

Bridgewater College

BC Digital Commons

Honors Projects

Spring 5-7-2022

Supporting Exceptional Learners through Evidence-based Practices in Social Emotional Learning and Academic Settings

Lexia Werner

lwerner@eagles.bridgewater.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bridgewater.edu/honors_projects



Part of the [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [Early Childhood Education Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Elementary Education Commons](#), [Language and Literacy Education Commons](#), [Liberal Studies Commons](#), [Secondary Education Commons](#), [Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education Commons](#), [Special Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Werner, Lexia. "Supporting Exceptional Learners through Evidence-based Practices in Social Emotional Learning and Academic Settings." *Senior Honors Project, Bridgewater College, 2022*.

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by BC Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of BC Digital Commons. For more information, please contact rlowe@bridgewater.edu.

Supporting Exceptional Learners in Social Emotional Learning and Academic Settings

Lexia Werner, Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gwen Jones

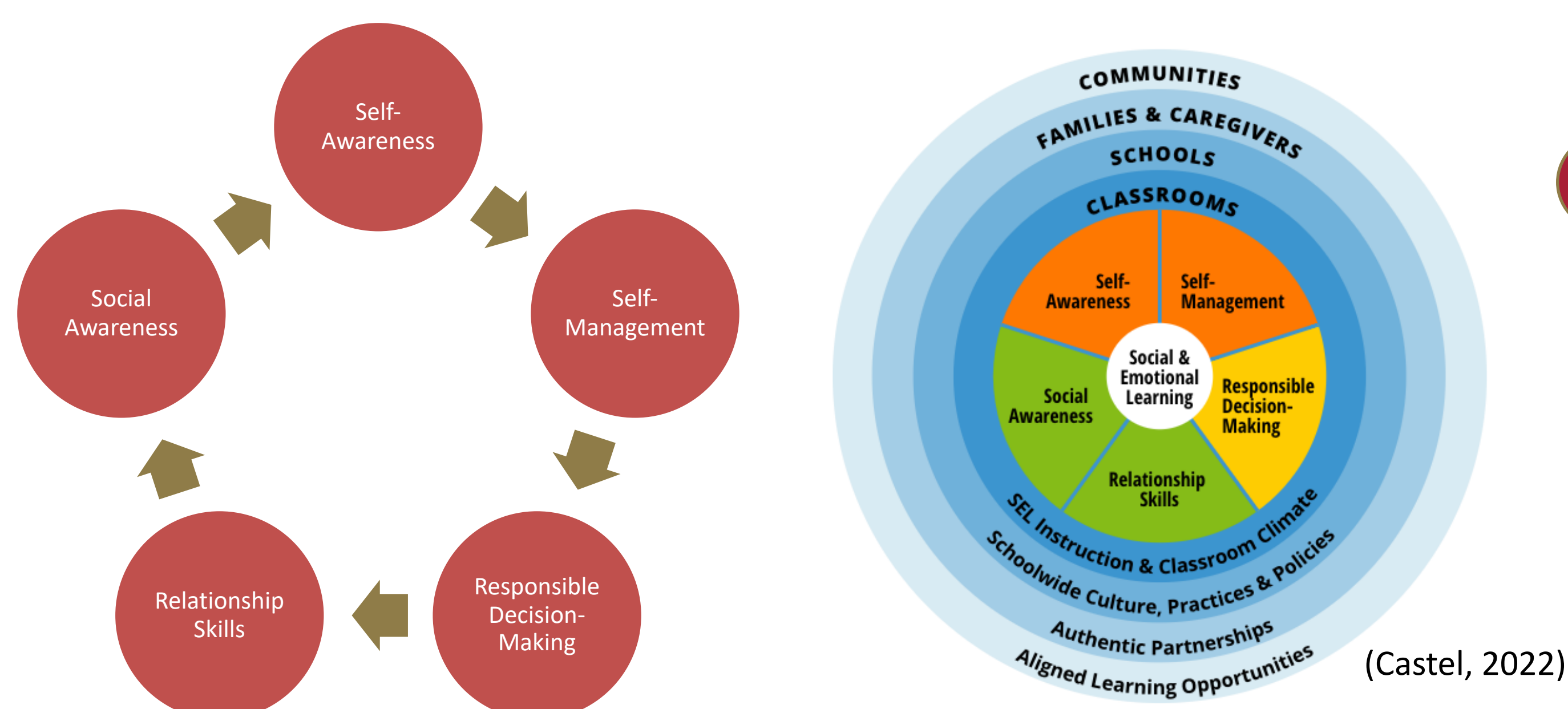
Abstract

Although many teachers are attempting to meet all of their students' needs, differentiating subject materials, and attending planning learning committees, students continue to be at risk of not getting their full needs met. Exceptional learners that are also English Language Learners are at the most risk of not receiving resources. Some of these students are at risk for SEL developmental skills as they are limited based on their learning difference. Teachers have the ability to work together and increase the meaningful learning experiences for exceptional learners by cocreating IEP's and participating in consultations with other teachers and administration. Supporting EL students with learning differences by implementing evidence-based practices is vital to ensure the individual is continuing to be successful. The accessibility of the general education curriculum is limited for students with learning differences due to the limitations on resources.

