Thank you, guys. Okay, the second topic I'm going to address relates real closely to the first, but I tried to set them up so they would, could be independently attended. So, we're going to talk about curriculum-based and writing lab approaches to language, literacy, instruction, and intervention. I'm going to, in this hour, try to illustrate mostly what I mean by those approaches using case examples. Notice the terms, instruction and intervention. By that, I'm trying to imply that you can find ways to work in classroom settings where you can address your general instruction goals for all students, and also your specialized intervention goals for kids with language literacy needs. So, how do you do that? Well, I spent a lot of my career trying to figure that out. I'm a speech language pathologist, but I have worked in curriculum-related fashion almost all of my career after I realized that the artic kids didn't need me as much as the language-impaired kids did. And I kept trying to figure out a way that I could actually be in the classroom. And so I'm going to share with you some of the ways that my colleagues and I learned to do this. I do have to disclose that I'm going to be talking a little bit about the TILLS, not so much in this session, just a little bit about the model. Because I think it helps you think about how to focus your instruction. And you need to have some individualized assessment in order to do that. But I'm going to be talking more about some other kinds of things. There was a book called the Writing Lab Approach but it's out of print, and I also need to thank the federal government. And some goals and objectives for this session for you all is to be able to think about how students' needs differ when they have dyslexia versus a specific comprehension deficit, how to help kids need more complex sentences, and the hint there is, when we have more complex ideas to express, we need more complex sentences. And to describe a mini-lesson for teaching how to replace discouraging comments with encouraging ones. So, it's a pretty specific objective. So we're going to review a little bit a language by modalities quadrant model, and then talk about the four questions of curriculum-based language assessment and intervention. I'm going to flip back to some slides from the first presentation that I didn't get to at the end that lay out the principles of the writing lab approach, and then we'll do as many case examples as we have time. So, let's first look through the language levels by modalities model. So, I set this up before as, you can assess kids and find out to what extent they're low versus high on the sound word level or the sentence discourse level, and then by looking at these patterns for the upper right-hand quadrant, we have high high kids who are good at both, or at least within normal limits with both, sound word and sentence discourse level abilities. And you can assess that with our TILLS test, the test of integrated language and literacy skills, and other tests. You can also assess spoken and written language, and you look for a pattern. If they're low with all of this, or at least many, and you know what? Every child is so unique. I just get struck over and over again at how individualized the patterns are. Certainly, we can see that kids, some kids fall very neatly into one quadrant or another. But a whole lot of kids are really a mixture of strengths and needs. And there are some who are really good at narrative discourse and really bad at listening and reading comprehension. So, it does matter, the kind of discourse that you're assessing. Dyslexia is the pattern that you see when they're very good at sentence discourse ability, so they're good at narrative story retelling, they're good at listening and
reading. They're good at listening comprehension, but not necessarily good at reading comprehension, and why? Because they have trouble with that reading decoding problem, and that interferes with their ability to get meaning. But you can get fooled by that, because once they get to a certain amount of skill level, what happens with dyslexic kids is they tend to get so that they can get accurate enough, it just takes a lot more effort. And then they can use their extraordinarily good skills sometimes for language comprehension, and they can fool you. They can score pretty well on a reading comprehension test. And part of the reason for that is we have, scientifically put, crappy tools. By that, I mean, very often you could answer the questions correctly without ever knowing what the passage said. And they've changed some of these tests, but it used to be that the kids would have to read the passage, but then the clinician would read the questions. So the kids didn't have to read the questions. And so then you're getting this artificially inflated reading comprehension score. And what happens is, they get, it takes such effort, that they're so fatigued at the end of the day, that these kids, and especially those of you who might work with college-age students who have dyslexia, it's really, it really wears them out to put that much effort into reading. But they're so good at language, in some areas, that they're able to compensate. And then we have this specific comprehension deficit, and these are the kids who are at least quite a bit better at reading the surface, but they read the surface, but they don't know what they read. They don't understand the language underneath it, and they don't understand when they hear, when they listen to complex language. They sound okay when they talk, but when you start really analyzing what they said or what they wrote, you realize that those sentences don't quite make sense. They're not really capturing abstract ideas the way you would like to see them do, and it's really an expression problem as much as a comprehension problem. What's specific about it is that it's not a decoding problem. They're pretty good at reading, decoding, and