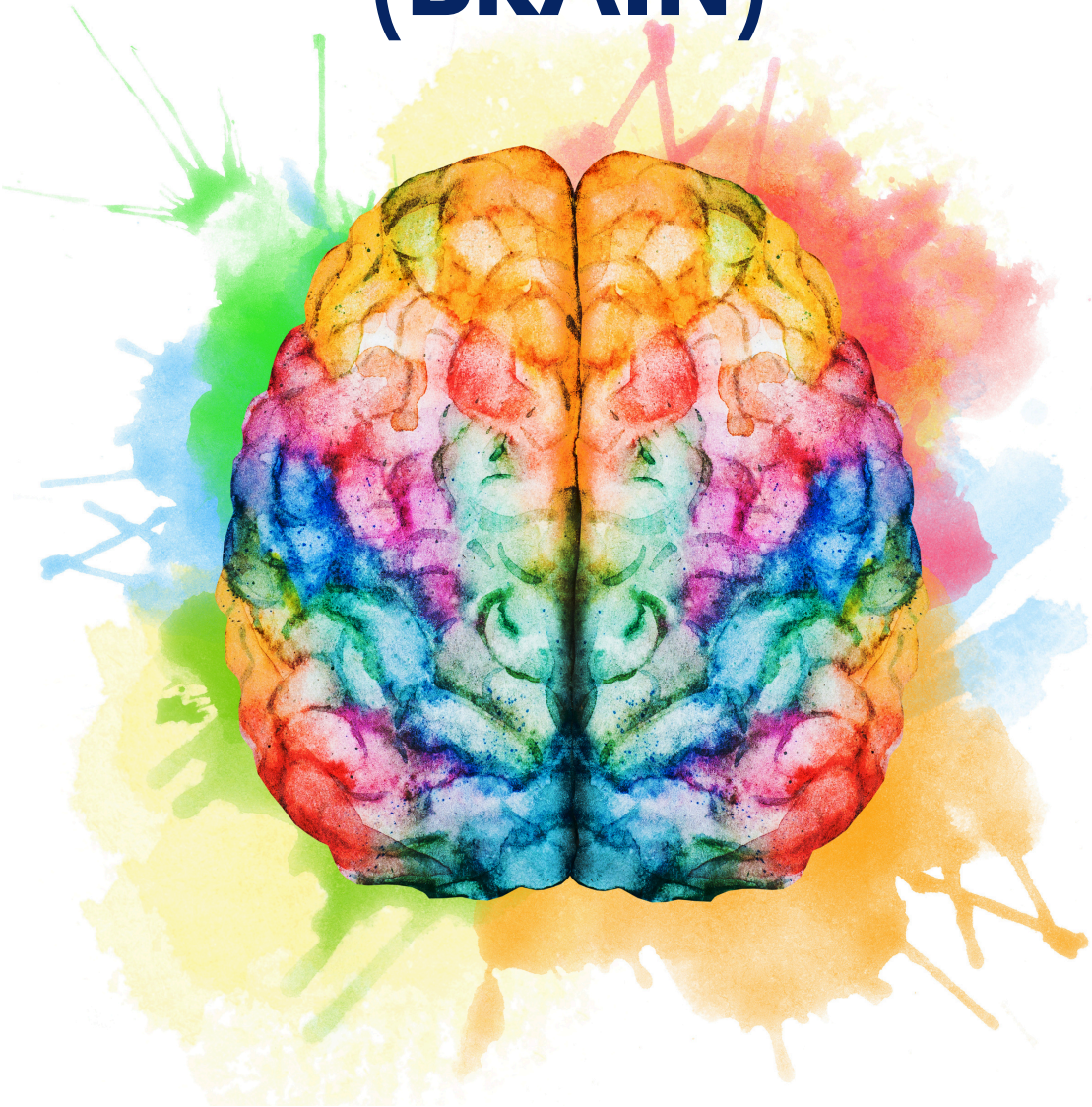
Building Responsive Approaches for Instructional Needs (BRAIN)



Prepared by HWDSB Psychological Services

HWDSB
BE YOU. BE EXCELLENT.

2025-26

Processing Areas

Using this Guide

Understanding Learning Profiles: Understanding individual patterns of personal strengths and needs may be useful in promoting academic success, improving learning skills, and determining effective accommodations or interventions to support a student in the classroom.
How to Use this Resource:

Processing area and what it measures.

Processing Area		
Definition		
Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources & Assistive Technology Strategies

If this processing area is a strength, the student may excel with these tasks. If it is an area of need, the student may require support with them.

When choosing instructional strategies, it's important to consider the student's stage of development and overall learning profile.

Strategies and resources are designed with both elementary and secondary students in mind. * indicates that app can be found in the HWSDB catalogue

The Importance of Supporting Students in Their Area of Need:
Supporting students' areas of need will reduce the amount of mental effort your brain uses when you are learning something new or doing a task (cognitive load).

