

Individualized learning

Individualized learning plans can increase success by treating children based on their unique abilities and backgrounds. Individualized instruction takes into account the following:

- Diverse learning styles and intellectual strengths.
- Different rates of learning.
- Varying socioeconomic backgrounds.

While the preschool classroom will have a group of children roughly the same age, the stages of development will differ from one child to the next. There could be children of varying degrees of abilities in the classroom as well as children who excel in certain areas. An effective teacher is one that recognizes the importance of creating individualized learning goals for each child and assisting each child to reach their full potential.

Not only do children develop at their own rates, but they often learn in very different ways. While one child in your care learns best by listening, another child may be a visual learner and need to see what is being taught. Giving each child the opportunity to learn in the way that is best for them means that you are giving them the confidence they need to be independent learners.

Real-Life Scenario

Leo, a 4-year-old, was diagnosed with a language delay. Leo's teacher, Mr. Bertrov, is working with him on using words for common objects and activities in the classroom rather than gestures such as pointing or grabbing objects. What are some ways Mr. Bertrov can design individualized learning for Leo to support his language development?

- Provide Leo with an opportunity to practice using words for common objects, by placing crayons and scissors just out of her reach, creating a situation in which he must ask for the items. Mr. Bertrov does not hand the objects to Leo until he names or attempts to name them.
- Mr. Bertrov may further support Leo's learning by modeling the correct words and asking Leo to repeat them. Leo is then rewarded by receiving the objects he desires.
- Mr. Bertrov actively reinforces Leo's independent attempts to use his vocabulary, because independence is the ultimate goal.

