print (text and computer); important information is not always distinct from details or additional information
Practice activities and homework	Requires assistive technology to participate in activities and complete work	Assistive technology is not available at home

Culminating projects	Difficulty with fine motor	Project requires written information
	Inconsistent communication skills	Project must be presented to class

If these instructional activities are designed using the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), (CAST, 2002), the unique needs of a broad spectrum of learners will be addressed from the beginning. Barriers inherent within typical instructional activities can addressed through flexible teaching strategies using multiple forms of media. Flexible options for students to engage in learning and demonstrate what they know further remove barriers and limit missed opportunities, thus reducing the necessity for adaptations to the curriculum for the many students who struggle with routine instructional activities, including students with disabilities.

Three questions addressing the main principles of UDL might be useful to instructional teams as they develop and review instructional activities for all students:

1. Does instruction provide multiple, flexible methods of representation to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge?
2. Does instruction provide multiple, flexible methods of expression and apprenticeship to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know?
3. Does instruction provide multiple, flexible options for engagement to tap into learners' interests, challenge them appropriately, and motivate them to learn?

(CAST, 2002)

It is crucial to understand that the active participation of the student with disabilities in all of the instructional activities should result in the achievement of the prioritized outcome(s) and grade level content standard(s) versus simply participating in or completing the activities. Previously, when students were included in general curriculum activities for social inclusion, the focus was often solely upon completing the activities as a matter of belonging to the community of learners; therefore, the student might have been provided hand over hand assistance, a model to copy, or even a separate activity to complete. These types of assistance did not move the student towards learning the content standard; rather the focus was on social inclusion as opposed to content knowledge acquisition.

Even after the most careful instructional planning using the principles of UDL has occurred and the IEP has ensured the provision of supports that provide access to most instructional activities, barriers to learning may still exist for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities within specific activities. In these cases, a more specialized support may be called for, such as support provided by a general education teacher or peer and both low- and high-tech assistive technology adaptations, strategies, and tools. Considering the rapidly developing world of assistive technology coupled with an individual's changing level of skills, it is important to continually evaluate the use of specific tools to determine if they are effective and the best way to support active

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participation, both to access information and demonstrate knowledge. In other words, students should never be denied instruction on concepts because they are unable to access the information through traditional instructional formats such as reading the text without appropriate adaptations or because they were unable to demonstrate the learning through traditional means. Instead, the information needs to be presented in a way that is accessible and meaningful to the student (e.g., tactile objects, picture symbols or use of a text reader) so that the student has equitable opportunities to learn and demonstrate knowledge, as do all other students. The use of digital media can facilitate this through its flexibility. Text, images, sounds and movies can be digitized and represented in alternate forms such as symbols or graphics.

It may be helpful to create a menu of support ideas to be utilized across instructional activities. One example might be when the class is reading orally, the student could listen with the additional support of manipulating an object representative of the topic of the text. Another might be when the class is completing a worksheet, the student could match picture symbols to vocabulary words. A complete menu of supports and means of active participation that correlate with major instructional activities such as listening, reading, and writing, ensures that meaningful supports are planned and in place for the student, and that these supports are not just occurring "on the fly." Pathways (Denham, 2004), located in Appendix B, is a resource which provides numerous ways to make learning accessible. It includes a section for reading, writing, and presenting, and is helpful when planning for access to the general curriculum and standards. If careful planning of appropriate supports and adaptations is not accomplished, it is highly doubtful that active participation of the student with disabilities will be forthcoming. All aspects of instructional planning are critical if students are expected to perform at the highest levels possible.

Teachers may ask themselves the following questions when determining needed supports for the student:

- *Is the student actively participating in each part of the instructional activity?* That may include reading, writing, speaking, listening, answering questions, doing research, taking tests, etc. These activities may be done in the context of different instructional formats, such as group or individual work. The focus is not upon *which* instructional activities will the student participate in, but *how*.

- *What is needed to engage the student in the instruction?* This may not require anything additional to what all students are receiving, but may be something as simple as the student having an object representative of the concept to hold while listening. The engagement should be matched to the particular learning style of the student and facilitate the acquisition of the content.

- *Does the student have a means to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and concepts acquired?* Again, preferential learning styles should play a role here, and multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) should also be considered. Even though the student may be learning more complex and sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge, it may be preferable to rely on a more established

means of communication so that the demonstration of new knowledge is not compounded by a "new" communication mode as well.

Classroom based assessments are generally included within general education units of study either as ongoing checks on student understanding or as end-of-instruction tests of student achievement. Both of these are essential components of instruction designed to inform teaching, providing information on what the student has learned and to what level and if additional/different instruction is needed. Step 3, Identify the instructional activities, in this process should include at least one classroom based assessment activity, being sure once more, to adhere to the principles of UDL.

