Teaching and Designing Accessible Synchronous Courses

Winston Online

Jaclyn Siegel, Head of School

Rachel Smith, Focus Director

AGENDA

WHO IS WINSTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

- Who we serve
- Our model
- Course design

SUPPORTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY & EXAMPLES

- Executive Function
- Dyslexia
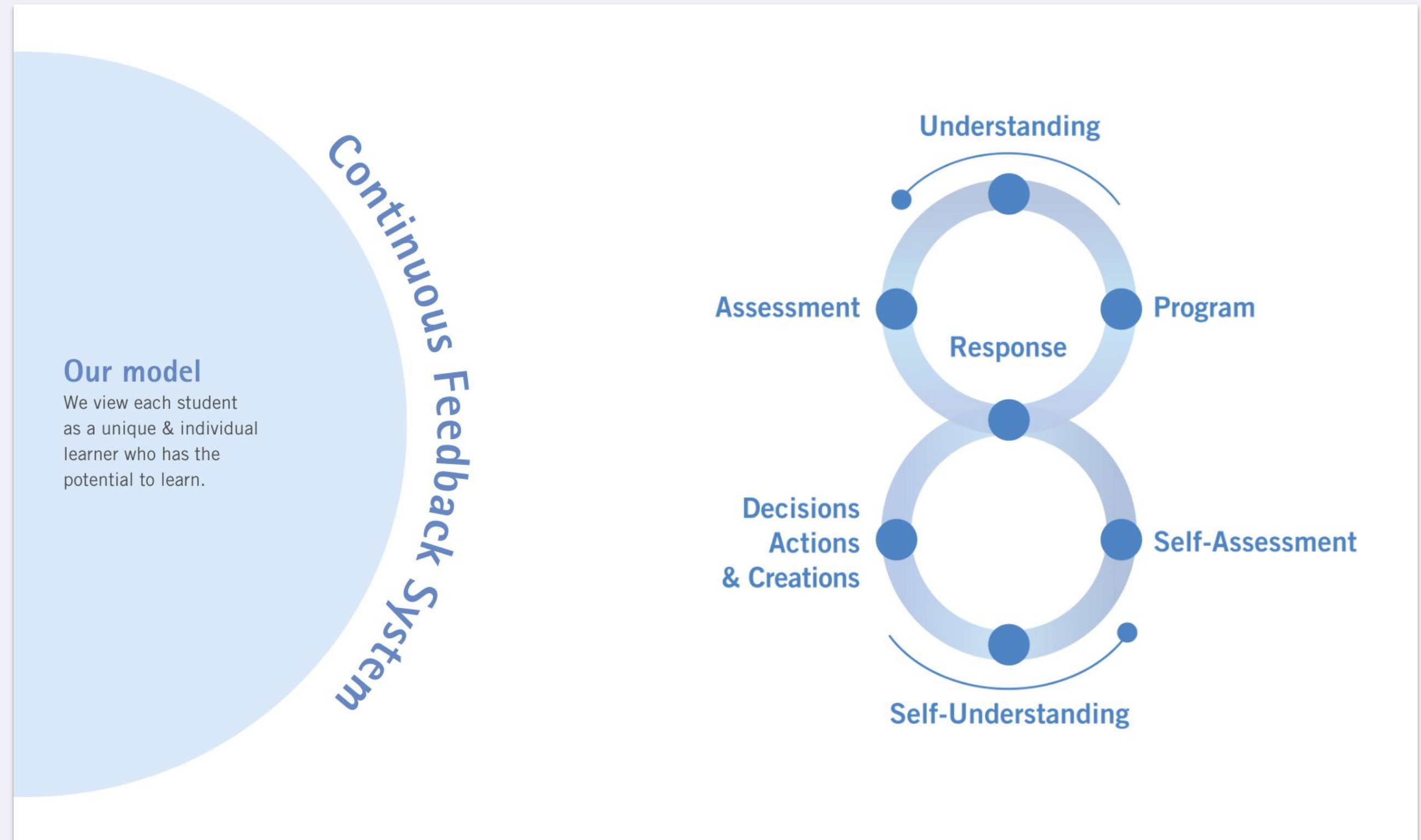- Nonverbal Learning Disorder (NLD)

Q & A

WHO IS WINSTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

- **Quick History of WPS**
  - 1981 – NYC campus
  - 2022 – 8 campuses
  - Winston Online
 - Winston in College

- **Our Model**
  - Continuous Feedback System
    - **Assessment**
    - Understanding
    - Program
    - Response

Our model

We view each student as a unique & individual learner who has the potential to learn.