Reducing cognitive load can have several positive effects on learning, including:

- improve learning
- increase productivity
- enhance creativity
- reduce stress and fatigue
- promote better decision-making
- increase focus and attention
- improve overall performance

If you come across a link that is not working or have a suggested app/website, please complete this form to let us know!

return to home

Verbal Comprehension - Expressive Language

The ability to express ideas using words (spoken and written language)

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Communicate thoughts, needs or wants Vocabulary development Retrieve verbal information from long-term memory Explain new ideas or concepts to other people Complete oral or written expression tasks Ask questions, make requests, express emotions and engage in conversation Organize thoughts or ideas Generate grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs Give directions Explain abstract concepts Participate in class discussions Talk in public	Encourage students to read or listen to audiobooks to expand their vocabulary and background knowledge Give extra time to formulate ideas Provide cues/prompts, ask questions and model expressive language Pre-teach new vocabulary and provide visual associations when possible Use visual supports (pictures and diagrams) to help retrieve language-based information from memory Encourage students to use mind maps or semantic webbing before presenting or writing to link vocabulary and thoughts Allow for alternative ways to demonstrate knowledge (e.g., visual representations) Encourage students to talk about interests and engage in conversation to practice communicating Encourage students to use synonyms to help with word-finding difficulties Provide opportunities to practice oral responses in advance Assess knowledge through cloze activities (fill in the blank, matching, true/false, multiple choice)	Text-to-speech software and Picture Dictionary (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) Build keyboarding skills through online practice (e.g., Typing Club or Typing.com Turn on word prediction and autocorrect features in Microsoft Word Electronic dictionary, thesaurus & editing software (Microsoft Editor or Grammarly*) Activities to teach how to express emotions and needs (Microsoft Reflect) Practice Oral Presentations (Microsoft Speaker Coach) Answer questions and summarize information (Microsoft Co-Pilot) 5 ways to use Copilot in education #shorts AI in Teams Graphic organizers (PowerPoint, Canva) HWDSB's Virtual Library (see last page) Visual and symbol supported educational resources (Boardmaker and Visual Supports) Centre for Success AT Resource (innovATion)

Verbal Comprehension - Receptive Language

The ability to understand verbal and written language

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Understand instructions, directions, lessons, conversations Understand new vocabulary Comprehend written information and solve word problems Identify important information and key points Understand both figurative and literal language Interpret sarcasm, play on words, and homonyms Participate in class discussions and lessons Socialize with peers	Provide overview of lessons in advance Pre-teach new/complex vocabulary or concepts Repeat vocabulary, terms and definitions Explicitly link prior knowledge with new vocabulary Allow more time to process verbal information Use simple and familiar language when giving instructions Check-in to ensure comprehension Present new information using concrete manipulatives and multisensory methods (written, visual and spoken) Highlight key/main ideas Reduce Auditory distractions Provide step-by-step instructions with visual examples Speak clearly, slowly and use gestures and visuals Encourage student to do practice questions to prepare for tests Teach student to look for and understand non-verbal gestures Explain the root or origin of words and concepts to give context and meaning	Text-to-speech software and Picture Dictionary (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Electronic dictionary, thesaurus & editing software (Microsoft Editor or Grammarly*) Answer questions and summarize information (Microsoft Co-Pilot) 5 ways to use Copilot in education #shorts HWDSB's Virtual Library (see last page) Caption presentations in selected language (Microsoft Live Captions) Graphic organizers (PowerPoint, Canva) Reading Comprehension -How Do I Teach Main Idea? Reading Rockets Summarizing Strategies (readingrockets.org) Visual and symbol supported educational resources (Boardmaker and Visual Supports) Centre for Success AT Resource (innovATion)

Visual-Spatial Processing

The ability to analyze and integrate visual details, work with part-whole relationships, recognize patterns, and understand spatial relationships