Activity 3 (after Step 3 introduction)

   a. Spend 4 minutes in small groups letting participants discuss successes and difficulties in making general education activities accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities. **(5 minutes)**

   b. Give each table of participants a list of the 5 research based instructional practices at the bottom of page 4 (lecture and note taking, cooperative learning groups, research, practice activities and homework, and culminating projects) and have each group brainstorm ideas that might make these activities accessible and meaningful for students with significant cognitive disabilities. (10 minutes) Have each group report out to the large group. (5 minutes) **(15 minutes)**

   c. Post chart paper in 4 areas of the room. Label one chart "visual impairments", one "hearing impairments", one "tactile needs", and one "other learner needs." Divide participants into 4 groups. Assign each group to a chart. Give five minutes for groups to list on the paper a menu of supports and adaptations that might make instruction more accessible for students who have that particular disability. Have groups rotate clockwise to the next paper, adding on the list generated by the first groups. After 3 minutes, rotate and repeat the activity for 2 minutes. Rotate and repeat once more for 2 minutes so that each group has had an opportunity to think about each disability/learning style. Rotate one more time for about 1 minute so that each group can see what has been added to its original list. **(20 minutes)**

Step 4 - Target specific objectives from the Individual Education Program (IEP)
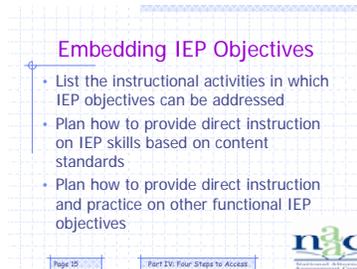
This step begins to overlap with Step 1, Identify or link to the appropriate standard, if IEP goals and objectives addressing the general curriculum and achievement of standards have been written. If this is the case, opportunities to instruct, learn, and practice these IEP skills will be inherent within the instructional activities specified in Step 3, Identify the instructional activities. There may be opportunities to practice IEP objectives, such as increasing vocabulary or comprehension within the instructional unit based on one novel, and then again within instruction on additional novels. Reading and math IEP objectives can often be addressed in cross-curricular instructional units as well. For example, increasing reading vocabulary could be addressed using science and social studies texts, as well as in language arts class. Improving computation skills could be addressed in math and science experiments.

Basic communication, motor, and social skills have sometimes been taught in relative isolation, as goals in and of themselves. What has been missing from instruction is context – what does a student need to communicate, what does she need to be able to do, and what social skills does he need. Embedding communication, motor, and social skills within in the general curriculum - what does the student need to communicate during social studies, what does she need to be able to do physically during math, and how does he need to interact with others in language arts, creates additional access to the curriculum, and can be addressed while providing instruction on the content standards.

By embedding basic communication, motor and social skills within the context of general education activities (the same ones as specified in Step 3, Identify the instructional activities), the teacher provides students access to the curriculum as required by IDEA 2004 and NCLB, while still providing essential instruction on those critical skills. This allows for a seamless transition from basic skills to the acquisition of content area knowledge. With curriculum as the basis for instruction, all students will be receiving the same content. As they become more effective communicators, they will be able to demonstrate what they know about the curriculum. Even though some students may be working explicitly on these types of skills, it is important for teachers to strive to instruct and assess students' performance on the content knowledge as well.

For example, reading and math skills are used throughout many content areas. Reading is used to access information in a variety of situations, such as reading about electrons in science and reading directions for a project in Technology Education. Math skills are often used within academic areas as well - numbers are used to locate pages in a text book, measure temperature in science, and create geometric shapes in art class. It is also important to remember that while reading and math skills can be used across many other content areas, the primary places for instruction and learning of the reading and math skills are language arts and math classes.

When a student has cross-curricular IEP goals and objectives, it is beneficial to identify when the objectives occur within an instructional activity. Identifying such times will allow the teacher to provide systematic instruction, as well as monitor performance. For instance, along with the language arts skill of increasing vocabulary through the use of picture symbols, a student might also work on following directions during projects,

initiating use of his/her communication system, and remaining on task in general education instructional activities. While addressing objectives of the instructional unit and planning for participation, the teacher can designate sessions to keep data on each of these objectives for the IEP progress report, as well as assessing for performance toward the grade level content standard. Another example might be that, in addition to working on the language arts skills of writing, increasing sight word vocabulary and answering recall questions, a student might work on articulation and supplementing verbal communication with picture symbols. Data probes can occur within designated sessions during the instructional unit, rather than as isolated repeated trial sessions.