they can memorize spelling words. We also talked about this tool that you can use to gather information from the teacher and the parent and the student about areas that they think are strength areas for them as well as weakness areas. And you can use it for screening, and then identify prioritizing one area. This last question asks, what one thing would you think most help this child do better at school? We went in the last session over the four questions of curriculum-based language assessment and intervention, and I'm going to review those now. So, when you are working, and I'm coming at it from a special ed person, only I'm a speech language pathologist. Some of you special ed teachers, special ed teachers, general ed teachers, and we have to collaborate with each other, and figure out how to do that in a way that we're not stepping on each other's toes. And what's, you know, we're all-- I know you won't believe this. You may laugh at this. We're paid too much to have somebody stand at the back of the room watching somebody else teach. We have to, if we're going to collaborate, if we're going to work in inclusive models, we have to figure out a way to do that that all of the kids are benefitting. So the general ed teacher is making sure that all of the kids, including the kids with special needs in his or her classroom, are learning, and learn that those general ed teachers can teach those kids, because sometimes they don't realize how good they are at figuring out what those kids need, and that they do have ways of helping those kids. And that also that the kids, that the special needs personnel,
whether they be speech language pathologists, reading specialists, special ed teachers, are able to either have the kids pull out part of their classroom curriculum and bring it into the special needs room, and I’ve had, I’ve found that special ed teachers have trouble being in the regular ed classroom. They have trouble scheduling time to do that, because they have kids coming, at least in Michigan, they have kids coming in and out of their classrooms all the time. So it’s very hard for them to say, I’m going to go work in the third grade classroom on a writing project. But what they can do is have the kids bring their projects down to the special ed room and work on them there, and everybody can work on some of the same goals, and you can figure out from your team who is best suited to do what. Okay. But this idea of curriculum based doesn’t have to be classroom based, okay? So you can have decided as a group that this student is struggling a lot with the language of science, or with expository text. So have them bring their science textbook into the speech language room or the special ed room and say, and you don’t have to do a whole chapter. You can learn a ton from just pulling out one little paragraph, and then going through the four questions a curriculum based language assessment intervention. What does this context require? So for me to read a section of a chapter and then answer the questions at the end of the chapter, what do I have to do? What skills do I have to apply? I have to realize like, when I have to look at a figure or a graph and get information out of that? There are just a lot of little skills that I have to do, and then I ask the child. So the second question is, what does the student currently do? So now I say, here’s this little chapter. Why don’t you read this to me? Now here are some questions. What do you do? Show me what you do? And, you know, see if they have any strategies, and watch them doing it individually. Then begin to strategically introduce some scaffolds to see, if I point out to them, here it’s asking you, here’s your procedure. There are five steps. What are the five steps? Maybe you want to make a list of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. How can we make this make sense to us? And then you begin to do that, and then decide what else might you have to do to help this student learn to approach this problem differently, and then should I modify this assignment? If so, how? We’re also going to talk about setting goals in kid language, so that kids know what they’re doing and why. Does that sound like something you heard earlier this afternoon? Kids should always be able to tell, what are you working on here? What’s your goal? Okay? I remember one time working with a child in the Writing Lab, he just had a mouse, and he was just doing random-- I said, well, you know, what’s your goal here? Goal? And what are you trying to do, you know? And so we had to work on that. But I also remember teachers who thought that only special needs kids had goals. We all need goals, right? So getting goals that are written in language that kids can understand, using authentic curricular materials, targeting those goals using scaffolding strategies and other supports, and then remembering to celebrate change, and that’s why doing projects that have a beginning and work through to the end has a lot of power that, when you’re, like, tutoring is, like, a separate lesson each day. We don’t want to get there. So, this is just another way to lay out those four questions. So you may be able to see, I think these four questions are really important. They guide you through what does the context require? That’s an outside in question. I’m starting with the curricular context. What does the student currently do? Now I’m starting within the student and say, when they are approaching this task, what do they do? And
