

# Mythbusters:

## Four Blocks Edition



# Why is reading and writing important?



- Writing allows person to express themselves and communicate for variety of purposes.
- If person can't read and write, will rely on others for assistance
- Accessing grade-level standards
- Life outcomes – how much richer is your life?

# Now, on to the myths!



- Historically, there have been three big assumptions about literacy instruction for students with disabilities.
- These assumptions can have a negative impact on students' learning and outcomes.

# Myth 1: “This student can’t learn to read or write.”



- Least Dangerous Assumption
- We all started somewhere!
- Maybe we just don't know how to teach them.

# Myth 2: “We should be focusing on functional skills.”



- What is more functional than reading and writing?
- Teaching many functional skills do not actually accomplish what they intend.

# Myth 3: “This does not apply to my students.



- Every student can benefit from instruction using Four Blocks.
- Four Blocks can be used with any curriculum and with students at any level.
- Supplemental materials should of course be used!

# How do we teach literacy now?



- Let's look at some common literacy practices that we use as Special Educators
- Our main goal should always be helping students read and write independently.
- Not everything we do works towards this goal.

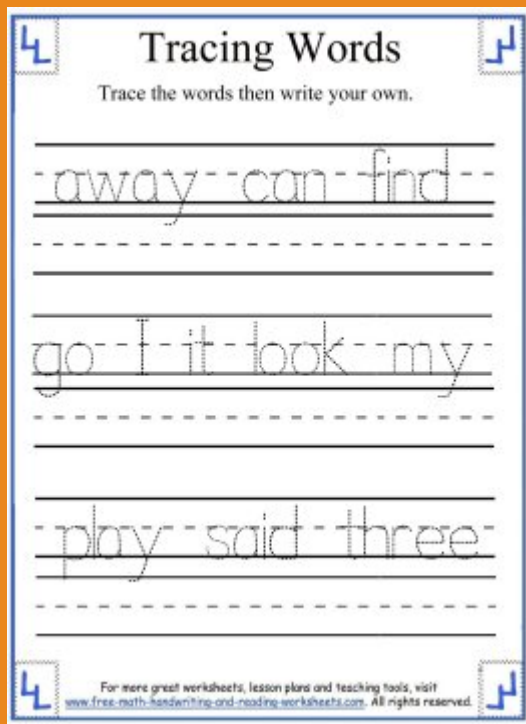
# Sight Words/Flash Cards

all	am
are	at
ate	be
black	brown

- Teaches in isolation without context.
- Does not help students learn decoding skills.
- No writing component, students can't get their thoughts out.
- Do students even understand what a word is?

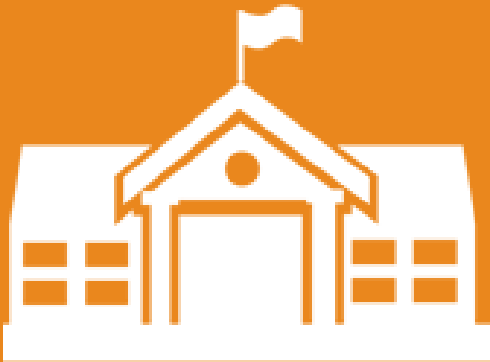


# Handwriting/Tracing



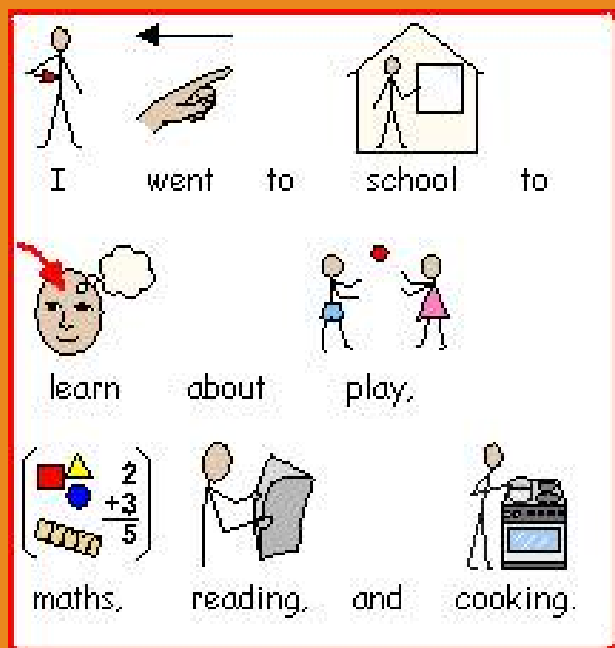
- Every student needs a pencil (traditional, computer, AAC).
- Make sure students have tools to participate in literacy activities, even if they can't write legibly.
- Handwriting and tracing provides no context for what is being written.