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Understand and interpret graphs, charts, figures, geometric shapes, analog clocks, and other types of diagrams or visual information Seeing the "whole picture" or knowing what details are important Ability to "read between the lines" and interpret information that may not be obvious Organize work on a page (e.g., write within margins and align math columns) Build and assemble objects Organize information from different sources into one cohesive written piece (e.g., putting parts of information together to create something new) Understand directional information such as left/right or remembering directions to a location (sense of direction) Mentally manipulate objects or visual patterns to see how they would appear if rotated Estimate or gauge distance, depth, size, shape, time Read nonverbal cues such as body language and facial expressions Impact performance in Mathematics, Science, Geography, Art & Design	Teach students to use self-talk when problem solving to help connect visual symbols to what they represent Model tracking by using a finger or pointer while reading Present information step-by-step and include a written or auditory sequence of steps to assist with visual tasks Supplement visual material with explicit verbal instruction (auditory or written) Use graph paper to make columns in math Provide extra paper or space for students to write or show answers Reduce unessential images and keep all visually presented material simple and uncluttered Reduce visual distractions by folding a test or cover part of the page Use highlights or sticky-note to draw attention to important information on worksheets Provide the option of oral assessment Explain the big picture before teaching the details with review and reminders throughout on how the parts fit to form the whole When teaching math use number lines, visual representations and real life examples	Mind mapping, concept mapping, outlining and graphic organizers (PowerPoint or Canva) Khan Academy -Self-paced math practice and instructional videos GeoGebra for math support and online manipulatives Virtual manipulatives and math learning centre Polypad Virtual Math Support (Microsoft Math Solver & Math Assistant in OneNote) Virtual Math Tutoring (TVO Mathify) Grades 4-12 Knowledgehook-math software used to identify learning gaps in and provide targeted interventions (Grades 1-8) Math Up: MathUP Resources (license required Math Manipulative Guide LD@school Mathematics and LDs: Mathematics and Learning Disabilities (LDs) Ontario Curriculum-High Impact Math Strategies and Tools: Curriculum and Resources Resources to support creating positive learning conditions for math class through inclusive practice ideas and engaging activities.

Fluid Reasoning

The ability to think logically and problem-solve in new situations or unfamiliar scenarios using logic and interpreting patterns, often requiring flexible thinking.

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Understand relationships between concepts Infer or draw conclusions Make connections between new material and previous knowledge Apply problem-solving skills in new situations (apply rules or transferring skills and knowledge) Understand and anticipate cause and effect Recognize patterns and relationships Think flexibly Generate multiple perspectives or options (divergent thinking) See the big picture and how things relate to each other Identify the main ideas and condense information down to the most essential or relevant parts Apply logic to new situations Think on your feet to solve a problem that requires logic and not memorized knowledge Impacts performance in math, science and reading	Explicitly teach multiple approaches to problem-solving Provide opportunities to sort, classify, and categorize objects to demonstrate connections Highlight and define relationships and connections between concepts or ideas Explicitly link cause and effect Think out loud to demonstrate and model problem-solving strategies Provide guided practice with feedback Provide a step-by-step checklist to complete a task Use real-world problems and examples to help students to apply and generalize problem-solving strategies (e.g., analogies that are relatable) Provide lesson outline to help student see how parts of lesson go together Use graphic organizers, writing templates to assist in unifying or breaking information apart Ask students to show all their work when possible and give partial credit if they can show the correct process Teach cues for identifying main ideas When teaching math use number lines, visual representations and real life examples	Mind mapping, concept mapping, and graphic organizers (PowerPoint, Canva) Khan Academy -Self-paced math practice and instructional videos Minecraft in Education Reading Rockets Summarizing Strategies (readingrockets.org) Knowledgehook-math software used to identify learning gaps in and provide targeted interventions (Grade 1-8) Math Up: MathUP Resources (license required) Math Manipulative Guide LDeschool Math and LDs: Mathematics and Learning Disabilities (LDs) Ontario Curriculum-High Impact Math Strategies and Tools: Curriculum and Resources Answer questions, organize, summarize or simplify information (Microsoft Co-Pilot & AI in Teams) 5 ways to use Copilot in education #shorts Resources to support creating positive learning conditions for math class through inclusive practice ideas and engaging activities.

Processing Speed (Fluency)

The ability to rapidly and accurately process information

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Process information quickly Respond quickly Copy information down efficiently Complete work/tests within the required time frame Improvise during class discussions Take notes during lessons Make rapid comparisons between concepts Quickly and accurately process letters, words, numbers, and quantity (rapid automatic naming) Read with sufficient speed and accuracy to support reading fluency and reading comprehension Count with automaticity and solve basic math calculations quickly to support math fluency	Reduce quantity of work in favour of quality Provide additional time to process instructions, formulate a response, provide an answer and complete a task (extra time at all phases) Speak slowly and use familiar vocabulary Minimize the amount of information that needs to be copied (provide copy of notes or have student take pictures) Provide advanced notice before asking questions in class Short answer and/or multiple-choice format for assessment and allow for oral assessment Provide activities for repeated practice to increase fluency and automaticity (e.g., flashcards, speed drills) Teach keyboarding skills and encourage regular practice Provide tools that support processing fluency (calculator, word prediction, speech to text) Break tasks down into manageable chunks	Record classroom lessons Text-to-speech software and Picture Dictionary (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) Use Microsoft Office Lens to upload documents and images (Microsoft Office Lens) Build keyboarding skills through online practice (e.g., Typing Club or Typing.com Answer questions, organize, summarize or simplify information (Microsoft Co-Pilot & AI in Teams) 5 ways to use Copilot in education #shorts Centre for Success AT Resource (innovATion) Virtual E-Resources, Audio and eBooks (HWDSB System Learning Commons) Knowledge Hook-math software used to identify learning gaps in and provide targeted interventions (Grades 1-8)) Math Up: MathUP Resources (license required) Math Progress-customize lessons to build foundational math skills

Working Memory

The ability to temporarily hold and manipulate information in your mind while performing a task.