Continuous Feedback System

Understanding

Assessment

Program

Response

Decisions Actions & Creations

Self-Assessment

Self-Understanding

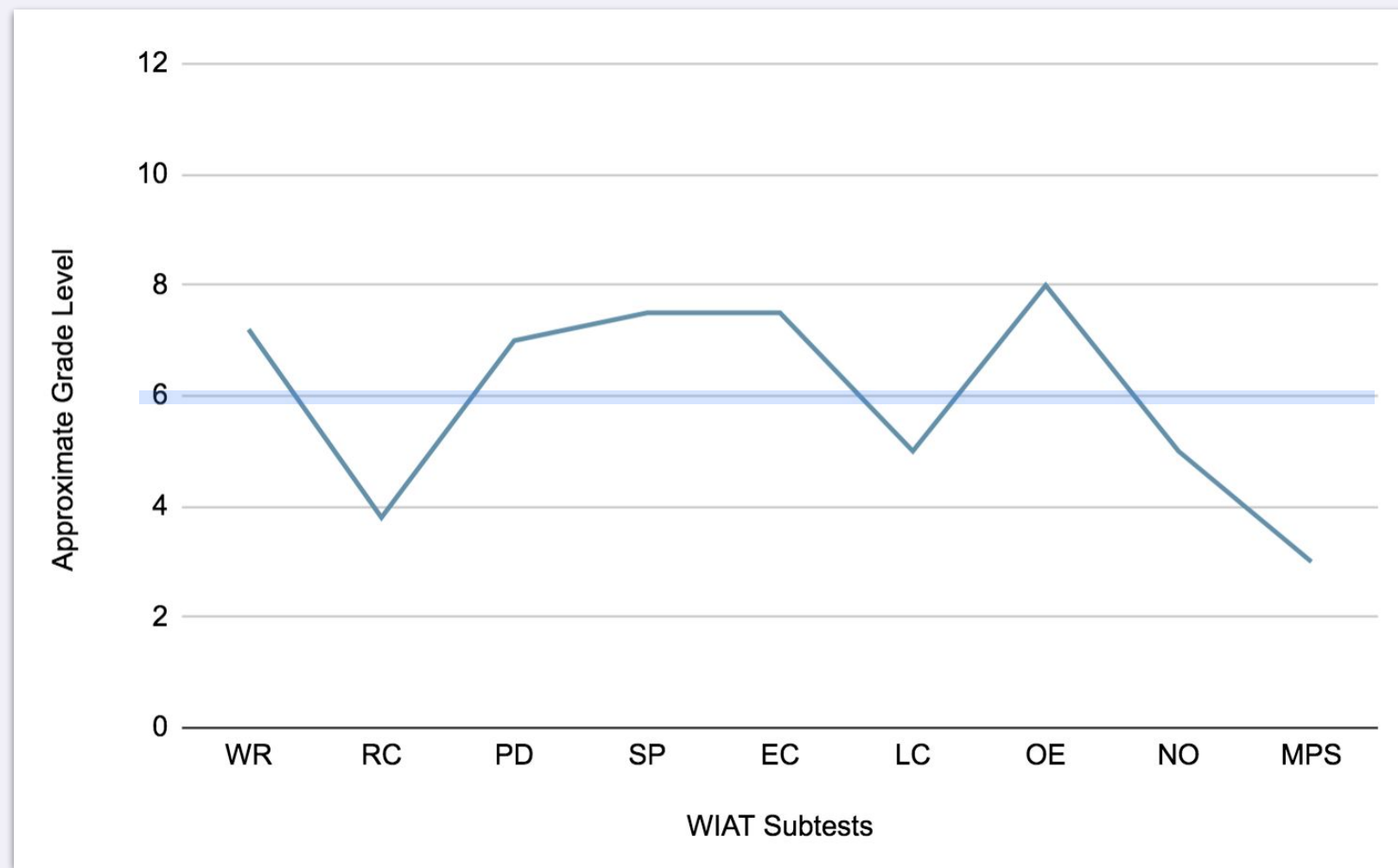# WHO IS WINSTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Components of Understanding
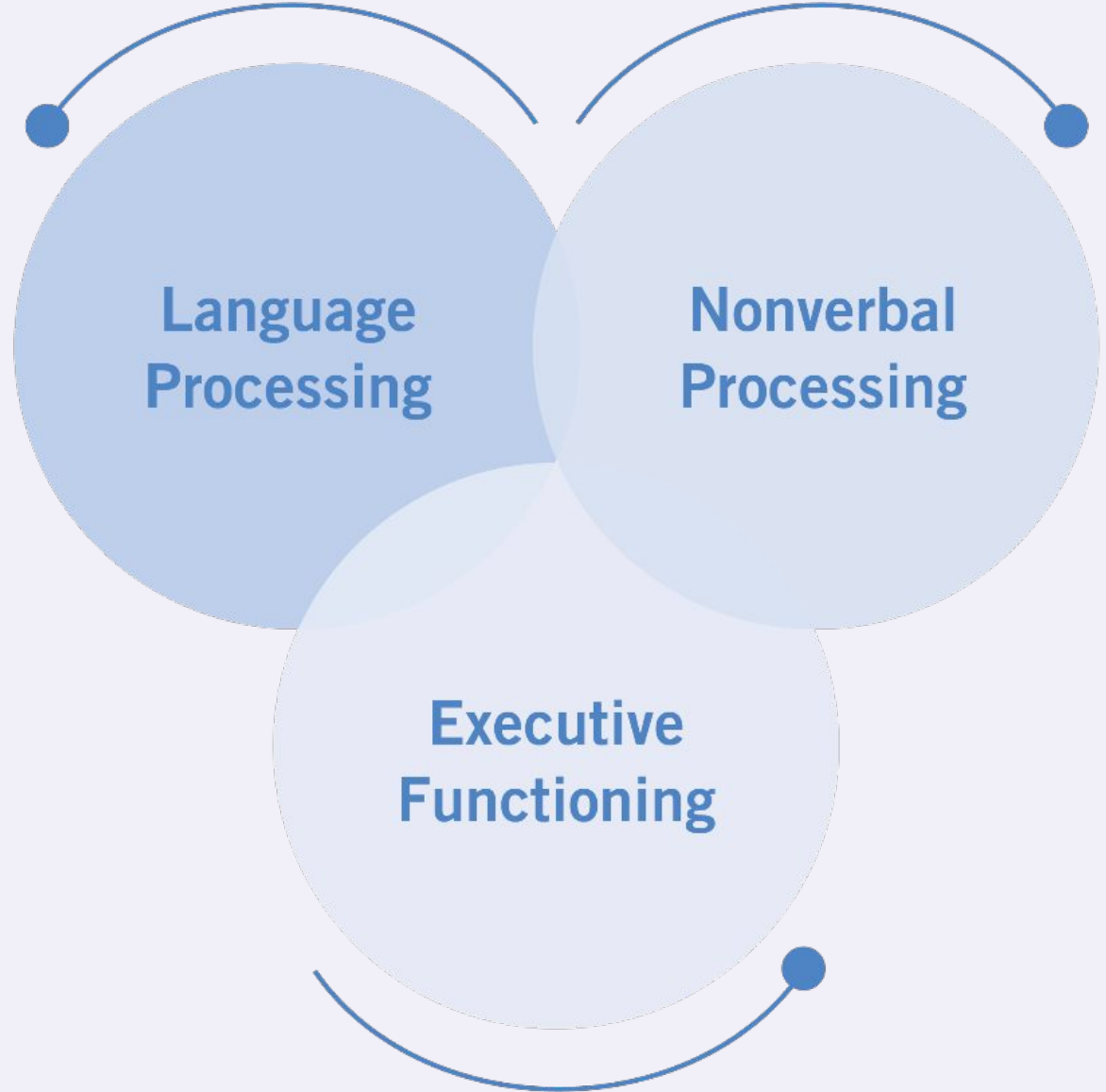
COURSE DESIGN AT WINSTON ONLINE

- **Program**
  - Learning profiles & groups

VS.