Activity 4 (after Step 4, Target specific objectives from the Individual Education Program introduction)

    a. Spend 2 minutes in small groups discussing the idea of embedding non-standards based IEP goals and objectives within general education, standards based activities. **(3 minutes)**

    b. Given a list of IEP goals, both standards based and non-standards based, have each group sort them into standards based and non-standards based groupings. Have groups report out how they categorized the goals and why, understanding that some IEP goals can be either standards based or non-standards based according to context. **(15 minutes)**

    c. Have each table generate a list of more traditional IEP goals. (5minutes) Provide them time to discuss how these could be embedded within standards based, general education activities. (10 minutes) *Take care to make sure that participants are identifying skills and not activities as they generate goals. For example, one common **activity** that is sometimes found on students' IEPs is "sorting silverware." This is separate from the **skill** of "sorting by one or more characteristics". Another example is "doing the laundry" (**activity**) versus "following verbal/written directions to complete a task" (**skill**).* Report out general findings to large group, giving time for other groups to provide feedback. (10 minutes) **(25 minutes)**

Examples

The following is an example of the stepwise process for a middle school student working on a language arts standard. Ryan is a 13 year old student who has a significant cognitive disability. He is currently able to identify familiar pictures and picture symbols, has an emerging sight word vocabulary of around 35 words, and can answer basic recall questions regarding short passages of text. He speaks in 2 and 3 word phrases and has poor articulation. He can independently write his personal information and can copy text. He can click and drag using a mouse on the computer, and can type but only when provided a model. Ryan's IEP goals are:

- Increase reading vocabulary words
- Identify picture symbols related to curriculum
- Increase reading/listening comprehension
- Express thoughts in writing with words and picture symbols
- Increase task completion

The following stepwise process was planned in collaboration with a middle school language arts teacher.

Activity 5 (before Ryan and Veronica samples)

Conduct brief needs assessment by asking for and charting the "Top Ten Questions" participants have about the process. Use these to guide the training as Ryan and Veronica samples are presented.

a. Let participants state questions in large group **(3 minutes)**
b. Have participants within each small group come to consensus on 2-3 questions, depending upon the size of the groups and then report out to large group **(10 minutes)**
c. n/a

Step 1 - Identify or link to the appropriate standard:

Standard: Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics) (*IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts*).

Grade level Content Standard: Identify and explain vocabulary taken from text appropriate for middle school.

The standard is about increasing vocabulary.

The general education language arts teacher is actually addressing multiple standards during this instructional unit; however, this example will focus on only one standard to more clearly illustrate the stepwise process.

Figure 1 Step 1: Identify the standard(s), of Ryan's Chart

1. IDENTIFY THE STANDARD(S) THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT WILL ADDRESS.		
What is the state standard?	**What is the grade level standard?**	**What is the standard all about?**
Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics	*Identify and explain vocabulary taken from text appropriate for middle school.*	*Increasing vocabulary*

Step 2 – Define the outcomes of instruction for all students

The teacher is using the novel, *The Giver* by Lois Lowery (1999) as the text appropriate for middle school and as the basis for this instructional unit. The book is the story of Jonas and his job as the keeper of memories in a self-contained utopia that is isolated from *Elsewhere*. Everything is the same in this utopia - there are no colors, and all jobs and families are assigned. Anyone who breaks the rules, gets sick, or has a disability is sent to *Elsewhere*. Through his senses and emotions, Jonas learns from The Giver about the memories of experiences that the people in the community chose to give up in order to attain Sameness and the illusion of social order.

The general education teacher has determined that all the students will be expected to learn the following based on the given content standard:
- Identify unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics

- Explain the meaning of identified vocabulary words from each chapter
- Identify vocabulary words with multiple meanings and the meaning applicable to the context of this book

The teachers discuss these outcomes and for Ryan decide that they will focus on:
- identifying unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using graphics and context
- explaining the meaning of those same vocabulary words by matching to a picture representing the concept.

Additionally, it is agreed that Ryan will have fewer vocabulary words to learn. Ryan will be exposed to the entire book, while the teacher also focuses direct instruction on the prioritized outcomes targeted for Ryan. His IEP specifies picture symbols, pictures, text reader, and scribe as supports. These will be considered in preparing for instructional activities in Step 3, Identify the instructional activities.

Figure 2 Step 2: Define the outcome(s) of instruction, of Ryan's Chart

2. DEFINE THE OUTCOME(S) OF INSTRUCTION FROM THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON .		
What are the desired outcomes for all students in general education? What will classroom based assessment look like?	Which outcomes will be prioritized for direct instruction and monitoring for the target student with significant cognitive disabilities? What will formative assessment look like?	What supports (already identified or additional) would be necessary for the target student to access the instruction?
- *Identify unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics* - *Explain the meaning of identified vocabulary words from each chapter* - *Identify vocabulary words with multiple meanings and the meaning applicable to the context of this book*	- *identifying unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using graphics and context* - *explaining the meaning of those same vocabulary words by matching to a picture representing the concept.* *He will have fewer vocabulary words but will still be exposed to the entire book.*	*picture symbols, pictures, text reader, and scribe as supports*

Step 3 – Identify the instructional activities:

The general education teacher lists the types of instructional activities planned to address the standard while reading *The Giver* and then the teachers plan for ways that Ryan can actively participate. They determine the supports Ryan needs for each activity.

