Chapter 5
Students with Special Education Needs

Chapter Summary

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Characteristics of Students with Special Education Needs

Each student with special education needs has an individual profile of abilities, needs, interests, and learning preferences. Some students with special education needs are able to master the grade-level programs of study with differentiated instruction and support strategies. Other students have more complex learning needs that require significant changes to the learning outcomes in the grade-level curriculum framework.

Students' special education needs can affect language learning in a variety of ways and have a variety of implications for classroom planning and instruction. For example, these students may be less likely to participate in classroom discussion, may have difficulty formulating and expressing ideas, and may find the task of writing difficult and stressful. On the other hand, these students may have strengths in the visual domain and often benefit from the use of graphic organizers, charts, and visual cues.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Every student who is identified as having special education needs must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This plan, usually coordinated by the student's classroom teacher, will contain information about the student's strengths and needs, relevant medical history, services that might be needed, educational goals and objectives for the year, required accommodations and strategies, and plans for transitions.

A student's IEP can provide helpful information for planning and adapting instruction in the language arts classroom. Any significant modifications of curriculum will be documented in the IEP. For example, a student with severe communication difficulties may have long-term goals such as establishing eye contact or initiating peer and adult interactions, and would focus on social outcomes to achieve these goals. On the other hand, a student with reading difficulties may be able to achieve most outcomes from the grade-level program of studies, but other outcomes, such as those related to reading in an additional language, may be modified.

The IEP will also contain required accommodations and instructional strategies. An accommodation is a change or alteration in the regular way a student is expected to learn, complete assignments, or participate in classroom activities. Accommodations remove, or at least reduce, the impact of a student's special education needs and give him or her the same opportunity to succeed as other students. Once a student has been identified as having special education needs, accommodations should be considered to ensure that the student can access the curriculum and learn and demonstrate new knowledge to the best of his or her ability.

The following accommodations are frequently used to support students with special education needs in Grade 4 to Grade 6:

- Arrange alternative seating (e.g., near teacher, facing teacher, at front of class, away from distractions).
- Allow more time for tasks or assignments.
- Reduce the volume of tasks required (e.g., fewer sentences to read, fewer vocabulary words).
- Reduce the demand for copying.
- Present fewer questions on a page, and provide more space for answers.
- Provide visual cues (e.g., draw arrows and stop signs on the student's paper to indicate what to do next or where to stop).
- Encourage the use of place markers, cue cards and writing templates.
- Encourage the use of a variety of writing instruments (e.g., pencil grips) and paper (e.g., graph paper, paper with lines, paper with raised lines).
- Allow the use of personal word lists or other print references.
- Provide checklists and/or picture cues of steps for longer tasks.
- Break tasks into small steps.

Differentiated Instruction

Individual students with special education needs may require specific accommodations in the language arts classroom, but teachers can support the learning of all students by incorporating elements of differentiated instruction. Many of these sample strategies will be beneficial for a number of students, not only students with special education needs.

The term *differentiation* embraces a variety of instructional strategies that recognize and support individual differences in student learning. Differentiated instruction maximizes learning by considering students' individual and cultural learning styles, recognizing that some students will require adjusted expectations, and offering a variety of ways for students to explore curriculum content and demonstrate learning (as well as accepting that these different methods are of equal value). With differentiated instruction, the teacher creates learning situations that match students' current abilities and learning preferences but also stretch their abilities and encourage them to try new ways of learning. Differentiation can occur in the content, process, and/or products of classroom instruction.

Differentiating Content

Content consists of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students learn, as reflected in the general and specific learning outcomes of the curriculum framework. These outcomes identify what students are expected to achieve in the course of their language learning; however, individual students may vary in their language competence, their ability to apply the language in various situations, and their use of effective strategies.

Differentiation of content recognizes that, while all students are focusing on a general learning outcome, specific learning outcomes may differ for some students. Differentiating content allows students to learn developmentally appropriate concepts while working with developmentally appropriate materials.