then, I'm trying to analyze the mismatch between the child and the expected response, and the child's actual observed response, and then what should I do to modify it? Another outside in question. So I'm now going to again go through those questions, so the first question might be, what does the curriculum require? So, analyze the test demands. Put yourself in that context. And then select curricular materials, so that's your expected response. I like to use grade level materials. Now, when kids have reading problems, they often get stuck in their fourth grade, but they're reading at a second grade level, so let's give them second grade readers. Except what? When they're in the classroom, do they get second grade science books when everybody else has fourth grade science books? They're expected to read at grade level. So when I'm working with them on the language and literacy problems, I want to use the language of their grade level textbooks, and I want to show them-- I'm not saying there's not a place for leveled readers. But when I'm working with them, I want to show them that they can, in fact, get some information out of that. They can read that, because their attitude toward themselves as learners is just as important-- well, that might be overstating it. That's what happens when you get up on a soapbox in a podium in front of you, you just want to pontificate. Anyway, it might be that that is just as important. I know it's very important that kids have this sense that they can do it, and that's part of the current lesson. So, all right, here. Let me think if I have time to do this. This is an excerpt that one of my colleagues, a clinician, used one time when she said, Nicky, I've got this fifth grader, and she's never been in therapy, but she can't-- her teachers telling me she can't understand what's going on in the classroom. And I said, well let's do some curriculum based language assessment. And so, this was the passage that she pulled out of her fifth grade history book. And what I'm going to do is, I'm going to read it to you. You can look at the screen, but the way Shara gave it to her what she actually read it aloud, and then had her retell it, okay? So the first is, of all I'm reading it aloud, I want you to think about what you would have to do to retell this. In fact I'm going to ask you guys to turn and retell this. Really, it only takes a second, to a neighbor. All right, here you go. Have you ever read a book over and over again? About 500 years ago, Christopher Columbus did. The book told of faraway countries where people dressed in brightly colored silks. It described a beautiful gold palace. The book had been written by an Italian named Marco Polo in 1298, more than 150 years before Columbus was born. It described the 17 years Marco Polo spent in India, China, and Japan. Columbus hoped one day to see those Asian countries for himself. In the 1400s, however, the trip to Asia was as long and difficult as it had been in Marco Polo's day. The only routes Columbus knew crossed huge deserts and tall mountains. Columbus felt sure there was a faster, shorter way to Asia. He planned to find it. Okay, just take a minute and make some pairs, and one of you tell it, and the other one kind of monitor it. Tell the story, okay?

>> [INAUDIBLE]
>> Okay, you guys, I'm going to, I know this, we could spend longer on this. But alright, so first let me ask, how did the person do? Reteller did pretty well? Yeah? Okay, good language skills in this room. Okay, now, everybody in here was thinking they might have to retell it, I hope. So, that actually makes you different in how you listened, right? What other things did you notice about, in order to retell that story? Can you reflect on some of the cognitive linguistic skills that
you had to use? What did the task demand? What does, that was, you know, so there was sequencing, you had to kind of, and did you notice how time was really pretty challenging? What, did it help you to know something about, so world knowledge could really help you. What were you going to add?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> Yes. Yeah. Interesting, yeah. Mm-hmm. Yeah, and isn't that interesting, how when you're in the middle of something, you know, you see things differently. At different times, you'll see different things in this passage. No, but that's a great example. And you have a lovely voice for sharing with other people, so I think that people could hear, but she said that she noticed all the commas, because she's working with her students on commas. And I think that's one of those cues that you can point out when you're doing it. Now, notice that I read it with as much meaning-- I read it quickly, but with as much meaning as I could. If you decide to have it be that you want to look at decoding, too, you'd want to have the student read it aloud, but Shara was worried about listening comprehension, so. But notice, it's a written passage. You can use it for more than one thing. And yeah, so those commas were important. Did anybody, yeah, what else, Diane?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> Yes. Yeah. Yeah. So, the expectation that you are going to have to retell it made you process it different. You applied different executive functions to it, you know. I'm going to really have to pay attention. Yeah, yeah, good observation, what else?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> Yeah. Yes. Yeah, you raise a really important point about summarizing versus retelling, because you don't want them to have to kind of retell it in the same words that you did. And in expository text especially, some of the research has used summarizing as a way, like Sheryl Scott's work has used summarizing where they show a video, and then have kids summarize it. Because you're pulling out the key details, as you say. You're organizing it and saying what it is meaning, and how, and you can look at some of the structure, whether or not they're getting the structure. Did anybody use visualization while you're listening to that? You know, those beautiful colors, did you notice that? Okay, let's see what our little girl did. So that's part, here are just some of the things. You pay closer attention, use knowledge of historical discourse, a mental timeline. I just really got confused, unless I needed to write down a timeline really, to get some of those years, to get that right. You use cohesive devices. There was like, those Asian countries would, if you knew something about it, maybe already had some world knowledge, but if you didn't, you could realize that those Asian countries applies to China and Japan and India, and then using a lot of, you needed word knowledge, too, as well. And, like, had been written, in fact, is a past perfect, and you probably can't remember that unless you're an English grammar teacher. But our language systems know what that means, that it was a completed action in the past. Marco Polo wrote the book before Columbus was even born. So now we want to see what our student actually does, so that's the observed response. What does the student currently do? And we start out with pretty independent, and then we gradually kind of strategically, and you get better at this over time. You form a hypothesis. I
