

# Illustrations and Disabilities

The use of student drawn illustrations during learning is shown to positively improve comprehension for students who have learning disabilities.

## Population

The use of illustrations has been shown to be effective with students who have the following disabilities:

- Emotional/ Behavioral Disorders
- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Communication Disorder
- Autism
- Dysgraphia (OHI)

Grade Levels  
2nd- 10th

Illustrations use sense of sight and touch and can activate spatial reasoning. This keeps the mind occupied for students who exhibit attention deficit and hyperactivity characteristics. Additionally, illustrations aid in visual processing, memory deficits and bring out creativity. Students who are ELL may also benefit from illustrations due to text-generation difficulties.

## Implementation

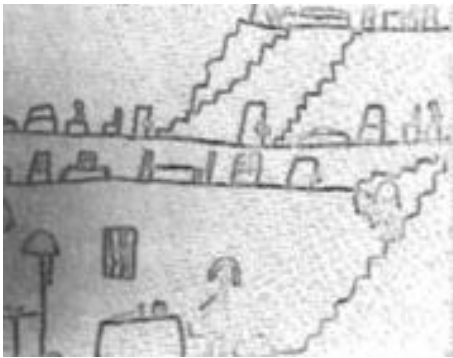
- Illustrations can be used in any lesson for any content area.
- After any lesson the teacher can ask the student to think about the "characters," surroundings, events, and emotions.
- The teacher can model by illustrating some of what the student is describing.
- The teacher then asks the student to create their own illustration.

Teacher

## Student

- The students are to ask themselves the following:
  - Who are the "characters?"
  - What are the surroundings like?
  - When is this taking place?
  - What is happening?
  - What is going to happen?
  - How does it end?
  - How do the "characters" feel?
- The students must then make an artistic representation of the answers to the questions above.

## Examples



## Benefits

Students with LDs can benefit from creating illustrations about lesson content because:

- the creator explores feelings through its' creation that can lead to better comprehension of concepts
- expressing oneself through images can help compensate for text-generation difficulties
- art can assist comprehension through visual-motor channels even if this area of ability is impaired

## Quotes

"Incorporating the arts into forms of assessments of skills such as writing provides an optional means for these children to demonstrate what they can do," Dunn, 2013, p. 226.

"Through the use of cognitively oriented experiences with drawing, modeling, and painting, learning disabled children were able to develop the skills needed to bring order to their perceptually disoriented world," Silver & Lavin, 1977, p. 34.

## References

- Dunn, M. (2013). Using art media during prewriting: Helping students with dysgraphia manage idea generation before encoding text. *Exceptionality*, 21(4), 224-237.
- Freilich, R., & Shechtman, Z. (2010). The contribution of art therapy to the social, emotional, and academic adjustment of children with learning disabilities. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 37, 97-105.
- Silver, R.A., & Lavin, C. (1977). The role of art in developing and evaluating cognitive skills. *The Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 10(7), 27-35.