Teaching to the Mean

Teaching to the Profile

COURSE DESIGN AT WINSTON ONLINE

- **Program**:
  - Learning profiles & groups
  - Prioritizing skill areas & skill–based goals
  - Small group instruction
  - Interactive & synchronous

- **Response**:
  - Informal/formal assessment
  - Change in the moment
    - e.g. bring in more content to enhance background knowledge

- **Student response & awareness**
  - Decisions, actions, & creations
  - Self–understanding
  - Self–assessment
  - Response

SUPPORTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

- Executive Functions
- Dyslexia
- Nonverbal Learning Disorder (NLD)

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

WHAT IS IT?

an umbrella term that describes the supervisory and self-regulatory mental processes involved in planning, organizing and responding in a flexible, strategic, and appropriate way

- goal selection
- planning & prioritization
- self-regulation
- mental flexibility
- metacognition
- accessing working memory
- & more

HOW IT SHOWS UP IN THE CLASSROOM

Challenges:
- Organization of internal information and external output
- Organization of materials
- Planning and time management
- Initiation, sustained attention
- Written expression and organization

Strengths:
- Verbal expression
- Fund of knowledge
- Abstract thinking

Social Emotional:
- Social communication
- Self-regulation

SUPPORTS

- Explicit strategy instruction
- Explicit development of metacognition
  - Self-awareness
  - Learning how to learn
- Structured goal setting
- Integrate organization of thoughts, materials, & time
  - Graphic organizers
  - Calendars/agendas
  - Digital/physical filing system
- Highlight shifting & flexibility
- Self-regulation supports
  - e.g. modeling
  - visual aids
- Active breaks
- Clear agendas

TEACHING & TECH

- Mindful of media usage in lessons and visual display on screen
  - Avoid cognitive overload to support working memory and attention
- Thoughtful selection of tech tools
  - Consider demands on student
- Learning environment
  - Physical
  - Digital (student controls)

DYSLEXIA

WHAT IS IT?

- A specific learning disability, neurological in origin
- Persistent deficits in working memory, phonological processing, and rapid automatic naming
- Unexpected deficits in relation to other cognitive abilities

HOW IT SHOWS UP IN THE CLASSROOM

Challenges:
- Decoding & spelling
- Reading fluency & written expression
- Calculation
- Reading comprehension (due to decoding weaknesses/ weak vocabulary)

Strengths:
- listening comprehension
- abstract thinking
- analyzing/synthesizing information

Social Emotional:
- emotional impact of dyslexia

SUPPORTS

- Explicit, multisensory instruction
  - Visual, verbal, tactile, and kinesthetic
- Repeated practice
- Review & reinforcement
- Controlled text
- Self-regulation tools
- Growth mindset modeling and instruction
- Build background knowledge & vocabulary
- Active breaks
- Clear agendas

TEACHING & TECH

- Whizzimo
- Read & Write (accessibility)
  - Text to Speech
  - Speech to Text
  - Rewordify
  - Word/picture dictionary
- Screen masking
- Learning Ally
  - Audiobook
  - Customization

NONVERBAL LEARNING DISABILITY (NLD)

WHAT IS IT?

- A specific learning disability, neurological in origin
- Persistent deficits in processing & integrating visual-spatial information
- Visual-spatial skills include:
  - Processing visual stimuli
  - Ability to analyze and assess visual information
  - Find orientation in space
  - Perceive visual information

HOW IT SHOWS UP IN THE CLASSROOM

Challenges (all or some):

- Executive functioning
- Social communication
- Mathematical concepts
- Higher order comprehension

Strengths:

- Auditory perception
- Rote verbal skills & concrete information processing
- Decoding & reading fluency

Social Emotional:

- Adaptation to novelty, social competence, emotional regulation, activity level

SUPPORTS

- Explicit instruction
- Highlight (visually/verbally)
  - Pattern recognition
  - Making connections & conceptual relationships
  - Part-to-whole relationships
- Verbalize thought process
- Priming for purpose (thoughtful cueing)
- Explicitly develop metacognition
- Repetition, review, & repeated practice
- Verbally mediate
- Active breaks

TEACHING & TECH

- Mindful of media usage in lessons and visual display on screen
  - Avoid cognitive overload to support working memory and attention
  - Mindful of visual spatial demands
- Thoughtful selection of tech tools
  - Consider demands on student
- Learning environment
  - Physical
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Q&A

Next open house: Tuesday, May 14th @ 12:15pm EST / 9:15am PT

THANK YOU!

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