wonder if, you know, how much of the problem vocabulary is? So you might probe a vocabulary word. What does that mean? Or a reference word, you might ask what that word refers to. Or some syntax. Well, what does it mean that, you know? And so, then let's look at what this little girl said. Here's her retelling. Columbus, Columbus was sailing Marco Polo to Asia, and he was trying to find a different route to Asia, and a hundred years, they spent a hundred something years they spend in India or something, somewhere around there and you can't remember. Okay. So, I want to suggest, first of all, transcribing this is worth the effort. Because you really, and notice how its transcribed exactly. This is a speech language pathology thing/ you can always tell in a dorm who's a speech path major, because they're relistening to the same bit of text over and over again, about a hundred times. Alright, what is the strength? What does she get? You want to start with that, and that's a really good thing to remember when you're thinking how to scaffold kids. Always comment first on something they got right, or got close. What do you see up there that's any kind of a strength? Yeah, yeah. Columbus and Marco Polo. We got in major places, we got India, yeah. Okay, even got the goal, right? Did somebody else have something different in the back? And go, trying to find a different route? That's big. We're often asking for that, right? So, it looks like it's kind of like a mishmash, and the kid didn't get much out of it at all, but she actually got a fair amount out of it. Now, let's look what she wrote, which is also kind of interesting. Columbus sailed to Asia with Marco Polo, I think, in the 1800s. For 100 and some then, one days, they stayed in India. Columbus found a different route to Asia than the other one he had. Columbus was looking for gold and other things. So, any new strengths there? Yeah, world knowledge is probably one of the best predictors of reading, how kids perform on reading and comprehension tasks. That's why it's really hard to make a language comprehension test that assesses language comprehension, because it's, you know, how did you know that? Well, you know, comprehension is getting it, getting the content. And so, yes, world knowledge is really important, and showing kids how to activate their world knowledge may be one of your important techniques when you're working with kids on comprehension. That's that, what do we know? What, you know, what do we need to know? That's what that's all about. Yeah.

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> Uh-huh, yeah. Yeah. It is a real struggle for kids to put down what's in their head on paper, and a lot of them have at least slightly better oral skills than written skills. But they don't automatically say a sentence aloud to themselves before they start to write it down, and you can teach them, that's a very simple thing that you can teach them. Well, say the sentence first to yourself, because you're really good at that. And maybe you start with using a shared pencil, where they dictate the sentence to you, you write it down. With kids who are very low functioning, that can really help them, where they produce a sentence. I mean, and that may in fact be their goal, is to construct a reasonable sentence, and you, and the clinician writes it down. The kid practices reading some of what they've written, or at least constructed. But we've got sentence level problems, we got word level problems. So, you know, I could, if I had a lot more time, I could teach you a way to analyze a written language sample, and I'll show you a little bit about that. But, that levels model of thinking about how's the discourse? What's the
sentence level? What's the word level like? And how is the sound word structure knowledge playing out in the in the child's production, will give you a way to say that, otherwise you've got, where do I start? I don't know even what to say about this. And it will help you with some goals and objectives, especially if you also can compare it to some formal assessment data, and try to figure out how the child is performing relative to their peers. So, when we're gathering these original story writing probes as part of a Writing Lab approach, and I'm going to show you about that in a minute, here's a way that we've done over the years, I've written about this several chapters. I can give you some more references if you want, but this is what I would do. And this is with grade level. We've done it at first grade, but really it works best starting at second grade level up through, you can do it through high school if you have a time, way to do it. Today we're going to write stories, or you can in fact also use reports if you want, trying to get a sample of their expository writing. You know something about stories. We're interested in the stories that fifth graders write. So, you know something about stories. Stories tell about a problem and what happened. Your story can be real or imaginary, or you can say today we're going to write a report about something you know about. So