General Education Instructional Activities	Plans for Ryan's Participation	Supports
Read each chapter aloud in class – students take turns reading aloud and demonstrate they are listening by following along in the book and participating in class discussions/questions.	– Ryan will listen to chapter being read – he will demonstrate engagement by looking at pictures that correspond to the text (i.e., picture of a boy, family, jobs, bike, etc.). *(figure 1)* – He can take a turn reading a small section of a chapter by providing the text paired with symbols and using software designed for this purpose.*(figure 2)* – He can answer selected questions during class discussion.	– Pictures or picture symbols that correspond to the text – *Writing With Symbols 2000* (Widgit) or *PixWriter* (Slater Software, Inc) – Speech/language pathologist practice with content vocabulary Speech/language pathologist practice with content vocabulary
Each student will keep a vocabulary journal for each chapter by: – writing unfamiliar words when heard while reading – writing the words identified by the teacher – recording the page on which the vocabulary word is found – writing the sentence it was found in – writing the definition – identifying words that have multiple meanings and using the word in a different context	Ryan will: – pick the words paired with picture symbols from several within the entire book that he does not know and glue those in his journal – glue other words identified by the teacher – match the word to the sentence in which it appeared – match the printed word to the picture symbol *(figure 3)* – match multiple meanings given picture symbols (e.g., "rule"as a guideline and "rule" as a measuring tape)*(figure 4)*	– Picture symbol vocabulary words – Occupational therapist may help with fine motor skills
Classroom based assessment: Students will be given a list of vocabulary words to define and to write the word in a sentence using an alternative meaning	Ryan, using Writing With Symbols with a send grid, will: – match a vocabulary word to its definition – complete sentences with different contexts with the correct vocabulary word	

Figure 3 Step 3: Identify the instructional activities, of Ryan's Chart

What are the instructional activities planned for all students?	How can the student actively participate in the instructional activities?	What supports (already identified or additional) would help the student access the instruction?
Read each chapter aloud in class – students would take turns reading aloud and demonstrate they were listening by following along in the book and participating in class discussions/questions. *Each student will keep a vocabulary journal for each chapter by:* *– writing unfamiliar words when heard while reading* *– writing the words identified by the teacher* *– record the page on which the vocabulary word is found* *– write the sentence it was found in* *– write the definition* *identify words that have multiple meanings and use*	*– Ryan will listen to chapter being read – he will demonstrate engagement by looking at pictures that correspond to the text (i.e., picture of a boy, family, jobs, bike, etc.). (figure 1)* *– He can take a turn reading a small section of a chapter providing the text paired with symbols, using software designed for this purpose. (figure 2)* *– He can answer selected questions during class discussion.* *Ryan will:* *– pick the words paired with picture symbols from several within the entire book that he does not know and glue those in his journal glue other words identified by the teacher*	*– Pictures or picture symbols that correspond to the text* *– Writing With Symbols 2000 (Widgit) or PixWriter (Slater Software, Inc)* *Speech/language pathologist practice with content vocabulary Speech/language pathologist practice with content vocabulary* *– Picture symbol vocabulary words* *– Occupational therapist may help with fine motor skills*

## Step 4 - Target specific objectives from the IEP

Ryan will be able to work on his reading IEP objectives within several of the instructional activities:
- While taking a turn reading a small section of a chapter providing the text paired with symbols, he can work on identifying picture symbols.
- When answering selected questions during class discussion, he will be working on reading/listening comprehension; therefore, additional instruction can be provided and the IEP objective monitored.
- He can work on identifying picture symbols and words when matching words to definitions and when he is completing sentences.
- Task completion can be monitored during all the activities that require a finished product.

Figure 4 Step 4: Target specific objectives from the IEP, of Ryan's Chart

4. TARGET SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FROM THE IEP TO ADDRESS DURING THE UNIT.		
Which of the instructional activities provide opportunity to work on objectives?	What IEP objectives re: the general curriculum can be addressed within the instructional activities?	What other IEP objectives can be addressed within the instructional activities?
1. take a turn reading a small section of a chapter providing the text paired with symbols 2. answer selected questions during class discussion 3. match words to definition complete sentences. 4. all the activities that require a finished product.	1. Identifying picture symbols 2. work on reading/listening comprehension and monitor 3. increase reading vocabulary words	 4. task completion can be monitored during

