Dynamic Assessment - Basic Principles

Measure how a child learns, not just what they know.

Pretest

Quick probe (vocab, grammar, narrative). Note baseline strategy use.

Mediated Learning Experience

Mini-teach. Script your prompts.

Posttest

Re-test with parallel probe. Compare gains + responsiveness to baseline.

Intentionality

"Today we're going to work on ___. It matters because ___."

Meaning

"I'll show you a strategy and we'll practice it together."

Transcendence

"Where else will you use this? In class, at home, or in stories you read?"

Planning

"Plan your steps: first __, then __, if you get stuck do __. Tell me your plan back."

Transfer

"How will you remember this next time? Show me in a new example."

Affect & Arousal

- Stays calm and tries again
- Stays on task without lots of reminders
- Notices when something doesn't make sense and fixes it

Elaboration

- Explains thinking in own words
- Tries new/efficient strategies
- Connects ideas or gives examples

Behavior

- Follows prompts right away
- Attends and stays engaged
- Accepts and uses feedback

Rate 1–5: 1 = little support needed → 5 = maximum support needed • A lower rating means more independence. • Likely difference: posttest improves and ratings drop (less support needed) • Language impairment likely: posttest changes little and ratings stay high

LAYERS

References: Peña, Gillam, & Bedore, 2014; Peña et al., 2006; Petersen et al., 2017; Hunt et al., 2022; Peña, Reséndiz, & Gillam, 2007

© Layers Consulting. All rights reserved. May be reprinted for personal use.

Explore the Course