think about something you know. But the problem is, to do a report, you need to do some research. You know, but you're asking them to do it off the top of their head. What you're trying to do is figure out, can they organize an informative piece? But, we've done both, but stories work particularly well. And then we give them a plain piece of paper to plan. You can use this piece of paper to plan using anything you know about planning. So, what we're interested, what do they do? Do they make a list? Do they draw a Venn diagram? Do they draw some kind of a picture that, or do they start writing their story? Immature kids will just start drafting their story, and then they rewrite it. And then we give them lined paper and, you know, give them like 45 minutes to write. And toward the end, if they're likely to have words that you can't figure out what they are, you have then read it aloud and you write in the words so you can understand it. So, that's just one kind of assessment. The other would be, like, the math assignment that I showed some of you earlier. So, now we're going to ask ourselves, you know, what's the student do? So we got a kind of a look, and we know that she's confused about timing, right? Do, you know, Columbus and Marco Polo live at the same time? How are we going to show her? And remember, we're not trying to teach her about Columbus and Marco Polo. What are we trying to do? We're teaching her the processes for which she can use to disentangle this complex text and make sense out of it. And we're trying to show her that she can figure it out if she spends a little time with it, and goes back and forth for a while. So, I would transcribe, you know, as I showed you in this example, and in some cases we use Salt, I am a new-- I'm going to let that go. But then we think about at the different levels, how is, did she organize the discourse? Well, the sequence. Somebody brought up sequence early on. How was her sequence? We might look at that. This was really a historical piece, so sequence was important, and yet things were out of order, weren't they? And so, what strategy would she have to figure out those different years if she-- and that's where I would probably put a timeline in. Sentence level, that was a problem for vocabulary, there were probably some things, but she was good at proper names, which I'm not good at. So I was very impressed by that. Phonology, morphology, other kinds of cognitive skills, attention,
and here, I’ll go back. Somebody's taking a picture here. These slides are online, too. So, then I have a worksheet that I also uploaded online, so that you can use this to make an inventory, but don't expect to make a complete inventory. When you're trying to do some informal assessment, curriculum based assessment, you can quantify some things, and you can use those quantifications to measure progress over time. But be careful, because if it's real informal, you know, the conditions may change a lot. But what you want to do is you want to start somewhere that's going to make a difference for that student. You want them to get the concept, first of all, that language has patterns, that it's easier to remember things if you can see the patterns, and you want to show them that this is like something I've done before, and even if I don't know the answer immediately, I have skills for figuring it out. So, here's the worksheet, and this is, I uploaded this as an individual sheet. Feel free to modify it or use it. If you use it like mine, you feel, you know, I'd appreciate referencing. But I don't even care about that. So I'm not going to, I don't have time to go over this, but I want to point out just something about the organization. There is a discourse level, sentence level, vocabulary, sound word structure, and then there is a section on social communication that often goes along with this. There are some executive skills, like whether this student actually willingly approached the task. Does the student persist when challenged? Does the student set goals for problem solving? So, you might write some goals and objectives and maybe a goal would be for the student, when I start something new, I should have some goals on what I'm going to learn. That would really be consistent with what our speaker, keynote speaker talked about earlier today. There's also some questions about emotional and behavioral control. So many of our kids get these overlaid behaviors over time. Some are perfectionists, some are I don't care, you can't make me care about this. But they really do care, so forth. There's also a word structure knowledge kind of checklist, and again, it's fairly detailed, but it's a way to kind of remind yourself whether you've actually looked, and is this child no sound symbol associations? If that becomes the area of difficulty for the child. What about prefixes? Suffixes? It's over there somewhere, there it is. Okay, so now the fourth question is, how should we scaffold this task? How should we modify it? Maybe we should actually modify the task. But I like to keep things as close to the general ed expectations as I possibly can. I'm not afraid to simplify it if I need to, but this is where we use, I'm sorry, dynamic assessment to look for what the cues the child may be missing, and what we can figure out by pointing out some of these cues within the text. And then assess whether or not the child can independently do that. So with kids, sometimes I've asked them, you know all those questions I was asking you? Well, we're going to transplant, and you ask those questions of yourself. And I might give them a worksheet where it has a set of self-talk questions that they can go, like, what does the math problem require? Can I draw the picture then do the math? And does this make sense? So, we've been using this term scaffolding, which we use it a lot in education, and I find that people don't always have a real clean idea of what it is. It's really what a mentor, a teacher-- we're all mentors, ultimately, aren't we? Who, what we say or do to enable a less mature learner to complete a task that they wouldn't also otherwise be able to do. So, we're there beside them, we're building this temporary scaffold, but it's not scaffolding if it has to be there. We don't want them to become