Figure 5 Picture symbols that accompany the novel.
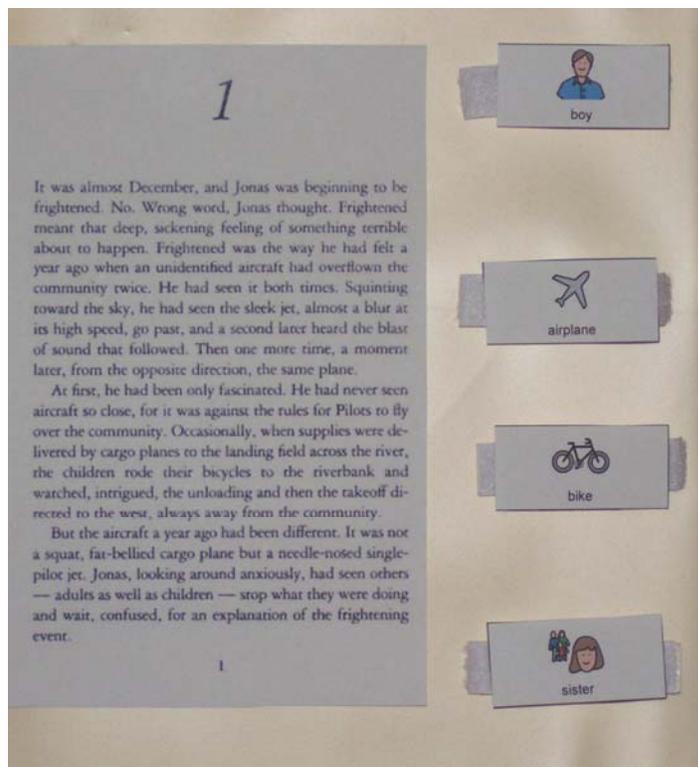
Figure 6 Section of text written in picture symbols.
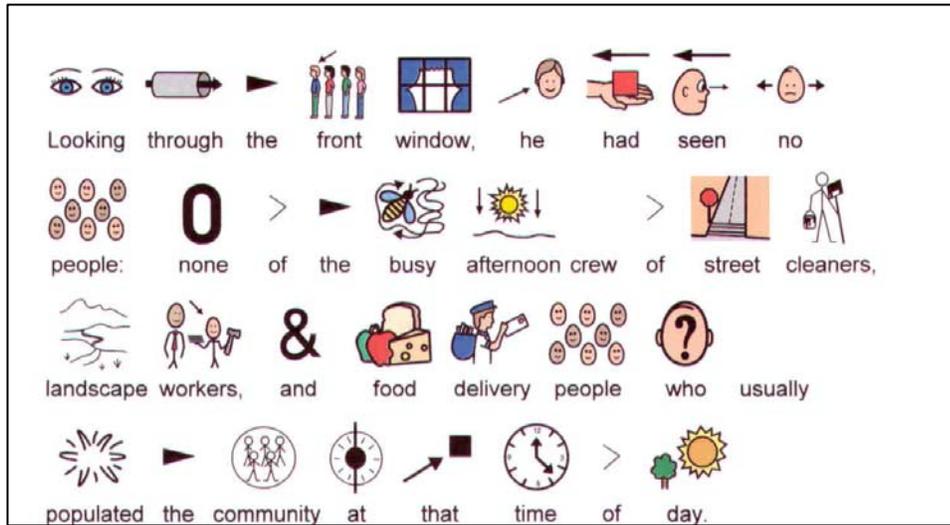
Figure 7 Adapted word map

Stepwise Process to Accessing Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum - Ryan		
1. IDENTIFY THE STANDARD(S) THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT WILL ADDRESS.		
What is the state standard?	**What is the grade level standard?**	**What is the standard all about?**
Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics	*Identify and explain vocabulary taken from text appropriate for middle school.*	*Increasing vocabulary*
2. DEFINE THE OUTCOME(S) OF INSTRUCTION FROM THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON _THE GIVER_.		
What are the desired outcomes for all students in general education? **What will classroom based assessment look like?**	**Which outcomes will be prioritized for direct instruction and monitored for the target student with significant cognitive disabilities?** **What will formative assessment look like?**	**What supports (already identified or additional) would be necessary for the target student to access the instruction?**
– *Identify unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics* – *Explain the meaning of identified vocabulary words from each chapter* – *Identify vocabulary words with multiple meanings and the meaning applicable to the context of this book*	– *identifying unfamiliar vocabulary from the text using graphics and context* – *explaining the meaning of those same vocabulary words by matching to a picture representing the concept.* *He will have fewer vocabulary words but will still be exposed to the entire book.*	*picture symbols, pictures, text reader, and scribe as supports*

Stepwise Process to Accessing Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum - Ryan