There are three basic ways to differentiate content: parallel instruction, overlapping instruction, and additional or remedial instruction.

1. Parallel instruction

In parallel instruction, all students work toward the same general learning outcomes, but some students work on specific learning outcomes from different grade levels. This instruction often requires flexible grouping within the classroom.

2. Overlapping instruction

In overlapping instruction, some or all of a student's outcomes for the instructional activity are drawn from sources other than the standard subject-area curriculum and are based on goals identified in that student's IEP. For example, a student with a moderate or severe cognitive disability may work on his or her goal of using pictorial symbols to express basic requests within the classroom, while the other students use German vocabulary to do the same task.

3. Additional instruction

Additional instruction occurs when a student has unique learning needs that necessitate instruction in an area not required by other students, sometimes with direction from a specialist. For example, a student with learning disabilities may need additional instruction regarding phonemic awareness, decoding, or effective use of learning strategies.

Differentiating Process

Differentiating the process means varying learning activities or instructional strategies to provide appropriate opportunities for all students to explore new concepts. This may require developing a number of different ways that students can participate or providing adapted equipment or materials. Collaborative learning activities, learning centres, learning logs, individual goal setting, changing the pace and/or delivery of instruction, and using visual and verbal cueing are examples of differentiating process so that all students can be more active participants in the classroom.

Differentiating Products

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Appendix C:
Sample Text Forms

Differentiating products means varying the type and complexity of the products that students create to demonstrate their learning. Students working below grade level may have different or reduced performance expectations from their grade-level peers. For example, they may answer a question with a drawing instead of a written sentence. Allowing students choices for demonstrating their knowledge can also accommodate differing student abilities, interests, and learning preferences.

Program Planning for Differentiation

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Appendix C:
Instructional
Planning Guide

Teachers can use a framework, such as the one described in the following steps, to plan for differentiation in the German language arts classroom.

1. Identify underlying concepts.

Teachers identify the concepts all students in the class should understand by the end of the lesson or unit. It is important to separate the concepts from the content used to develop these concepts. Different content may be necessary for students with different levels of skill; however, at the end of the learning activity all students should have a similar understanding of the concept, taking into consideration the level at which they are working.

2. Choose instructional strategies.

Present the concepts in such a way that all students are able to gain an appropriate degree of knowledge. Consider the following strategies for differentiating instruction.

- Present new material in short periods of time through varied activities.
- Use materials at a variety of difficulty levels for the whole group.
- Begin instruction at the individual student's current level of functioning.
- Stand close to students who need extra help.
- Modify the pace of instruction.
- Simplify instructions.
- Write instructions on the board.
- Ask students to repeat instructions or paraphrase what has been presented.
- Demonstrate, model, or act out instructions.
- Complete the first example with students.
- Use a multisensory approach.
- Present concepts in as concrete a way as possible.
- Use pictures and concrete materials.
- Use different coloured chalk and pens.
- Break information into steps.
- Provide additional time to preview materials and/or complete tasks.
- Adapt the level of questioning.
- Use your advance planning organizers.

3. Choose strategies for student practice.

Use a variety of practice activities and, wherever possible, provide students with choices for their mode of practice. This may require adapting how students participate, providing adapted materials, or adapting goals for individual students. Each student should have the opportunity to participate meaningfully according to his or her skill level.

The following chart shows examples of different modes of student practice.

Verbalize	Write	Create	Perform	Solve
• oral report • panel discussion • debate • games • brainstorming • oral questions and answers • interviews	• research papers • poems • essays • stories • diaries • plays • cookbooks	• diorama • collage • painting • model • pictograph • mural • bulletin board • games • inventions	• simulation • role-play • drama • pantomime • puppet show • radio commercials	• puzzles • problems • riddles • games • brainteasers • charades

4. Choose strategies for assessment and evaluation.

Identify a variety of ways that students can demonstrate their mastery of the objectives and their understanding of the concepts. The criteria for evaluation should take into account the students' needs and abilities.