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Multi-task (i.e., perform more than one task at a time) Follow multiple-step instructions Follow a conversation while keeping responses and follow up questions in mind Sustain attention during a task Recall and interpret lengthy reading passages Organize and sequence ideas for writing tasks Keep track of belongings and materials Hold a question in mind while formulating a response or carrying out an action Remember phonological rules and apply them when reading unfamiliar words Continue to hold ideas and knowledge in mind while trying to spell words and write sentences (organize ideas) Work through math calculations while keeping the logical sequence of a math problem in mind Take notes- listening while writing Time management-keeping track of what task needs to be done next Participating in class discussions- remember what was said in the lesson	Simplify tasks, present information slowly, and draw attention to key points Provide a written checklist of steps to complete a task Clearly lay out success criteria at the beginning of a task Encourage students to dictate thoughts to reduce cognitive load (e.g., scribing or speech to text resources) Encourage the use of verbal mediation strategies Break tasks into smaller chunks Provide information in multiple modalities (e.g., verbal, written, kinesthetic) Use visuals to support information like anchor charts, diagrams, pictures Overlearn information so it becomes automatic to reduce cognitive load (e.g. math facts) Provide class notes and handouts prior to class Teach students to be active readers (e.g. highlighting, underline and summarizing key points) Repeat instructions and highlight main points (Chunk, pause and repeat critical key items) Check in with students to ensure comprehension of task expectations and how to begin	Make use of external memory devices such as assistive technology, calculators, alarms, calendars (MS 360 calendar - Planner Guide) Turn on word prediction and autocorrect features in Microsoft Word Text-to-speech software and Picture Dictionary (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) Mind mapping, concept mapping, and graphic organizers (PowerPoint, Canva) Visual memory aids for math (e.g., multiplication table, visual representations, number lines) Virtual manipulatives and math learning centre Polypad Virtual Math Support (Microsoft Math Solver & Math Assistant in OneNote) Note taking app: OneNote & Notability* Mnemonics such as acronyms, rhymes or visualization mnemonics: mnemonic-strategies Magic-to-do page on Goblin Tools- A tool to break tasks down into manageable steps Knowledgehook-identify gaps & provide targeted math interventions (Grade 1-8) Summarize or simplify information (Microsoft Co-Pilot & AI in Teams)

Verbal Memory

The ability to remember and recall information that is presented in words (spoken or written). It involves the storage and retrieval of language-based information, such as lists of words, sentences, conversations and stories

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Remember and follow verbal instructions Memorize factual or rote information (e.g., math facts, months of the year, alphabet song) Remember details from stories, conversations and class lessons Recall sequences Remember lengthy verbal instructions or reading passages	Present information in small chunks Check in with students to ensure comprehension of task expectations and how to begin Repeat key points Teach alternative ways to recall information (e.g., mnemonics) Accompany information with multisensory learning experiences (e.g., visual, tactile, kinesthetic cues, videos) Teach paraphrasing Give verbal information in written form so it can be reviewed as often as needed Use visuals to teach new concepts and use them to cue memory State important information at the beginning and the end of a lesson encourage drill/active rehearsal to help convert information to longer-term storage Embed information in context Encourage frequent review of subject material (repeated exposure)	Use text to speech software to improve comprehension and retention") (Microsoft Immersive Reader) HWDSB's Virtual Library (see last page) Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) Record classroom lessons (to allow for repeated exposure) Summarize or simplify information (Microsoft Co-Pilot & AI in Teams) Strategies to Enhance Students' Memory Making It Stick: Memorable Strategies to Enhance Learning mnemonics, such as acronyms, rhymes or visualization mnemonics: mnemonic-strategies from LDonline & mnemonic-strategies

Visual Memory

The ability to remember and visualize things you have seen before.

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Recall visual details of images Remember maps and diagrams Remember the layout of a room or objects Recall visual sequences (e.g., spelling patterns) Remember mathematical formulas Remember movement sequences (e.g., dance and martial arts) Remember landmarks to help navigate directions Copy from a book or from the board Find letters on a keyboard or numbers on a calculator	Verbally explain visual information Use mnemonics and alternative memory strategies for easier recall Provide information through multiple sensory learning experiences (e.g., visual, tactile, kinesthetic cues, videos) Draw student's attention to key visual elements (e.g., highlight or underline) Provide auditory cues (e.g., use keywords to cue) Reduce the amount of information on the page (e.g., less print to read, isolate key info) Provide access to formula or data sheets during tests Use graphic organizers, mind maps, writing templates to assist in unifying information and breaking information apart	Video record demonstrations to allow for repeated exposure Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) and Text-to-speech software (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Build keyboarding skills through online practice (e.g., Typing Club or Typing.com Electronic dictionary and thesaurus (Microsoft Editor) Virtual Math Support (Microsoft Math Solver) Use Microsoft Office Lens to upload documents and images (Microsoft Office Lens) Strategies to Enhance Students' Memory Making It Stick: Memorable Strategies to Enhance Learning mnemonics, such as acronyms, rhymes or visualization mnemonics: mnemonic-strategies from LDonline mnemonic-strategies