3. IDENTIFY THE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO BE USED IN THE UNIT.

What are the instructional activities planned for all students?	How can the student actively participate in the instructional activities?	What supports (already identified or additional) would help the student access the instruction?
1. *Read each chapter aloud in class* − *students would take turns reading aloud* − *demonstrate they were listening by following along in the book* − *participate in class discussions/questions.* 2. *Each student will keep a vocabulary journal for each chapter by:* − *writing unfamiliar words when heard while reading* − *writing the words identified by the teacher* − *recording the page on which the vocabulary word is found* − *writing the sentence in which it was found* − *writing the definition* − *identifying words that have multiple meanings and using the word in a different context* 3. *Classroom based assessment:* − *Students will be given a list of vocabulary words to define and to write the word in a sentence using an alternative meaning.*	1. *Read each chapter aloud in class* − *Ryan will listen to chapter being read – he will demonstrate engagement by looking at pictures that correspond to the text (i.e., picture of a boy, family, jobs, bike, etc.). (figure 1)* − *He can take a turn reading a small section of a chapter providing the text paired with symbols, using software designed for this purpose.(figure 2)* − *He can answer selected questions during class discussion.* 2. *Ryan will:* − *pick the words paired with picture symbols from several within the entire book that he does not know and glue those in his journal* − *glue other words identified by the teacher* − *match the word to the sentence that it was in* − *match the printed word to the picture symbol (figure 3)* − *match multiple meanings given picture symbols (e.g., rule such as a guideline, and rule as a measuring tape) (figure 4)* 3. *Ryan using Writing With Symbols with a send grid will:* − *match a vocabulary word to its definition complete sentences with different contexts with the correct vocabulary word*	− *Pictures or picture symbols that correspond to the text* − *Writing With Symbols 2000 (Widgit) or PixWriter (Slater Software, Inc)* − *Speech/language pathologist practice with content vocabulary* − *Picture symbol vocabulary words* − *Occupational therapist may help with fine motor skills*

| Stepwise Process to Accessing Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum - Ryan		
4. TARGET SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FROM THE IEP TO ADDRESS DURING THE UNIT.		
Which of the instructional activities provide opportunity to work on objectives?	**What IEP objectives re: the general curriculum can be addressed within the instructional activities?**	**What other IEP objectives can be addressed within the instructional activities?**
1. *take a turn reading a small section of a chapter providing the text paired with symbols* 2. *answer selected questions during class discussion* 3. *match words to definition in complete sentences.* 4. *all the activities that require a finished product.*	1. *Identifying picture symbols* 2. *Working on reading/listening comprehension and monitor* 3. *Increasing reading vocabulary words*	*4. Task completion can be monitored during all activities.*

Veronica

The following is an example of a completed stepwise chart for Veronica. Veronica is a 14 year old middle school student with a significant cognitive disability. She has other disabilities resulting in her label of multiply disabled. Her other disabilities include limited vision which is partially corrected with glasses, a moderate hearing loss which requires hearing aids (although she does not tolerate those), and a seizure disorder which is generally controlled with medication. Even though her seizures have decreased with the medication, she still has approximately 4 detectable petit mal seizures daily at school and 3 grand mal seizures a week. The grand mal seizures require a recovery period of 45-60 minutes. Veronica uses a wheelchair and needs someone to push her. She has low muscle tone but can sit in a chair without support for about 7 minutes. She has some difficulty in crossing midline. Her fine motor skills include the ability to hold objects in either hand but she cannot isolate use of index or other fingers. Veronica can consistently track objects and select her choice, either by gaze or reach-and-grasp. Veronica's reach-and-grasp allows her to use objects to communicate and this makes instruction and performance accessible. She also vocalizes.

Her IEP goals include:
– Increase communication using an augmentative communication board
– Follow simple one step directions
– Activate a switch with up to 8 keys
– Identify high contrast picture symbols/pictures
– Identify numbers 1 – 5
– Match objects to objects or picture symbols

The chart below is an example of what a plan might look like for Veronica. Ideally, the general education teacher and the special education teacher collaborate to plan for instruction; however, this plan could be completed by either person. Regardless of how the plan is made, it is vital to begin with the overall general education standard, grade level content standard, expected outcomes, and instructional activities, and adjust as needed to provide access for the student with significant cognitive disabilities.
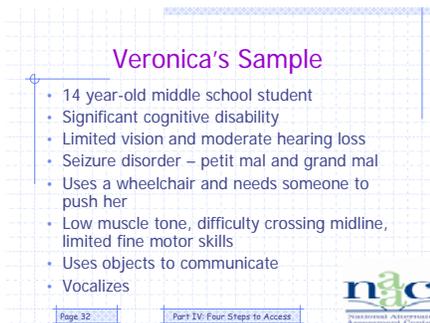
Veronica's Sample
- 14 year-old middle school student
- Significant cognitive disability
- Limited vision and moderate hearing loss
- Seizure disorder – petit mal and grand mal
- Uses a wheelchair and needs someone to push her
- Low muscle tone, difficulty crossing midline, limited fine motor skills
- Uses objects to communicate
- Vocalizes

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Veronica's IEP Goals
- Increase communication using an augmentative communication board
- Follow simple one step directions
- Activate a one level communication device with up to 8 keys (or message squares)
- Identify high contrast picture symbols/pictures
- Identify numbers 1 – 5
- Match objects to objects or picture symbols

