

Subject Area: Life Skills

Title of Instructional Method: Role-play

Grade Level: Preschool -- Adolescents

Description of each Instructional Method:

Role-play provides a safe environment for students to practice steps and strategies necessary to develop target life skills. It allows students to experiment, succeed, fail, and learn without real world consequences. Role-playing is a process in which teachers put students into a specific scenario (given the situation, background information, environmental information, and trigger) in order to see how the students handle the situation. These scenarios can have a positive outcome which would provide an example of what should happen and can also have a negative outcome which would provide an example of what should not happen. The teacher and students are able to discuss the events of the scenario as they happen or after the scenario is complete.

References in APA format:

- Williams, G., & Reisberg, L. (2003, March). Successful inclusion: teaching social skills through curriculum integration. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 38*(4), 205. Retrieved January 15, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.
- Parsons, S., & Mitchell, P. (2002, June). The potential of virtual reality in social skills training for people with autistic spectrum disorders. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 46*(5), 430-443. Retrieved January 15, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.
- Hanley, G., Heal, N., & Tiger, J. (2007, Summer). Evaluation of a class wide teaching program for preschool life skills. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 40*(2), 377-300. Retrieved January 15, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.
- Gamble, B. (2006, September). Teaching life skills for student success. *Techniques: Connecting Education & Careers, 81*(6), 40-41. Retrieved January 15, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

How-To Information:

In order to use this method, the teacher needs to have a clear understanding and definition of what he/she wants the students to learn by using role-play. The teacher would then do the following: describe a certain scenario (negative outcome then positive or positive outcome then negative) to the students, appoint positions (characters or objects) to each student participating in the scenario, provide the students with background information about each position, and direct the students to begin. During or after the scenario, the teacher will discuss with the students what went on and why learning using role-play is important

Implications for Practice:

Pros: This method of teaching places students in real world scenarios. It gives the students a hand on experience of the positive/negative consequences of each scenario.

Cons: The students may not want to participate in the activity. The student may also not take the scenarios seriously and therefore not learn anything.

Other Considerations:

The teacher must explain to the students the purpose of the activity. There must be a clear understanding of the lesson that is to be learned.

Examples of Role-playing Scenarios:

Answering a telephone, asking for help, greeting someone, starting a conversation, taking responsibility, obeying legal signs/signals, interacting well with co-workers, or emergency situations.

Additional Links:

These are just a few websites found that contain some good information that teachers/paraprofessionals can use:

* Starting Point: Role-Playing Exercises <http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/roleplaying/>

* Enhancing Life Skills http://www.school-counselors.com/counselors_8.pdf

* Journal of Extension, Creative Teaching: Simulations, Games, and Role Playing
<http://www/joe.org/joe/1989summer/tt1.html>

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