Methods

As a completion of my Honors distinction, I completed this poster presentation on the strategies teachers, administrators, and students can use within learning plans. These plans help encourage all school educators to collaborate in order to allow all individuals with learning differences with or without English as a Second Language barriers to be successful in the classroom.

Social Emotional Learning Implementation



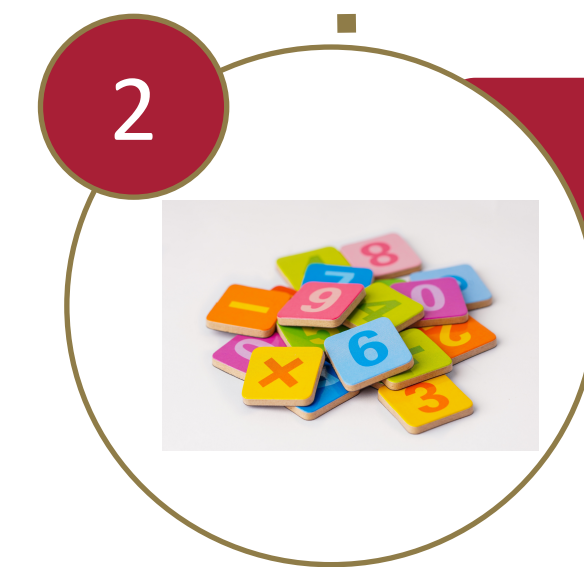
Results

5 Best Strategies for Exceptional Learners



Building Prior Knowledge | Prior

Building knowledge before teaching new content is crucial for exceptional learners as they are able to make connections with past learning experiences and cross-curricular units. Students that also speak English as a second language benefit from this knowledge being built before new concept teaching because it offers them the opportunity to connect to pre-existing knowledge.



Building Vocabulary | Vocab

Building vocabulary for students that struggle with learning differences and speak a language other than English is crucial for language acquisition. Building vocabulary in lesson plans allows these students to understand and manipulate content-related vocabulary. Teachers should use targeted vocabulary instruction and pre-teach significant vocabulary words as it is proven to help English Learners with learning disabilities to be successful.



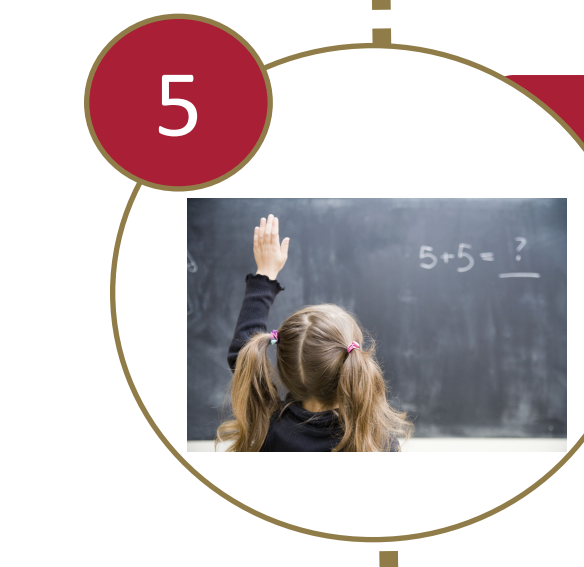
Explicit Instruction | Explicit

Teachers should implement advance organizers and think-aloud techniques for exceptional students in order to maximize their learning potential and decision-making processes. Teachers should implement the use of student-friendly language to help limit confusion for EL students with special needs. Students with learning differences should obtain multiple opportunities to scaffold with material and have meaningful feedback from teachers.



Visual Representations | Visuals

English Language students with learning differences have a more difficulty with processing and executive functioning. The implementation of visual aids in literacy like videos, pictures, or graphic organizers for these learners are beneficial. These organizers help readers organize the details of the text and serve as anchor visuals for students. The use of visual representations help students with or without learning disabilities make meaning from the text.



Opportunities to respond | Engagement

Using technology--especially assistive technology—and interactive response cards offer students an opportunity to respond during classroom instruction. These opportunities can also be used without technology by using printed pictures, whiteboards, or high tech like electronic clickers. Teachers should provide students with adequate wait time and constructive and positive feedback on tasks within the classroom environment.

Reasons for Teaching

Students need scaffolding and opportunities to respond on material that is learned within the classroom

- “Students require 4-6 OTR per minute on new material and 8-12 OTR on previously learned materials in order for effective learning to occur” (Hovey, Miller, & Kiru, et al., 2019, cited by Whitney, Cooper, & Lingo, 2015).

The Accessibility of content for learners with disabilities is limited within school districts and curriculums

- “Accessibility to course content is essential because 63% of students ages 6-21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) spend most of the day in general education classrooms, including 70% of students with LD...” (Hovey, Miller, & Kiru, et al., 2019)

Gradual Release Model of Explicit Instruction



Conclusion

Strategies for students with learning differences and speaking English as a Second language are significant for teachers to implement in the modern-day learning environment. The evidence-based practices support students to encourage them to participate with their utmost potential in order to succeed. Providing students with the accessibility to curriculum and course content allows individuals to obtain and improve learning outcomes within the school year and beyond. Building on prior knowledge, teaching vocabulary, exposing students to explicit instruction, implementing visual representations, and opportunities for students to engage and respond offers learners to be academically and socially successful in their growth as a whole child. General educators that collaborate with Special needs and ESL teachers will benefit the students' learning growth and provide inclusiveness within the classroom.