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Activity 6 (after Ryan and/or Veronica samples)

In working with teachers in 5 states, we have found that it is preferable to have them complete the next activity in stages – one for each step with feedback after each step. Having them complete all four steps before receiving feedback gives too much opportunity for incorrect practice, resulting in misconceptions regarding each step and frustration with the process as a whole.

a. 1. Using the chart on the following page, have each table of participants identify a student and write a short vignette. Complete Step 1, Identify the standard(s), (content specialists and general education teachers will be the "resident experts" in this step). Have participants review their own work with these guiding questions:

- Column 3: Does the information in the column "What is the standard all about?" maintain the intent, essence, critical function, or big idea of the grade level standard? (10 minutes)

2. Complete Step 2, Define the outcome(s) of instruction, (content specialists and general education teachers will be the "resident experts" in the first column with special education teachers being the "experts" in the second and third). Have participants review their own work with these guiding questions:

- Column 1: Do the outcomes for all students relate directly to the achievement of the grade level standard? Does the classroom based assessment actually measure the students' performance toward the grade level standard?
- Column 2: Do the prioritized outcomes relate directly to the outcomes for all students? Do the prioritized outcomes match the intent of the outcomes for all and do they mirror the performance demands? Have a sufficient number been selected?
- Column 3: Do the supports listed directly impact upon the accessibility of instruction and performance? Are there any others that might be useful? (5 minutes)

3. Complete Step 3, Identify the instructional activities (content specialists and general education teachers will be the experts in the first column and special education teachers will be the experts in Columns 2 and 3). Have participants review their own work with these guiding questions:

- Column 1: Are the activities listed in enough detail? Do they represent all aspects of typical instruction such as lecture, individual and group work, research, reading, writing, etc.? Does the classroom based assessment actually measure the students' performance toward the grade level standard?
- Column 2: Is the active participation identified for each step? Does the active participation mirror the participation of typical students in each step (i.e., if other students are calculating, is the student with disabilities calculating)?
- Column 3: Are appropriate supports (accommodations, modifications, assistive technology, people) in place allowing for maximum participation and learning? Do the activities require additional supports other than those identified in Step 2? (20 minutes)

4. Complete Step 4, Target specific objectives from the Individual Education Program, (special education teachers will be the experts in this step). Have participants review their own work with these guiding questions:

- Column 2: Are all standards based goals connected to one or more general education activities?
- Column 3: Are there opportunities to work on other goals (non-standards based) at naturally occurring times within the context of general education activities? (10 minutes) **(45 minutes)**

b. Complete **Activity 5.a.** except ask groups to report out after each step. **(60 minutes)**

c. Complete **Activity 5.a.** except ask groups to critique each other's work. Then groups revise as necessary. **(75 minutes)**

Stepwise Process to Accessing Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum		
1. IDENTIFY THE STANDARD(S) THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT WILL ADDRESS.		
What is the state standard?	**What is the grade level standard?**	**What is the standard all about?**
Understand measurable attributes of objects and the units, systems, and processes of measurement Apply appropriate techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurements	Understand, select, and use units of appropriate size and type to measure angles, perimeter, area, surface area, and volume. Select and apply techniques and tools to accurately find length, area, volume, and angle measures to appropriate levels of precision.	Use appropriate tools and techniques to measure angles, perimeter, area, surface area, and volume.
2. DEFINE THE OUTCOME(S) OF INSTRUCTION FROM THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON _GEOMETRY_.		
What are the desired outcomes for all students in general education? **What will classroom based assessment look like?**	**Which outcomes will be prioritized for direct instruction and monitoring for the target student with significant cognitive disabilities?**	**What supports (already identified or additional) would be necessary for the target student to access the instruction?**
– Apply appropriate measuring techniques to authentic task – Demonstrate knowledge of how to measure volume – Be able to estimate needed amount of materials	– Apply appropriate measuring techniques to authentic task – Know how much something holds (i.e., volume)	– Math manipulatives – 4 key voice output device – Adaptive keyboard – Auditory feedback software – Pictures

