

**Catering for Learner Diversity  
Series: Adopting e-Learning to  
Cater for Students with Special  
Educational Needs  
in the Junior Secondary English  
Classroom**

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# Objectives

1. To develop an awareness of different educational needs of students that teachers in the mainstream English classroom need to address and the role of e-learning in helping to address these needs
2. To explore different e-learning resources and strategies that can be used to successfully develop the language skills of students with special educational needs in the mainstream classroom
3. To develop effective teaching strategies that facilitate the learning of students with SEN in the mainstream classroom with the use of e-learning resources

# Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- o The term “special educational needs” is very broad and includes a wide range of needs, from mild forms of dyslexia to severe forms of autism (Hockly, 2016)
- o In groups, talk about your own experiences with SEN students in the classroom

# Today we will look at three broad SEN groups

- o Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing (Dyslexia)
- o Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)
- o Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

# Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing (Dyslexia)

- o Dyslexia is a neurobiological disorder that affects the development of both decoding (written word pronunciation) and encoding (spelling)

# Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- o Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition that becomes apparent in some children in the preschool and early school years. It is hard for these children to control their behavior and/or pay attention

# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- o Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disorder that affects the brain's normal development. Children with ASD have difficulties with social communication and interaction. They also have narrow interests and repetitive behaviour, and might have sensory sensitivities

# An Inclusive Classroom

- o finding out why students do not learn well and why some learn better than others
- o using appropriate strategies to help each student learn better and make improvements, including removing barriers to learning
- o not intended to minimise the difference in student ability and performance, but to enable all students to learn and perform to the best of their abilities (CDC, 2017)



# What could be the main benefits of using e-learning with SEN learners?

- o Discuss your ideas in groups
- o Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)
- o Type in the pin
- o And share your ideas

# The Role of e-Learning Resources in Helping SEN Learners

- o Technology can now allow learners to develop self-help and self-referencing skills
- o Language can be delivered to learners at the point of need (Hockly, 2016)
- o Tablets and other devices have made it easier now to cater for diversity and can be engaging and interactive (Cumming & Rodriguez, 2013)
- o Tablets and other devices allow students to become more independent and engaged (Queensland Government, 2012)

# What are some of your considerations when you think about using e-learning in your classroom?

- o Discuss your ideas in groups
- o Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)
- o Type in the pin
- o And share your ideas

# Some Considerations

- o the environment in which the e-learning resources will be used including school's technological infrastructure
- o our learning objectives
- o the type of special educational need
- o interests of the learners
- o age, ability and readiness of the learners
- o readiness of the teacher

# Task 1

- Work in groups and design an infographic about your given animal using Canva to be displayed in the classroom and educate your classmates
- Then post your infographic on Seesaw
- Information texts will be provided

# Task 2

- o Reflect on this experience
- o Each group will get an SEN to discuss
- o Now read about your specific SEN
- o Analyse the demands of the experience for your given SEN
- o Under your infographic - list out possible demands for your given SEN

# Task 3

- o Discuss the challenges posted on Seesaw
- o Have you come across these challenges before?
- o What have you done / could you do?

# Some General and e-Learning Strategies to Support Learners with SEN



# Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing (Dyslexia)

- Challenges
- General strategies
- e-Learning strategies

# Challenges

- o Learn to rhyme words
- o Learn the letter names and sounds of the alphabet
- o Confusion of letters and words (b/d, p/q and was and saw, dog and god)
- o Reversal of letters (persist past the age of 7 or 8)
- o Confusion with letters with similar sounds (/f/ or /v/)
- o Retaining the visual representation of irregular words for reading and spelling (once)
- o Spell words differently on the same page (wuns, wunce for once)
- o Spell words the way they sound rather than their look (sed/said)
- o Slow word perception – reading rate and fluency

# General Strategies

- o Make English as transparent and structured as possible
- o Explicitly teach them the rules
- o Get them interested in reading – road signs, menus, supermarket trips etc.
- o Phonics helps
- o Multisensory (and fun 😊)!
- o Provide tools, such as dictionaries and word banks to help learners

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Self-directed learning and referencing skills
  - o Online dictionaries and tablet dictionaries
    - o Merriam Webster's Learners dictionary
    - o Wolfram-alpha

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Support reading and writing
  - o Text to Speech / Speech to text functions
    - o Safari, Google, iPad Speech Reader
    - o Look up functions on browsers and iPad
    - o Google search by voice

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Other useful referencing tools to help with reading
  - o Google images
  - o Voki Edu
  - o Tellagami Edu
  - o Book platforms with reading aloud function – Example (EPIC)

# Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

- o Challenges
- o General strategies
- o e-Learning strategies

# Challenges

- o Concentrating for long periods of time
- o Focusing on tasks they don't find interesting or engaging
- o Staying still and often fidget in chairs or with hands and play with things
- o Executive function: Disorganisation / time management



# General Strategies

- Fidget toys and option to sit on gym ball
- Colour-coded folders to separate homework books by subject / priority
- Timetable – visual schedule (respond better to visual cues)
- Giving choice of task
- Silent reminders (make students aware of the sign)

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Engagement and interest
  - o Game-like activities:
    - o Kahoot
    - o Videos – Youtube / Instructables
    - o Type up on iPad / computer (Word / Pages)

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Organisation of thoughts and time management
  - o Tools for students – Graphic organisers (other options – Read Write Think / Popplet / Padlet)
  - o Timer – Make sure on track (<http://www.online-stopwatch.com/classroom-timers/>)
  - o Reminder on iPad

# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- Challenges
- General strategies
- e-Learning strategies

# Challenges

- o Highly complex special need
- o Often have difficulty in social interaction
- o Often have difficulty reading emotions
- o Often have difficulty in change and unexpected situations
- o Like logical and systematic presentations
- o Following requirements and instructions
- o Coming up with ideas and awareness of different genres (can recount events but difficulty with fiction and imagination)

# General Strategies

- o Provide predictable environments e.g. clearly posted timetable and preview any changes (teachers' sick leave, school events, substitute teacher, student teacher, observation)
- o Visual cues (pictures on desk, sign language, display on blackboard)
- o Use graphic organisers and writing framework
- o Ask them to write in first person and talk about themselves
- o Explicit explanation or demonstration of what the task requires
- o Displays of synonyms

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Social interaction and reading emotions
  - o WhatsApp group for English
  - o Edmodo / Seesaw English class group
  - o Mentimeter (Poll everywhere / Zeeting)

# e-Learning Strategies

- o Idea generation and emotions
  - o Emotionary – (iphone only)
  - o Online thesaurus and dictionaries
  - o Tools for students – Graphic organisers  
(other options – Read Write Think / Popplet / Padlet)



# General Apps, Tools and Platforms that can Help Cater for Learners with SEN

- o Puppet Pals 2
- o Shadow Puppet
- o Bitsboard
- o Lego Movie

# Key Points

- We need to teach learners strategies to help them so they can rely more on themselves and develop greater self awareness and confidence to tackle challenges in English
- We can provide learners with choice and this will increase their autonomy and independence

# Some Useful Websites for SEN x ELT x e-Learning

- o **Oxford University Press page on Dyslexia**
  - o <https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2013/09/19/dyslexia-a-problem-or-a-gift/>
- o Oxford University Press on ADHD/ADD
  - o <https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2014/03/05/teaching-students-with-attention-concentration-and-hyperactivity-difficulties-how-to-stop-those-spinning-tops/>
- o Language without Limits
  - o <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk>
- o Apps for autistic learners
  - o <https://thejournal.com/Articles/2011/12/05/Apps-for-Autistic-Learners.aspx?Page=6>

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