Using Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is a natural approach to differentiating instruction that can benefit both students with special education needs and their classmates. It can help to build positive peer relationships, increase students' feelings of responsibility for classmates, and encourage strategic learning by capitalizing on students' natural desires to interact. This approach gives students opportunities to learn new information in a supportive environment and to benefit from the experience and thinking of others. Often, students accomplish what they could not have accomplished alone. Collaborative tasks provide opportunities for language and culture learning specifically because students:

- participate actively in authentic situations
- externalize their knowledge, allowing them to reflect on, revise, and apply it
- notice gaps in their linguistic knowledge as they try to express themselves
- learn from the behaviour, strategies, and knowledge of more successful students (Swain 2001)

Teachers might consider using the following strategies to make collaborative learning as beneficial as possible.

Reflection

Create structured, reflective group activities in which students examine their own thought processes and explain how they reach a conclusion or arrive at an answer. Research suggests that students with learning difficulties are successful in collaborative settings only when this reflective element is incorporated (Scheid 1993). Furthermore, this kind of reflection and sharing during group discussions helps all students build higher-order thinking skills that are essential for language learning.

Social Skills

Teach and practise social skills within group contexts. To be successful, group members must get to know and trust one another, communicate accurately, accept and support each other, and resolve conflicts constructively (Johnson and Johnson 1994).

Accountability

Create situations in which each group member is accountable for his or her learning and group accountability is based on the achievement of group members. Research suggests that this accountability results in greater academic improvement for students with special education needs (Stevens and Slavin 1991).

Variety

Use a variety of different groupings and activities. See Chapter 4 "Cooperative Learning Activities" for some sample collaborative groupings and activities.

Strategies for Students with Attention Difficulties

Attention is the ability to focus on and encode relevant information, to sustain focus, and to carry out two or more tasks simultaneously. Attention also affects the regulation of mental energy and alertness.

Students experiencing difficulties with attention may:

- miss instructions
- respond with answers unrelated to the questions
- look attentive and focused but have trouble understanding and responding appropriately
- be easily distracted
- have difficulty inhibiting responses
- be impulsive
- move around or fidget
- have problems doing two tasks simultaneously (e.g., listening and taking notes)

Teachers might consider using the following sample strategies to support students who have attention difficulties.

1. Create structure to focus attention.

- Provide study carrels, earphones, and desks located in a quiet part of the classroom, or provide other physical accommodations to reduce extraneous stimuli.
- Encourage students to use a bookmark, ruler, or sheet of paper to cover the rest of the page when reading or reviewing directions.
- Limit materials on desks or in workspaces.
- Keep instructional group size as small as possible.
- Limit the number of oral instructions given at any one time, and follow up with printed instructions that include visual cues.

2. Give cues when students are to shift their attention.

- Keep tasks short and specific, and give only one instruction at a time. For example, say: "Read the first paragraph." After it has been read, instruct: "Now answer question one."
- Provide a list of tasks and have students check off each task as it is completed.
- Provide cues when there is a shift in activity. For example, when speaking to the class, stop and indicate information that students should write down.

3. Allow time for movement.

- Provide stretch or movement breaks as needed or make them part of the classroom routine. Arrange an area in the classroom where students can move around without distracting others. Give students the option of going to this area when they need a stretch break.

- Have students do regular errands in the classroom, such as passing out papers or putting materials away so they can move in the classroom in appropriate, helpful ways.
- Arrange non-distracting ways for students to move while involved in desk work. For example, replace a student's chair with a large ball and have him or her bounce gently at his or her desk while working. Small inflatable cushions also provide students with an opportunity to move in their seats without distracting others.