3. IDENTIFY THE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO BE USED IN THE UNIT.		
What are the instructional activities planned for all students? **What will the classroom based assessment look like?**	**How can the student actively participate in the instructional activities?**	**What supports (already identified or additional) would help the student access the instruction?**
1. Review length, width, and depth and discuss how these three things are used to measure volume – The class will brainstorm ways to compute volume (e.g., mathematical formula, fill containers with cubes, build to scale with cubes and count) 2. Practice figuring volume by completing problems on a worksheet 3. Work in small groups trying out various methods determined during the brainstorming activity (e.g., math formulas, math manipulatives, scaled materials) 4. Apply the skills in the context of constructing a playhouse: To build a playhouse 5 feet by 3 feet, the students must first determine how many cubic feet of concrete is needed for the foundation and the floor and then convert to cubic yards.	1. 3 pictures/picture symbol of the same item with the length highlighted on one, width on one, and depth on the third. The teacher or paraprofessional will provide direct instruction on each. She will line a tactile ruler next to the highlighted section of each picture. 2. While students are doing a worksheet, Veronica will practice lining her tactile ruler next to the highlighted areas of the pictures and activating the corresponding number on the voice output device. 3. In small group Veronica will use 1 centimeter cubes to fill a container (cube) and will be assisted in counting how many it took to fill the container. 4. Using a template, she matches one cube to each square on the template and then is assisted in counting the number of cubes used. She can use an adapted keyboard set up like a calculator to convert to cubic yards by matching the number of cubes counted and dividing by 3 (this will probably require gestural or physical prompting).	1. line drawings or pictures tactile ruler 2. voice output device 3. one centimeter cubes 4. template of scaled drawing of the playhouse one centimeter cubes adapted keyboard set up like a calculator calculator on the computer

4. TARGET SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FROM THE IEP TO ADDRESS DURING THE UNIT.		
Which of the instructional activities provide opportunity to work on objectives?	**What IEP objectives re: the general curriculum can be addressed within the instructional activities?**	**What other IEP objectives can be addressed within the instructional activities?**
1. place tactile ruler next to each picture/picture symbol	1. identify the picture/picture symbol with verbal cue	
2. identifying the number on the ruler	2. identifying the correct number on the voice output device	2. increase communication using augmentative communication device
3. placing 1 centimeter cubes into the container	3. No specific IEP objective for this activity	3. follow one step directions
4. placing each cube on a square on the template	4. matching objects to objects or picture symbols (i.e., template square)	
5. operate the adapted calculator	5. identifying numbers	5. increasing communication

Stepwise Process to Accessing Grade Level Content Standards and Curriculum		
1. IDENTIFY THE STANDARD(S) THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT WILL ADDRESS.		
What is the state standard?	**What is the grade level standard?**	**What is the standard all about?**
2. DEFINE THE OUTCOME(S) OF INSTRUCTION FROM THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON _____.		
What are the desired outcomes for all students in general education? What will classroom based assessment look like?	**Which outcomes will be prioritized for direct instruction and monitoring for the target student with significant cognitive disabilities? What will formative assessment look like?**	**What supports (already identified or additional) would be necessary for the target student to access the instruction?**
3. IDENTIFY THE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO BE USED IN THE UNIT.		
What are the instructional activities planned for all students?	**How can the student actively participate in the instructional activities?**	**What supports (already identified or additional) would help the student access the instruction?**
4. TARGET SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FROM THE IEP TO ADDRESS DURING THE UNIT.		
Which of the instructional activities provide opportunity to work on objectives?	**What IEP objectives re: the general curriculum can be addressed within the instructional activities?**	**What other IEP objectives can be addressed within the instructional activities?**

<u>**Stepwise Glossary**</u>

Collaboration- A relationship between individuals or organizations that enables the participants to accomplish goals more successfully than they could have separately. Educators are finding that they must collaborate with others to deal with increasingly complex issues.

Curriculum- Although this term has many possible meanings, it usually refers to a written plan outlining what students will be taught (a course of study). Curriculum documents often also include detailed directions or suggestions for teaching the content. Curriculum may refer to all the courses offered at a given school, or all the courses offered at a school in a particular area of study. For example, the English curriculum might include English literature, literature, world literature, essay styles, creative writing, business writing, Shakespeare, modern poetry, and the novel.

Hidden curriculum- The habits and values taught in schools that are not specified in the official written curriculum.

Instructional unit- A segment of instruction focused on a particular topic. School courses are frequently divided into units lasting from one to six weeks. For example, an American history course might include a four-week unit on The Westward Movement.

Outcomes- Intended results of schooling: What students are supposed to know and be able to do. Educators and others may use the term outcomes to mean roughly the same as goals, objectives, or standards

Standards- In current usage, the term usually refers to specific criteria for what students are expected to learn and be able to do. These standards usually take two forms in the curriculum:

> Content standards (similar to what were formerly called goals and objectives), which tell what students are expected to know and be able to do in various subject areas, such as mathematics and science.

> Performance standards, which specify what levels of learning are expected. Performance standards assess the degree to which content standards have been met. The term "world-class standards" refers to the content and performances that are expected of students in other industrialized countries. In recent years, standards have also been developed specifying what teachers should know and be able to do.

Definitions are from Lexicon of Learning, www.ascd.org.

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Checkpoint

- How do the 4 steps assist access to the general curriculum?
- How important is the general educator to the process?
- How do we make activities "meaningful" for students?
- How does UDL apply to the 4-Step process?

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Notes