Northeast Tennessee Assistive Technology Cooperative

NET-AT

East Tennessee State University Box 70548 Johnson City, TN 37614 (423) 439-4161

Assistive Technology Evaluation
Autism – Middle School

Name: Student H
Primary Disability: Autism
Area(s) of Need: Communication
Grade Level: Middle School
Instructional Setting: Self-contained
Team Members: Member A, SLP, NET-AT Team Leader
Member B, ATP, NET-AT Team Leader
Member C, ATP, PT, NET-AT Team Leader
Member C, ATP, NET-AT Technical Assistance Instructor

Purpose of Assistive Technology Evaluation:
The evaluation was conducted to determine appropriate forms of communication that will enable Student H to express his wants and needs and increase his participation and independence in school activities.

Observations:
Student H was observed in two CDC classrooms at a middle school. The classrooms were fifth/sixth and seventh/eighth. The Team observed the following:

- On the day of the evaluation, Student H's attention to task appeared to increase when working in the fifth/sixth's room.
- When the team arrived, Student H was working with his teacher (fifth/sixth teacher) using picture cards to learn social stories.
- Student H was observed using Phonics 4 Kids, Write-Out Loud (fifth/sixth room), and Earobics: Step 1 (seventh/eighth room) software programs on Windows based classroom computers. Within this program, he chose several activities from the menu (Matching Sounds, Consonants, Word Building and Letter Recognition). He demonstrated the ability to complete auditory discrimination tasks, as well as letter recognition skills.
- When using the computer Student H exhibited the following:
  o Right-handed mouse use
  o Left-handed keyboarding using his first and second fingers
  o Perseveration of left mouse click
  o Purposefully choosing wrong answer to continue auditory feedback
  o When prompts were removed, Student H independently typed a word ("feet") correctly using a word strip.
  o Student H also typed his name with verbal and visual prompts from the classroom assistant.

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o When using these software programs, Student H frequently "opened" and "closed" programs.

The following information was obtained from Protocol packet and classroom personnel:
- Classroom AT available to student:
  o PCS Notebook (Meyer-Johnson)
  o Co-Writer
  o Write-Out Loud
  o Three PC computers
  o Picture Scheduling
  o Variety of items for sensory input
  o Earobics
  o Phonics 4 Kids
- Student H uses the computer for 10-12 per week.
- Student H requires a 16 pt. font size

The team observed numerous interventions that are successfully being implemented for Student H.

Strengths:
Student H demonstrated several strengths:
- He periodically demonstrated appropriate verbal skills when asked a direct question.
- He demonstrated the ability to recognize letters of the alphabet.
- Functional computer skills
- Location of letters on the keyboard
- Student H was compliant and cooperative.
- Correct verbal spelling of words upon request

Considerations:
In order for Student H to be successful in the school environment, the team the offers the following considerations:

- Supervision and instruction on the appropriate use of computer programs
- Use of timer to increase time on task, completion of task and to decrease length of perseverations
- Dual headphones for teacher guidance
- Continued use of study carrel to decrease distractions
- Use of Earobics:Step 1 on a daily basis in the least distractible environment (i.e., fifth/sixth room)
- Boardmaker software to develop schedules and communication boards
- Picture-Word Association software (i.e., Pix:Writer or Writing With Symbols) software to increase reading skills through picture association

*Considerations are recommendations for the IEP team to utilize when taking into account the Assistive Technology needs of a student. The final determination of any AT device(s) and/or software is the decision of the IEP team.

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