4. Encourage students to maintain focus and mental energy.

- Provide periodic verbal prompts or visual cues to remind students to stay on task. For example, set an alarm to go off at specific intervals as a reminder to focus, or use recorded audio messages to remind students to check their work.
- Create guidelines for good listening skills and review these guidelines frequently (e.g.,"Show me 'listening.' Eyes on speaker. Pencils down. Hands on desk.").
- Reinforce listening skills and behaviours for all students by commending students who demonstrate these skills and describing what they are doing to be successful listeners.
- Place visual cues, such as stickers or checkmarks, at specific spots on worksheets as a signal for students to take a break.
- Use auditory cues, such as bells or timers, to indicate when to take a break or return to work.
- Place a time limit on homework. If elementary students are typically spending more than one hour a night on homework, this may be counterproductive and cause stress for the family. Encourage parents to contact the school if they have homework concerns.

5. Use low-key cues to correct inappropriate behaviour.

- Post reminders on students' desks. When possible, have students design and make reminder cards. Simply walk by and point to the reminder. This works for such skills as:
  - asking politely for help
  - focusing on work
  - taking turns
- Collaborate with individual students to identify physical cues that indicate that a behaviour is interfering with learning. Cues should be unobtrusive and simple, such as a hand on the shoulder. This works for minor behaviours, such as interrupting or talking off topic.
- Use coloured file cards with key messages, such as "talk in a low voice" or "keep working." If students need reminders, lay the cards on their desks, without comment. After five minutes, if the behaviour has improved, quietly remove the card. If the behaviour continues, add a second card.

6. Encourage students to attend to instructions.

- Enforce a "no pencils in sight" rule during class instruction and discussion times.

- Teach students to fold over their worksheets so only the directions show. This will physically slow down students and encourage them to attend to the instructions.

- Ask students to repeat instructions in their own words to a partner or the teacher.

- Ask students to work through a few questions and then check their work. For example, say "Do the first five and then raise your hand and we'll check them together to make sure you are on the right track."

- Hand out worksheets one at a time, when possible.

- Make a graph and have students record the number of correct answers (versus the number of completed answers). This will benefit students who might be more focused on quantity than quality.

Strategies for Students with Memory Difficulties

Memory is the ability to record new information, retain information for a short time, consolidate and use new knowledge and skills, and store information in long-term memory. Memory also involves retrieval and the efficient recall of stored ideas.

Students experiencing difficulties with memory may:

- be unable to remember colours and shapes despite repeated instruction
- be unable to recall information despite extensive studying
- frequently lose their belongings
- have problems remembering daily routines despite regular exposure
- have problems recalling facts and procedures, such as new vocabulary words or verb conjugations

Teachers might consider using the following sample strategies to support students who have memory difficulties.

1. Use instructional techniques that support and enhance memory skills.

- Provide one instruction at a time until students can remember and follow two consecutive instructions. Provide two instructions at a time until students can remember and follow three.

- Provide opportunities for students to see directions and other information. For example, take time each day to write and discuss the daily schedule on the board.

- Write down the main points on an overhead or on the board when giving verbal instructions.

- Present concepts concretely. Real-life examples add meaning and relevance that aid learning and recall. Concepts are easier to learn and retain when presented in familiar or authentic contexts.
- Assess student learning frequently and on shorter units of work. Use quick, short evaluations rather than formal, longer tests.
- Use language that is familiar.
- Provide cues that will help students recall details.

2. Integrate memory aids into each learning activity.

- Provide regularly scheduled reviews of procedures and concepts. For example, start each day by reviewing previously learned skills and ideas. Then present new skills and ideas. Before students leave for home, review the new information.
- Teach students to make lists of reminders regularly and note dates and assignments on a calendar.
- Teach mnemonics to help students recall concepts or facts. For example, use an acronym to describe how verbs are conjugated.

3. Provide multisensory cues to make information and skills easier to remember.

- Teach sound-symbol associations when introducing new vocabulary words. Say the name of the letter, its sound and a word that starts with that letter while looking at a picture of the word. Trace the letter on the desk, in the air or in a sand tray.
- Use visual cues, such as colour coding, photo and drawing sequences, charts, and videos.
- Use auditory and kinesthetic cues in combination. Combine songs with movement and dance patterns. Music and physical routines linked to fact learning can help students memorize faster and act as a cue for retrieving specific information.
- Incorporate hands-on learning experiences and demonstrations. Students learn and remember more effectively when they have opportunities to see and try out new information and skills in a variety of settings and contexts.