Visual Motor Integration

The ability to coordinate visual perception and motor movement to guide hand or body movements accurately and efficiently (e.g., printing, drawing, and catching)

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Print or write Maintain consistent size and spacing when printing or writing Letter formation Copy from blackboard Complete written work Make columns in math Put numbers on a line Draw or copy shapes Perform motor tasks such as using scissors, tying shoelaces and assembling items Play sports that track the movement of a ball (e.g., throwing, catching, hitting, and kicking) Hand-Eye coordination tasks such as mazes, and connecting dots Plan or organize movements in a sequence to complete a multi-step task (motor planning)	Reduce the quantity of work in favour of quality Provide copies of class notes Take pictures of important class information Scribe or allow speech-to-text and word prediction for tasks with extensive written output Implement strategies to strengthen visual-motor skills (e.g., tracing, threading beads, guided templates to practice cutting and writing) Allow extra time to complete tests and written work Cloze activities (e.g., fill in the blank or short answer) Allow the student to demonstrate knowledge in alternative formats (e.g., demonstrate, orally describe, use virtual manipulatives) Accept point form answers Use graph paper to guide number or letter placement Make accommodations in gym class (e.g., larger balls)	Speech-to-text software (Microsoft Dictate) Build keyboarding skills through online practice (e.g., Typing Club or Typing.com Turn on word prediction and autocorrect features in Microsoft Word Video record demonstrations to allow for repeated exposure Use Microsoft Office Lens to upload documents and images (Microsoft Office Lens) Handwriting without Tears Handwriting Without Tears® | Learning Without Tears® (lwtears.com) Printing Like a Pro! - An Evidence-Based Resource for Teaching Students to Print (bctf.ca) Mind mapping, concept mapping, and graphic organizers (PowerPoint, Canva) Centre for Success AT Resource (innovATion) Virtual manipulatives and math learning centre Polypad

Phonological Processing

The ability to hear, identify and manipulate the sounds of words (phonemes) to process written and spoken language.

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Identify and make rhyming words Learn sound to symbol correspondence Break words into chunks (syllable segmentation) Break down words into individual sounds and blend the sounds back together to form words Decode- convert symbols to sounds (read words) Encode-convert sounds to symbols (spell words) Reading fluency and comprehension Writing fluency and written expression Confuse words that sound similar Articulate words Word Finding (use precise language) Vocabulary development Learn a new language	Systematic and explicit phonics instruction Activities that focus on identifying, segmenting, blending and identifying sounds in words (e.g., clapping out syllables, rhyming games) Explicitly teach rhyme and phonetic rules (e.g., Empower program strategies) Use multi-sensory (visual, auditory and tactile) methods to develop symbol-sound correspondence Use decodable text to help students apply their phonic knowledge Phonological memory games using whole-word or word families (e.g., word bingo, word match) Ensure students have accurate and fast recognition of the alphabet and consonant letter combinations Small group or individualized instruction to address specific areas of challenge Allow for repeated reading with corrective feedback Use partner and/or model reading strategies	Acadience Assessment Tools by Grade HWDSB's Decision Making Tool for reading intervention Gr 3-8 & Gr 9-12 HWDSB's Guide to Evidenced based Reading Interventions (Gr 3-8): phonemic awareness , phonics, decoding, reading fluency reading comprehension Gr K-2 Acadience Reading Support Literacy Activities (K-2)-Family Guide University or Florida Reading Institute (UFLI) Systematic reading intervention Reading Rockets- reading activities Book Creator - create interactive eBook MOE:Effective early reading instruction: a guide for teachers HWDSB's Virtual Library (see last page) Alternative Education Resources Ontario (AERO)- text in an accessible format Text-to-speech software (Microsoft Immersive Reader) Centre for Success (innovATion) Onlit: structured literacy instruction All about Adolescent Literacy Reading Coach & Reading Progress

Orthographic Processing

The ability to quickly and accurately identify (when reading) and recall (when spelling) the letters and letter sequences that correspond to the speech sounds of language

