

Research: The Assignment Completion Strategy

Overview

This study investigated the effects of teaching the Assignment Completion Strategy to students with learning disabilities who were enrolled in at least three general education courses in which homework was assigned. Nine students in the 6th through 8th grades participated. One repeated measure in the study was the percentage of assignment completion behaviors performed by the students on a series of simulated probe assignments in the resource room where instruction in the strategy took place. Another repeated measure was the percentage of assignment completion behaviors performed by the students on actual assignments given to them in their general education classes as determined from each student's recordings in his/her assignment notebook. In addition, the teachers in these general education classes supplied information about the assignments given each week as well as whether each assignment was turned in, whether it was turned in on time, and the student's quarterly grade. A multiple-probe across-students design was used.

Results

Results gathered before instruction showed that the students earned an average of 19% of the points available for assignment completion behaviors on simulated assignments. During instruction in the Assignment Completion Strategy, eight of the nine students earned an average of 81% of the points available for simulated assignments, and they met the mastery criterion of 90% of the points within 3 practice trials. During the maintenance condition, the students earned an average of 90% of the points on simulated assignments.

On actual assignments given in class, the students earned an average of less than 1.7% of the points available for recording assignments and planning assignment completion per week. During the instructional and maintenance conditions, they earned an average of 28% and 60% of the points, respectively.

With regard to actual assignment completion, students turned in an average of 54% of their assignments during baseline and an average of 58% of their assignments during instruction in the strategy. During the maintenance condition, they turned in 70% of their assignments. They earned a grade-point average of 1.7 in the targeted classes in the first school quarter before instruction in the strategy. During the fourth school quarter, which occurred after the assignment-completion instruction, they earned a grade-point average of 2.7 in those classes.

Conclusions

This study showed that students with LD who were completing about half of their assignments in their general education classes could learn a strategy comprised of key behaviors associated with completing assignments. In addition, after learning the strategy, their assignment completion rates and grade-point average in the targeted general education classes improved.

Reference

Hughes, C. A., Ruhl, K. L., Schumaker, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (2002). Effects of instruction in an assignment completion strategy on the homework performance of students with learning disabilities in general education classes. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 17*(1), 1-18.