4. Set up classroom organizational systems and routines for easier access of information and materials.

- Label class supplies and class work. Encourage students to use folders and binders with different colours or labels and with pictures to separate subject work or materials for each class. Ensure that students have their names prominently displayed on all personal supplies.
- Assist students with daily and weekly organization of their desks and workspaces by providing time to clean desks and organize homework at school.
- Build procedures into the day for recording information in day-timers or assignment books.

- Provide memory aids for frequently used information (e.g., key vocabulary words can be kept in a pocket on the sides of students' desks). Schedules can be posted on the board or on the wall, and students can keep personal copies in their desks or notebooks.
- Tape simple cue cards of daily class routines on students' desks.

5. Teach students strategies for memorizing specific pieces of information.

To learn and practise specific vocabulary or verb conjugations, students can use a fold-over strategy.

1. Have students fold a paper to make four columns.

2. They copy target vocabulary words in English in the first column.
3. They write the German words for each of the vocabulary words in the second column.
4. Students check their answers, correct mistakes, and fill in missing words.
5. They fold back the first column so the English words are not visible, and practise translating the other way. Looking at each of the German words they wrote in the second column, they write the English translation in the third column. Students check their answers against the original words in the first column.
6. Students repeat this process to translate the words back into German in the fourth column. A completed practice page might look like this:

mother	Mutter✓	mother✓	Mutter✓
father	Vater✓	father✓	Vater✓
brother	Schwester✗	brother✓	Bruder✓
	Bruder		

Strategies for Students with Listening Difficulties

Listening plays a crucial role in language acquisition. Listening for specific information helps language and culture learners internalize the rules of language. Learners also need frequent opportunities to use language by taking on the role of both listener and speaker. Through social interaction, students can make and clarify or confirm meaning, test hypotheses about the language, and receive feedback. Language and culture learning is best supported when regular classroom practice provides opportunities for interactive listening—listening that requires the student to take a more active role by requesting clarification or providing feedback.

All students will benefit from the development of effective listening strategies, but these strategies are particularly important for students who already have specific difficulties related to listening.

Teachers might consider using the following sample strategies to support students who have listening difficulties.

1. Provide students with appropriate expressions to clarify meaning and to confirm comprehension, such as:

- *Noch einmal, bitte?* (Could you repeat that, please?)
- *Ich verstehe nicht.* (I don't understand.)
- *Wie, bitte?* (Pardon?)
- *Was bedeutet _____?* (What does _____ mean?)
- *Können Sie es bitte noch einmal sagen?* (Could you say that again, please?)

2. Present information in a "listener-friendly" way. For example:

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Appendix C:
How "Listener-Friendly" Is My Instruction?

- reduce distractions for students
- clearly communicate expectations
- provide students with some form of organizer at the beginning of class
- consistently review and encourage the recall of previously presented information
- use cue words and phrases to signal important information
- use transitional phrases to cue and signal the organization of information
- highlight important information
- vary volume, tone of voice, and rate of speech to emphasize important ideas and concepts
- present information in many different ways
- repeat important ideas and concepts by rephrasing and using multiple examples
- write important ideas, key concepts, and vocabulary on the board
- use visual aids and objects to support the concepts and information that is presented
- provide examples and non-examples of concepts
- frequently check for understanding
- provide students with opportunities to discuss concepts with a partner or in a small group
- provide students with opportunities to work with and practise new skills and concepts
- create time for reflection at the end of the class
- briefly review the important concepts at the end of the class, and preview what will be happening the next class

3. Model and practise active listening strategies in class.

Active listening is the act of intentionally focusing on the speaker to engage oneself in the discussion or presentation. Encourage and cue students to show active listening by:

1. looking at the speaker
2. keeping quiet
3. keeping their hands and feet to themselves
4. keeping their bodies still
5. thinking about what the speaker is saying

Strategies for Students with Reading Difficulties

Research suggests that a student's first language is always present in his or her mind during second language learning; the second language knowledge that is created is connected in all sorts of ways with the first language knowledge. Mental reprocessing of second language words, phrases, or sentences into first language forms is a common cognitive strategy for language learners (Kern 1994). First language understanding is also used in more complex ways to think about and process what is being read in the second language. This means that students who have difficulty reading in their first language may have difficulty reading in a second language. Many students with special education needs may be reading below grade-level expectations and will require accommodations in this area.

Recent research related to language and culture reading has focused on the use of reading strategies. In one study, students who experienced difficulty with language learning were found to rely extensively on phonetic decoding, while more successful students used strategies that called on general background knowledge (e.g., inferences, predictions, and elaborations) (Chamot and El-Dinary 1999). This research suggests that teachers can help students become more effective second language learners by helping them be more flexible with their first-language reading strategies and more effective at monitoring and adapting their strategies.

Teachers might consider using the following sample strategies to support students who have reading difficulties.

1. Create extra support for students with reading difficulties.

- Pair readers who are less able with competent readers and have them read and complete assignments together.

- Provide students with picture dictionaries to help them find and remember vocabulary.

- Photocopy reading material for students and use opaque tape to cover new or difficult words. Write simpler or previously learned vocabulary on the tape. This is also effective for reading materials that contain many idioms, metaphors, or unfamiliar figures of speech.

2. Teach students specific reading strategies.

- Have students use text-content strategies such as making connections to previous knowledge or experiences, making predictions about what will happen in a text, and asking questions about the text. Have students use these strategies before, during, and after reading to identify, reflect on, understand, and remember material they are reading.

- Have students use decoding strategies, such as highlighting different parts of a sentence in different colours (e.g., nouns in green, verbs in yellow) to break down and decode sentences.

- Have students use cognitive and metacognitive strategies to monitor comprehension, such as pausing after each sentence or paragraph and asking "Does this make sense to me?"

- Have students use strategies for dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary, such as the "Read Around" strategy:
  1. Skip the word and read to the end of the sentence.
  2. Go back and read the whole sentence again.
  3. Look at the beginning of the word for letter-sound clues.
  4. Think: "What word would fit here?"
  5. Try out a word in the sentence. Does this word sound right? Does this word make sense? Does this word match the letter clues?
  6. Look at the picture for a clue, if there is one.
  7. Ask someone.

Cognitive Strategy Instruction

Research in the field of cognitive psychology suggests that the differences between students who are successful and students who struggle may be related in part to what students understand about the learning process. From this perspective, learning is a knowledge domain, similar to science or history. The more knowledge a student has about how to learn, the more efficient his or her learning is likely to be. This knowledge includes an understanding of when and how to use cognitive strategies—tactics that support learners as they develop and internalize procedures for performing higher-level tasks. Cognitive strategies encourage students to take ownership of their own learning. Teaching cognitive strategies can help students with learning difficulties become more active and purposeful learners, thinkers, and problem solvers.

Strategy instruction is initially teacher-driven, with the teacher providing structured opportunities to learn, practise, and develop strategies; however, students should be encouraged to become aware of and monitor their own strategic processes as much as possible. Students need to know the purpose and limitations of the strategies, as well as when and where to use different strategies, so that they can eventually learn to rely on themselves rather than on the teacher.

Consider the following guidelines for teaching cognitive learning strategies:

- Match strategies to the requirements of the learning task. For example, if the goal of the learning task involves retaining the main ideas in a piece of factual writing, the student might be directed to use a chunking strategy to increase the amount of information held in short-term memory. The strategy must be developmentally appropriate for the student.

- Provide strategy instruction consistent with the student's current knowledge and skill level.

- Provide opportunities for extensive practice in strategy use. Practice helps students to spontaneously use the strategy and apply the strategy across a wide range of content areas and situations. Students benefit from both guided and independent practice.