dependent upon us. It can be kind of rewarding, but the kid can only do it in your presence. But it's not good for the kid, right? We want them to be able to be independent. So this is where we use a lot of different language to frame and focus the cues, because we want them to see it. We want their brains to make the connection. That's going to make those connections stick. But we can guide them, more or less explicitly, and sometimes we have to be real explicit. But we want to then pull back and say, now, do you remember what you did the last time? How did you figure that word out the last time? Can you figure it out again? Create new learning strategies is our goal. So, I didn't do intervention with this young girl about this, but these were, I might, you know, use graphic data, because you want them to connect for comprehension, you want them to be able to make a mental picture. Not necessarily all visual. When I say picture, a mental map of how these concepts fit together. And so, in this case, since it's a geography piece, you know, why not use a real world map to try to help them figure out? And so, show the student how, because did anybody visualize that, or at least those mountains, crossing those mountains? And where things were? And here's that timeline idea. So you might show, let's make a timeline. And you get the student to hold the pencil and draw the line, and write in the dates. So I've done this on PowerPoint, but you'd want them to construct it. Because that constructive learning is what we're trying to, when we're dealing with sentence discourse level learning problems, it's constructive learning. When we're dealing with sound word level, it's direct instruction. Very different instructional needs for these two kinds of problems. That's why it's so important to figure out where an individual student is breaking down. One area, both areas. So I've been commenting a little bit about how tutoring is different from intervention. In tutoring, the goals are to complete the assignment. Like, let's get the math done so we can quit for today. I think I said in the earlier session that I'd be acting as foster mother for my 13, 10, 8 and 7 year old, and I can't tell you how much homework they have. And, you know, I mean, it's like, can we finish this assignment? Intervention that foster new language skills. Now we're trying to teach the processes. This is the give them a fish or teach them to finish kind of thing. Okay, so then we want to use our assessment data to plan, so that could incorporate both formal test data and informal test data. And what I want to show you here is that there are very clear curricular goals for writing, and this is at grade three. But it's there at all grades. There is a goal to write, inform a standard that kids should be able to write informative or explanatory text to examine a topic and convey ideas. They also should be able to write narratives. Now, here's what I want to say about this. This is the context for teaching language and literacy skills. You're not just teaching how to write expository text, you're not just teaching writing. You're using writing context to teach language at all levels. And that's, now I want to flip back to the slides I didn't do at the end of the first session, because I organized some slides that would show the Writing Lab approach. So, if you were not at the first session, or you didn't download these, you can. So the Writing Lab approach is something that we developed to allow special needs personnel to be in the regular ed classroom with the general ed teacher, and you use writing process instruction, writing processes, as the context for both general and instruction to meet curricular goals, and for language intervention. The cool thing is language is every, it's part of every subject. So you can do language intervention
during science, you can do language intervention during social studies, you don't have to be in there during the language arts time. Another part of the Writing Lab approach the way we did it was to use computers for all stages of the writing process. You don't have to do that, but it was, in today's world, if kids don't know how to use computers, woof. And it can make their writing look like everybody else's writing. There are a lot of reasons that it's a good thing. It's also very inclusive, but it also could be done in a pull-out session. So, what's writing process? So we want kids to use their language skills to go through all stages of the writing process. So part of that starts with brainstorming, thinking about what am I going to write about? When I first learned to think about writing instruction as a way to reach kids who, it was an article that was written about a kid named Scott who was in a high school class who had a hearing loss, and he had, he was writing at about a first-grade level. And a general ed teacher was telling how she used the same skills that she used with her gifted kids with Scott, and she said, I want you to write a story, and every day she visited his desk, she said, and to see what his topic was going to be. That, do you see how important that is? She did not tell him a topic. She did not give him a story starter. She said, what are you going to write about? What did that convey to him? He's got ideas that are worth, and it took him a while, but he came up with a topic about writing about his dog, Hambone, who died, and he couldn't find him for a few days. And finally, he found him, and he didn't smell so good, and they took a shovel and they-- but his friends, when he read the story it was not, you know, spelled well. Sentence structure was