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Recognize/or correctly form letters and letter sequences Identify letter-sound correspondence Word recognition (e.g. sight word vocabulary) Discriminate between visually similar letters (e.g., b and d) and words (e.g., “no” and “on”; “of” and “off”) Read and spell irregular words (e.g., colonel) Reading fluency and comprehension Spelling (sound to print) Written expression and writing fluency Recognize and remember symbols and notations (e.g., math formulas) Develop vocabulary by recognizing and retaining new words Edit text (e.g., recognizing when a word is spelled correctly)	Explicitly teach letter identification, formation and spelling patterns to help with letter & word reversals Systematic & explicit phonics instruction - phoneme (sound)-grapheme (letters) correspondence Use multi-sensory methods to develop symbol-sound correspondence Word work that focuses on specific orthographic patterns (word families) Phoneme manipulation & rhyming activities Ensure students have accurate and fast recognition of the alphabet and consonant letter combinations Systematic spelling instruction that emphasizes letter patterns, common letter sequences, syllabication rules, spelling rules & exceptions to the rules Targeted practice with high-frequency words, including irregular words Teach words using morphological strategies (how specific letter patterns convey meaning) Repeated reading of connected text with specific letter pattern to increase fluency (decodable text) Learning word structures, including roots, prefixes, and suffixes, can help to decode and spell complex words (e.g., peeling off strategies)	Acadience Assessment Tools by Grade HWDSB’s Decision Making Tool for reading intervention Gr 3-8 & Gr 9-12 Evidenced based Reading Interventions (Gr 3-8): phonemic awareness , phonics, decoding, reading fluency reading comprehension Gr K-2 Acadience Reading Support Literacy Activities (K-2)-Family Guide University or Florida Reading Institute (UFLI) Systematic reading intervention MOE: Effective early reading instruction: a guide for teachers HWDSB’s Virtual Library (see last page) Teach Morphology & Morphology Instruction Alternative Education Resources Ontario (AERO)- accessible text Text-to-speech (Immersive Reader) Typing skills Typing Club or Typing.com Word prediction Microsoft Word Editing & Spell Check (Microsoft Editor) Speech-to-text (Microsoft Dictate) Reading Coach & Reading Progress Centre for Success (innovATion)

Executive Functioning (EF) - Metacognition

The ability to be cognitively flexible, initiate, plan, organize, sustain attention and monitor. Executive functioning acts as the brain's overall management system and is a strong predictor of academic success and productivity.

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Create an overall plan to reach a goal	Predictable and consistent routines (include visual daily schedules)	Mind mapping & graphic organizers (PowerPoint or Canva)
Shift focus between different tasks	Provide forewarning of upcoming transitions/changes to a schedule	E-tools for scheduling/reminders & lists (Microsoft Planner & Microsoft To-Do)
Adjust thinking and abandon unsuccessful strategies while problem-solving (mental flexibilty)	Explicitly teach cognitive flexibility, divergent thinking (generate multiple possibilities), and problem-solving strategies such as self-talk	Visual Task Timer*
Get started on tasks	Provide support to identify and initiate the first step of a task	Use camera to take a picture or video to capture important class information
Maintain focus, energy, and momentum to complete a task	Provide work samples and models	Use Microsoft Office Lens to upload documents and save as PDF
Prioritize when there is more than one thing to do	Use labelled binders, bins, etc.	Answer questions and summarize information (Microsoft Co-Pilot)
Develop sequential steps to complete a task	Organize work into electronic folders	Strategies to help develop critical thinking skills (metacognition)
Sustain attention	Provide instructions in writing (step by step with clear sequence)	Activities Guide: Enhancing and Practicing Executive Function Skills with Children from Infancy to Adolescence
Follow complex or multi-step tasks	Use graphic organizers, mind maps, writing templates to help unify information & break information apart	Card games and board games to practice EF skills
Tolerate transitions and changes to routine	Chunk, pause & repeat critical key items	Executive Skills Coaching - What Parents Should Know (middle school)
Keep track of belongings	Provide checklists, schedules, organizers	Helping kids who struggle with EF
Organize books, locker, desk, bedroom	Model planning, organization and goal setting (establish SMART goals)	HomeworkPlanner.pdf
Notice mistakes in work (self-monitoring)	Make time visual (visual timers, calendars, due dates in writing with planned mini-due dates)	EF in Teens: 10 Strategies for Parents
Estimate time required for tasks	Use strategies to reduce stress and promote healthy sleep habits to help optimize executive functioning	Magic to-do page in Goblin Tools- A tool to break tasks down into steps

Executive Functioning (EF) – Behaviour & Emotional Regulation

The ability to guide and modify behaviour and emotions while working towards a goal, especially in challenging situations. (e.g., regulate emotions, goal directed perseverance, response inhibition, and shift flexibly between tasks)

Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Manage impulsivity and think before acting Consider the consequences of actions Tolerate transitions and routine changes Shift between tasks Abandon unsuccessful strategies while problem-solving Manage frustrations Control temper and emotions Understand the impact of behaviours on others Maintain focus, energy, and momentum to complete a task Delay gratification	Explain the rationale of the task to increase engagement Establish routine and keep schedules as consistent and predictable as possible Model calm & reflective problem-solving Establish and maintain a supportive and reliable relationship with student Provide reminders & instruction prior to transitions or situations known to trigger dysregulation Explicitly teach cognitive flexibility, divergent thinking, problem-solving, impulse control and self-talk strategies Provide external reminders to mitigate externalizing behaviours (e.g., Stop, Now, and Plan) Anticipate & plan for problem situations Teach and practice coping & calming strategies Help students to better understand the consequences of their behaviour Develop a system to communicate when a break is needed (e.g., exit card) Teach students to advocate for needs Provide movement breaks Reward system/external motivators to make connection between practicing skills and working towards reward	Smart But Scattered Kids (website) Electronic devices for scheduling/reminders and making lists (Microsoft Planner & Microsoft To-Do) Validate feelings: Emotion Coaching Homepage - We Help with Emotion Coaching (elearningontario.ca) Relaxation techniques in the classroom Chill Out! Classroom Relaxation Exercises for All Ages » Britannica (britannicaeducation.com) Strategies to identify and manage emotions from School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) Organize your mind strategies Incentive planning: IncentivePlanners.pdf Activities to teach how to express emotions and needs (Microsoft Reflect) Visual and symbol supported educational resources (Boardmaker and Visual Supports) Social Emotional Learning tools

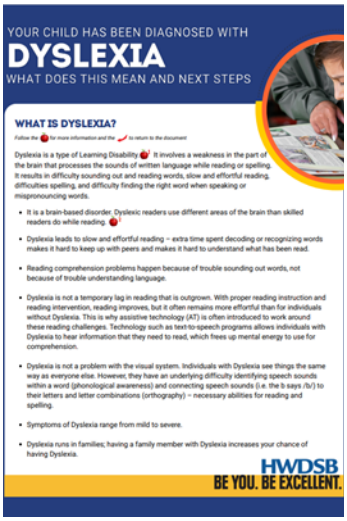
Nonverbal Communication

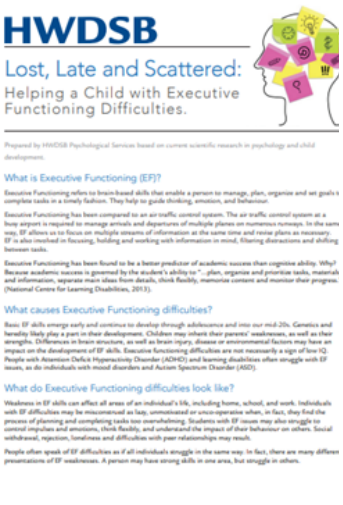
The ability to understand and interpret social cues and pragmatic language (knowing what to say, how to say it, and when to say it)

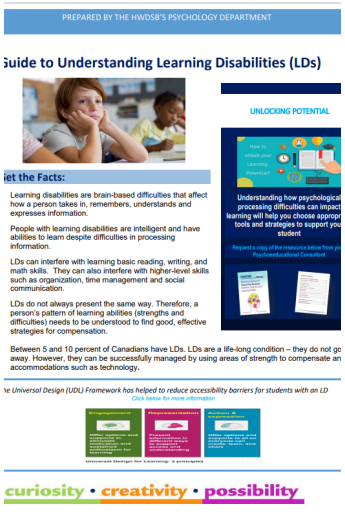
Connected Skill	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Assistive Technology Supports
Understand and apply appropriate social skills Manage transitions Comprehend figurative speech, idioms, humour, sarcasm Understanding nuances (reading between the lines) Control or coordinate movements (i.e., clumsy, poor balance, fine motor control) Recognize and understand how people communicate without words through facial expression, body language, and tone of voice Recognize emotions Express emotions Make friends and navigate relationships See the big picture (e.g., get lost in the details) Organization and planning Spatial awareness Thinking in flexible ways (seeing the ambiguity in situations) Being able to generate multiple explanations (divergent thinking)	Use role play and provide direct instruction about social situations (e.g., model how to join a group, where to sit) Provide a daily schedule and explicitly explain what is expected over the day Monitor social interactions and provide feedback to assist with possible misperception or misinterpretation Provide warnings related to transitions and possible changes in routine or plans Teach by talking rather than by showing Explicitly teach ways to plan, organize, and understand social situations Limit or narrow down options to avoid becoming overwhelmed Use explicit language - avoid idioms, slang, sarcasm, figurative speech Emphasize similarities, differences, and connections between details Breakdown abstract information into concrete terms and clues Help students to assess the size of a problem- is it big or is it little? Explain the rationale or goal of the task to increase engagement Reward system/external motivators to help see the connection between practicing skills and working towards a reward	Visual and symbol supported educational resources (Boardmaker and Visual Supports) Classroom accommodations for nonverbal learning disabilities (understood.org) Activities to teach how to express emotions and needs (Microsoft Reflect) Identification and Management of Emotions - Resource from School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) The NVLD Project | Non-Verbal Learning Disability Social Skills in Your Classroom | Reading Rockets Reimagining Wellness 2024 fosters well-being, creates community and supports each student in feeling safe, supported and included Create a social story: Templates for Personalized Teaching Stories | Autism Speaks Visual Supports (HWDSB Speech and Language Services)