# Linear Approach to Literacy



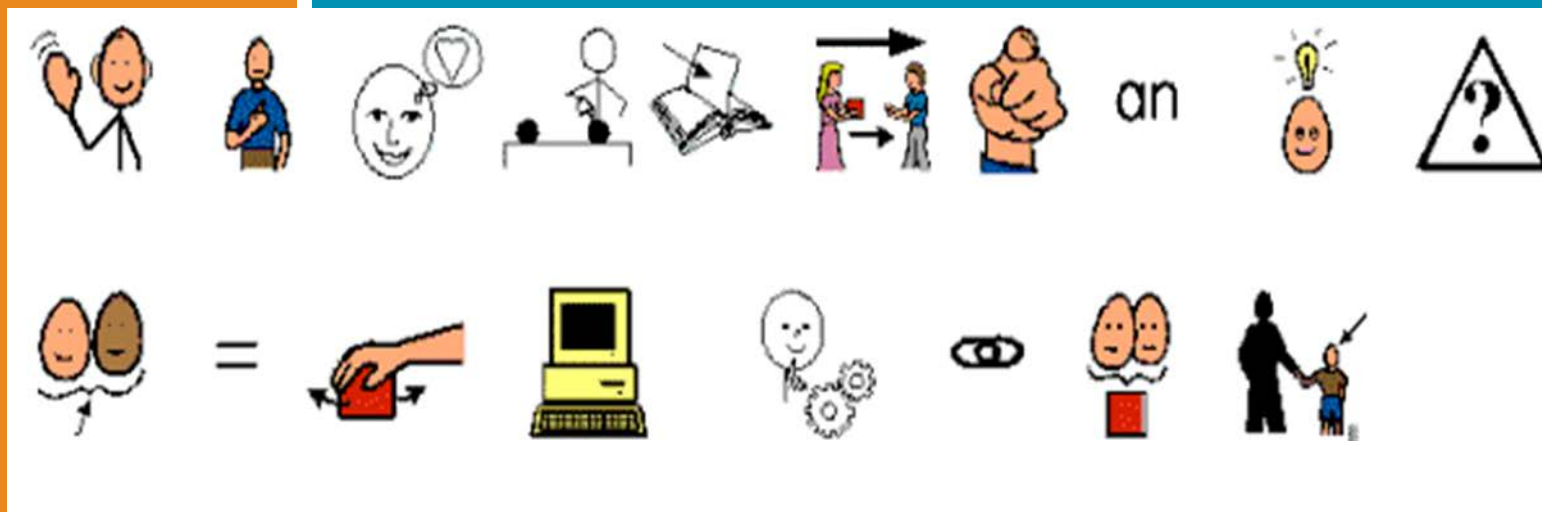
- Do students need prerequisite skills before literacy instruction is worthwhile?
- This leads to students working on letters or tracing their name when they graduate.
- Prerequisite skills often taught in isolation

# Picture Symbols

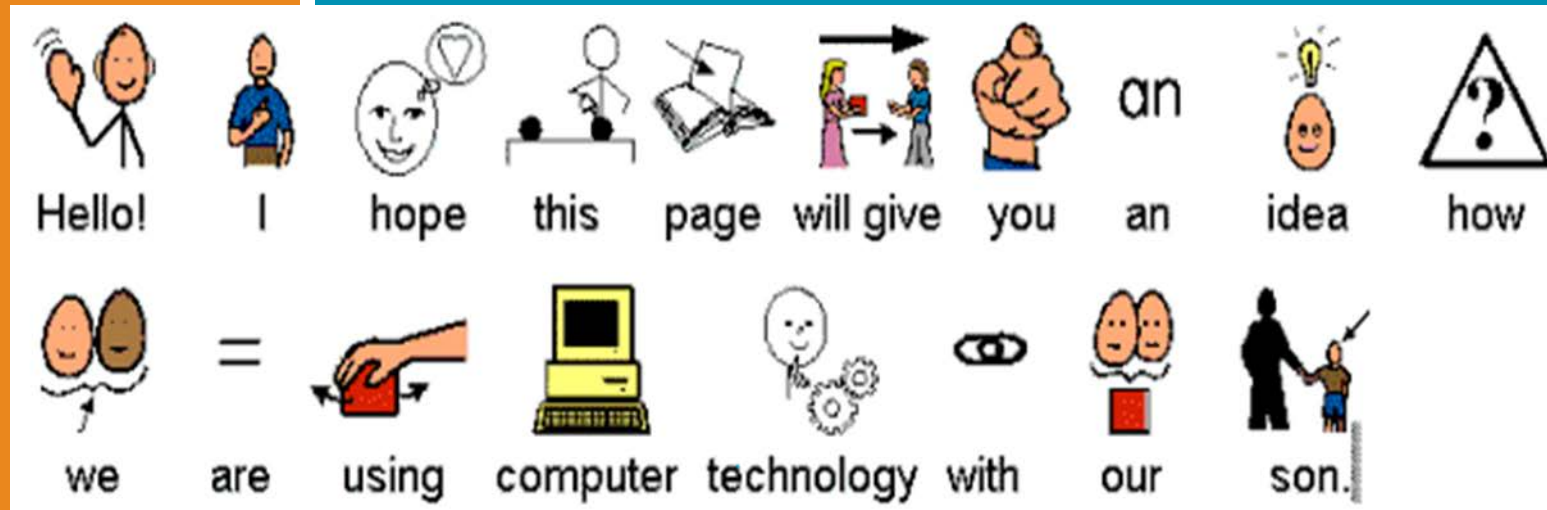


- Useful for communication, but can be detrimental to literacy instruction.
- Students can rely on picture instead of decoding.
- Picture symbols are often not helpful in identifying words.

# Can You Read This?



# How Well Did You Do?



# And Finally, a Word About Materials:



- Every student needs access to wide range of books, no matter their reading level.
- Be creative for students who may not be gentle with books.
- Laminated books, printed books, books made from household materials

# Conclusion



- This training operates under the assumption that every student can learn to read or write.
- Now, let's learn some tools to make that happen!