lacking. But it was very impactful, and he had people in tears. And he learned what communication with the story could do. And he was hooked. And he needed words, so I said, when you need words, you need complex sentences, when you realize that what you can do. So brainstorming, planning, organizing, drafting, revising, and editing, peer editing, and publishing, and presenting, there is all of these components. In our experience, we did this two to three days a week where we were in a regular ed classroom. By we, I mean my colleague Adalia VanMeter and I. We had a grant from the US Department of Education, and we worked with the Kalamazoo Public Schools. Teachers agreed to let us come in, and we planned together. So, we might be in a science class, we might be in social studies, and then later on we took our graduate students in there too. And then we figured out how to make these things work together, so we needed to have baseline story probes. Then we established individualized objectives at these levels I've been talking about, writing process levels, discourse sentence, sound word, self-regulation, and then we'd plan a project in collaboration with the teacher, and use it to work on individual objectives. And this would be just an example of what a typical day in the Writing Lab might work like, look like, 10 to 15 minutes of a mini lesson, then 30 minutes for works in progress, 15 minutes for sharing and preparing for the next day. So, you had to print out, because we didn't always have access to computers. So the next session might be working on editing, revising and editing a printout, or doing further research or different kinds of things. These are some examples of the kinds of projects we did about the author pieces, little bio sketches, stories, timelines, core democratic values. Those were in second grade, by the way. Core democratic values. That was tricky. PowerPoint presentations on the weather. That was in a fourth-grade class. Animal reports are a big deal in Michigan curriculum at third grade, so we did a lot of
those. Space reports, we do with fifth and sixth graders. And then the language targets again, these kind of, using this levels model instead of, like, syntax versus pragmatics. If you're a speech language pathologist, you might do that. Here's an example of planning. I want to talk about mini lessons and show you that courage, encouraging, discouraging, mini lesson. They start with naming a topic. Today we're going to learn about, we're going to talk and think about encouraging things we can say to each other, or courage. So you tell them what you're going to do. You activate their schemas by either modeling the process. So one of the things you have to teach kids to do is to use their public voice when they're doing presentations. Because they tend to want to hold their papers up like this, [INAUDIBLE]. So one of my favorite mini lessons is to have the classroom teacher come in and be the bad teacher, bad student. So she's chewing gum. You know, comes in chewing gum, holding the paper up, mumbling, and then you get the kids, you know, and you're making fun. But you have the kids brainstorm what the teacher could have done better to make the kids be able to understand what the teacher's story was all about. We didn't, couldn't even understand her. Why? Well, don't chew gum. Don't mumble. You know, don't hold your paper in front of your face. And then we would come up with a list of things that you do want to do for using your public voice. You look at your audience, you hold your paper down, you speak loudly enough that others can hear you, et cetera. Okay. There are a lot of oral communication opportunities while you're in a Writing Lab approach, talking to your peers, switching roles, but author chair and publishing parties are just magical. Because the kids love to have their peers as their audience. You know, it's one thing to have your parent or your teacher correcting your paper, but when you can influence your peers, get them to cry or laugh, that's pretty fabulous. Author chair, so the author reads a whole piece or a section of it, calls on others to make questions, ask questions or make comments, and you can work on all kinds of things while you're doing it. Use computers for everything. Another wonderful thing about the Writing Lab approach is teaching kids to organize themselves. A lot of them have struggled a lot with being organized. So, you give them loose-leaf notebooks and dividers, and have them label the dividers into different sections so they can keep track, and make it a little word dictionary in the back for their own mini lessons. I'm going to show you this one little example. This is a student, a third grader, who struggled a lot. And his teacher said, I can't teach him. He can't even read. And his fellow students said, he can't even read. And they were teasing him. And my colleague, Adalia VanMeter said, you know, let me show you. I bet that there's more than he can do than you think. And so I'll work with him in the classroom. So the assignment was to describe fruit, and it wasn't perhaps our favorite assignment, but he picked watermelon. So he picked his own fruit. He picked watermelon, and what you see here is a worksheet of Adalia working with him using a shared pencil, so some of it's her writing down what he said, and some of it was his writing. And along the way he formulated this sentence, it looks like a beach ball. And that came out, and what the teacher was looking for, she wanted similes. And he looks, and she used him as a good example. And when she did that, she had him. And in a subsequent lesson, he knows how to impress his teacher, and he says to her, you're going to love this. And this was the story that he was saying that about. It had nothing to do with the drawing. We were trying out some computer software, but he wrote this story and