Other Resources - Infolets

These and other resources can be found on the HWDSB website under the Mental Health tab (Help by Topic)







ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

in HWDSB's Elementary

VIRTUAL LIBRARY

Logging into the Virtual Library in 1, 2, 3:

1. Have your board-issued email and password ready. Don't have it? *Check with your teacher.*
2. Visit HWDSB's Student website & log into the Hub.
3. Click the Virtual Library button or search for HWDSB Virtual Library.

Sora

Popular reading App for students in K-12

- Increase/decrease font size
- Audiobooks and read-along titles available
- Colour contrast
- Alternative fonts

ON-Core

Multimedia correlated to the K-12 ON curriculum

- Closed captioning
- Video transcription available
- Can request CC on videos without, contact the SLC to request.

Curio

10,000+ high-quality videos and podcasts

- Closed captioning
- Video transcription available, including interactive transcription

Britannica Elementary

Research database geared to students in grades JK-5.

- Option to choose reading levels
- Increase/decrease font size
- Text-to-speech available
- Alternative fonts

PebbleGo

Research Database specifically designed for JK-3 students.

- Read-along feature
- Default large type font
- Transcripts for videos
- Screen reader support

Gale Elementary

Geared to students in grades JK-4.

- Alternative font sizes
- Ability to adjust font spacing
- Colour contrast
- Text-to-speech available
- Screen reader support

Click the icon to go to the resource

HWDSB
SYSTEM LEARNING COMMONS

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

VIRTUAL LIBRARY

Logging into the Virtual Library in 1, 2, 3:

1. Have your board-issued email and password ready. Don't have it? *Check with your teacher.*
2. Visit HWDSB's Student website & log into the Hub.
3. Click the Virtual Library button or search for HWDSB Virtual Library.

Sora

Popular reading App for students in K-12

- Increase/decrease font size
- Audiobooks and read-along titles available
- Colour contrast
- Alternative fonts

ON-Core

Multimedia correlated to the K-12 ON curriculum

- Closed captioning
- Video transcription available
- Can request CC on videos without, contact the SLC to request.

Curio

10,000+ high-quality videos and podcasts

- Closed captioning
- Video transcription available, including interactive transcription

Britannica High

Research database geared to students in grades JK-5.

- Option to choose reading levels
- Increase/decrease font size
- Text-to-speech available
- Alternative fonts

Gale High

Gale High is geared for students in grades 9-12.

- Increase/decrease font size
- Adjust font spacing
- Colour contrast
- Text-to-speech
- Screen reader support

Need More Help?

- Check with the Teacher Librarian in your school
- Check with the Learning Commons Technician in your school
- Email slc@hwdsb.on.ca

Click the icon to go to the resource

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ACCESSIBILITY SYMBOLS

VIRTUAL LIBRARY

Accessibility in Databases

Many databases offer accessibility features that help make learning inclusive for all students. Below are common symbols and their meanings.

Text to Speech: words read aloud to assist with auditory processing.

Font Size: increase or decrease the font size.

Alternative Fonts: Different fonts offered for easier visual processing.

Closed Captions: Shows spoken dialogue as text on the screen.

Transcription: written text of audio/video recordings.

Translation: Represents multiple language options.

HWDSB VIRTUAL LIBRARY

Find Resources with these accessibility features on the HWDSB Virtual Library.

slc@hwdsb.on.ca

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Student Support Template

1. Review Psychological Assessment Report and IEP Strengths and Needs charts.

2. Choose an area of processing need from the Strengths and Needs chart that is included in the BRAIN document (e.g., Phonological Processing)

_____
_____

3. Utilize the BRAIN document to define selected areas of need. Identify connected skills and academic tasks that may be challenging. Select an Instructional Strategy and Resource/AT Support to facilitate student learning.

Processing area of Need: _____
Definition: _____
_____
Connected skill: _____
_____
Academic impact: _____
Instructional strategy: _____
_____
Resource or AT support: _____
_____

4. Choose an area of processing strength from the Strengths and Needs chart that is included in the BRAIN document and can be used to support learning.

Processing area of Strength: _____
Definition: _____
_____
Connected skill: _____
_____
Related academic strength: _____
Instructional strategy to leverage strength: _____
_____

5. Use the information above to update the IEP.

6. *Universal Design for Learning* - Consider other students in the classroom who might benefit from these strategies.

Link to editable version