- Prompt students to use specific strategies at appropriate times. Some students with learning difficulties may require explicit prompting to help develop their abilities to transfer the strategy to different but related tasks (Gagne and Driscoll 1988).

The Importance of Motivation

One of the most important factors in determining the rate and success in acquiring an additional language is motivation (Dornyei and Csizér 1998). Even with appropriate curricula, good teaching, and inherent abilities, students cannot succeed without sufficient motivation. High motivation can make up for considerable difficulties in language aptitude.

Often closely related to motivation is the issue of language-learning performance anxiety, in which previous negative experiences create ongoing feelings of apprehension for students. Language learners who are overly anxious about their performance are often less motivated to perform in ways that bring attention to themselves in the classroom or in natural language-use settings. Language anxiety is associated with difficulties in listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and word production, and generally lower achievement in language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner 1991).

Teachers might consider using the following sample strategies for improving and maintaining the motivation of students in the language arts classroom.

1. Include a sociocultural component in classroom instruction.

- Show authentic films or video clips, and play culturally relevant music.
- Promote student contact with language speakers by arranging meetings with individuals in the community, organizing field trips or exchange programs, or finding pen pals or email friends for students.

2. Develop students' cross-cultural awareness.

- Focus on cross-cultural similarities and not just differences, using analogies to make the unknown familiar.
- Use culturally rich teaching ideas and activities.
- Discuss the role that learning an additional language plays in the world and its potential usefulness both for the students and their communities.

3. Develop students' self-confidence and decrease anxiety.

- Provide regular encouragement and reinforcement. Highlight what students can do rather than what they cannot do.
- Create a supportive and accepting learning environment by encouraging the view that mistakes are a part of learning. Tell students about your own difficulties in language learning and share the strategies you have used to cope with these difficulties.
- Make sure that students regularly experience success and a sense of achievement. For example, break down tasks into smaller, more manageable units so that students experience success with each step. Balance students' experiences of frustration by providing easier activities, and complete confidence-building tasks before tackling more difficult tasks and concepts.
- Provide examples and descriptors of accomplishment. Point out small successes.

4. Help students increase their successes.

- Help students link past difficulties to controllable elements, such as confusion about what to do, insufficient effort, or the use of inappropriate strategies, rather than to a lack of ability.

- Match the difficulty of tasks to students' abilities so that students can expect to succeed if they put in a reasonable effort.

- Encourage students to set their own goals that are achievable and specific (e.g., learning 10 new German words every week).

- Teach students learning and communication strategies, as well as strategies for problem solving.

5. Increase students' interest and involvement in tasks.

- Design or select varied and challenging activities. Adapt tasks to students' interests, making sure that something about each activity is new or different. Include game-like features, such as puzzles, problem solving, overcoming obstacles, elements of suspense, or hidden information.

- Use imaginative elements that will engage students' emotions.

- Personalize tasks by encouraging students to engage in meaningful exchanges, such as sharing information, personal interests, and experiences.

- Make peer interaction (e.g., pair work and group work) an important component of instructional organization.

- Break the routine by periodically changing the interaction pattern or seating plan.

- Use authentic, unusual, or exotic texts, recordings, and visual aids.

6. Increase the students' sense of satisfaction.

- Create opportunities for students to produce finished products that they can perform or display. For example, make a wall chart of what the group has learned and use it to celebrate successes.

- Provide students with authentic choices about alternative ways to complete tasks. Invite students to design and prepare activities themselves and promote peer teaching.

- Show students that you value second language learning as a meaningful experience in your own life, sharing stories about your personal interest in and experience with second language learning.

- Connect the task with things that students already find satisfying or valuable.

By providing students with learning experiences that create a sense of competence, enjoyment, and belonging, teachers can increase the motivation and success of all students. When motivation is combined with appropriate accommodations and differentiated instruction, students with special education needs can gain valuable knowledge, skills, and experiences.