

# Using DBP to Support classrooms with Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

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## EMBODIED COGNITION

**WHAT IS THEORIZED:** Embodied cognition is the idea that the mind is not only connected to the body but that the body influences the mind. The case for embodied cognition exists in both the sensory-motor and pre-operational stages of development (Piaget, 1962). Using the body as a learning tool, students are vigorously applying their sensorimotor, physiological, cognitive, and affective experience to combine the information (Bailey, 32).

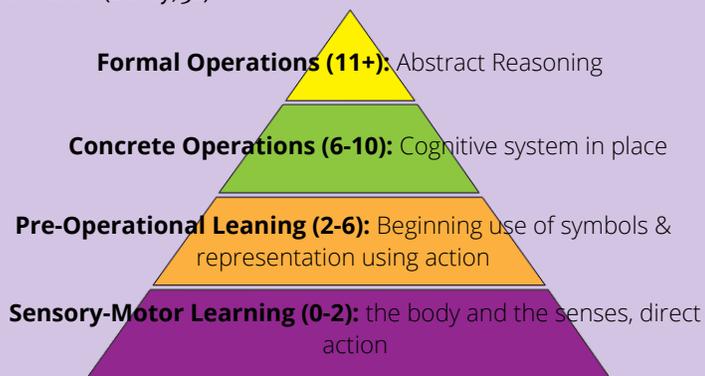


Figure 1: Pyramid of Piaget's learning development (Bailey 32)

**PUTTING THE THEORY TO PRACTICE:** Children with DDI often require more body engagement than their non-disabled peers.

- Try "Pass the Sound/Pass the Movement or Hula Hoop/Bubble Walk (Bailey, 204-205)

## SELF ADVOCACY & LIFE SKILLS

**WHAT IS THEORIZED:** "People with special needs are also able to develop such skills, where they can be responsible for their own lives, individual integration in the society, in education etc., yet it is necessary to teach them these skills in a modified [and understandable] manner." Tina Merela developed a method of teaching "self-advocacy skills with the help of drama activities, which were developed after the performative drama method AV (Ars Vitae) by Alenka Vidrih...The findings support that drama activities helped the child's development of self-advocacy skills." The threefold method promoted by Vidrih includes roleplay, improvisational skills, and dramatization of life skills. (Merela, 2019)

**PUTTING THE THEORY TO PRACTICE:** In Sally Bailey's *Drama for the Inclusive Classroom*, she offers "simple social situations [that provide] students with practice for real life situations using their improvisational skills" such as

- **Introductions**
  - **Making a Phone Call To A Friend To Plan An Outing**
  - **Ordering Fast Food Delivery**
  - **Going to a Restaurant**
  - **Job Interviews**
- (2021, pp. 144-148)

## AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

**WHAT IS THEORIZED:** Children and adults with severe speech or language problems may need to find other ways to communicate besides talking. There are many types of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) they can use. According to National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities, "All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence." (Brady, et al. 121-138)

**PUTTING THEORY TO PRACTICE:** According to McCarthy and Light, "theater may be an effective medium for teaching communication skills to children who use AAC and their nondisabled peers", especially activities that promote the ability "to communicate, imagine, and explore new vocabulary"

- Try activities that McCarthy and Light used in their study of theatre with AAC users, such as "I See" to introduce new nouns and phrases and "Act Out" to use communication modes other than speech. (2001, pp. 88)

## INCREASING PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS

**WHAT IS THEORIZED:** In a study lead by Hyunjin Kim, he defined prosocial behavior as "acts that promote the [social welfare of others] by proactive helping, sharing, donating, cooperating, and volunteering for a group or individuals in the group. Children with IDD can "demonstrate a lack of receptive and expressive communication skills, difficulties in social interaction and emotion-regulation showing deficits with joint attention, and lower levels of theory of mind". (2013, pp. 73-92)

**PUTTING THEORY TO PRACTICE:** In Sally Bailey's *Drama for the Inclusive Classroom*, she encourages many activities to promote prosocial behaviors, especially for students who have deficits with joint attention.

- Try "Conflict-Cooperation Drawings" to address "attention, behavioral regulation, cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, exploring conflict and cooperation, nonverbal communication, teamwork, and turn-taking" (2021, pp. 151-152)

# Research Cited

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