with some help, angry mad, my sister teased me. She said, nana nana, boo boo boo, she said. I just love that line. I use it all the time. And then this is where he says to his teacher, you're going to love this, when he's reading it. Then my temperature rise. Smoke started to come out my ears. Then my face started to turn red, and I started to sweat. It's burning up in here. So he had learned, you know, that the power of language, and that's what I mean by moistening the vocabulary sponge and getting kids to need more complex ways to say things. This was this little boy's final independently written probe, so this was written under those conditions where we do a story probe at the beginning of a session, usually, like, three months later, we'd have him write another one. He was now able to write well enough to write my grandma, she is a nice person, she died of breast cancer. I miss her. She was a good person. She was a good person. She was good to me. She called me her little guy. And after he read that story, he said, walked away, he said, this is a true story. And as he was walking down the hall, he said, I'm so happy. And those are the moments we live for. I'm going to share a couple of other case studies from my other, the afternoon talk slides. Any questions about, while I cue us up to where we were? There's a-- oh, I have to do this mini lesson. Here's where I was, I think. So, with this, I just want to point out that some goals are written in teacher language, and some are written in kid language. And so in their tool book, we would have the kids write their goals and objectives, and when in this approach, that we had the kids come in to a homework lab, they brought their curriculum to an after-school university clinic so they could work on it. And so at one point, we had a student with Down syndrome, and she kept saying, I'm so stupid. I'm so ugly. And what do you say? What's the natural thing to say? Oh no, you're not. Oh yes, you are. I mean, we all want to do it. And what do you say to yourself when you realize that you're falling into a routine that is not working, and has been going on for years and years? Is you say to yourself, this is a routine that is not working, and has been going on for years and years. She's modifying my behavior instead of me hers. And so you so one day we thought, we got to do something different. So that was the origination of the courage mini lesson. So, you say this is a lesson about courage. I'm going to write the word courage on the board. Who knows something about courage? So it wouldn't have all that other stuff yet. But we just have the word courage, and you'd get the kids to brainstorm that it might mean to have heart, you know, the word courage is, I think, from French even, and hero, and brave, and strong, take risks. Don't be afraid to tell kids some higher level things like that comes from French, and it means hardcore. And then you say, now I know you all know to dis, what it means to dis somebody, and you write in a different color, so you're trying to kill-- you're trying to achieve multiple objectives with the same activity. You know what I was going to say, kill two birds with one stone. I hate that metaphor. Discouraged, okay? So you show, what does it mean to discourage? When you discourage somebody, it means you can't have heart. You're not willing to take risks. You're not feeling strong if you're discouraged, you don't feel strong. Hmm. So what can we do about that? You know, then you erase or cross out dis, and write en. There's another way we can change this word. So we can encourage ourselves and others. And then in the mini lesson structure, so you introduce it. You brainstorm. Then you want to show the kids, make it theirs. So that's done with this, in their own tool book, you pull out a page and you say, everybody,
let's make a list of some discouraging things that we can say to ourselves and others, and encouraging things that we can say to ourselves and others. And so you scaffold, you structure as much as you need to, to get things like, I'm so dumb. I can get this. This is hard, but I can try. It was one of our favorites for I can't, and we taught this lesson over and over again in different groups of kids. One kid who had, he was so needy that he had his own aide that stayed with him all the time, and his mother came to one of our after-school conferences and said, TJ, his uncle's been living with us, and he taught him the encouraging-discouraging lesson. I mean this was a kid who couldn't even control himself, and he was-- I mean, I was amazed. So it really stuck. Five minutes left. Okay, so let me end with Matt. So Matt is, this was not his actual TILLS profile, but this is what I imagine would have been Matt's TILLS profile if we had had it. It's a compilation, and Matt wasn't his real name either. But he was in an after-school homework lab with us. And so what do we see about this TILLS profile? We see that he had a lot of difficulty. Vocabulary is pretty much right on norm, but listening comprehension is way low, reading comprehension isn't quite as low as listening comprehension, but yet it's not explained by auditory memory. Here's digit span forward and digit span backwards. He's good at repeating words. He's not good at phonemic awareness, but his non-word reading is pretty good. His reading fluency is right and within normal limits. He has some trouble, again, with comprehension. So he has comprehension problems. He looks like a typical kid. But this is a kid who had some trouble. His sound word level ability score on the TILLS, on this kid that I picked to be like him, was within normal limits, and the sentence discourse is low. So he's in this lower right hand quadrant, specific comprehension deficit. Yeah, was there a question? Okay, so let me, here's what he thought of himself, and what his teacher thought of him. He thought it's pretty good over here, but that's part of the problem. Okay, so his mom, who was a school psychologist, said she was surprised at kindergarten conference to find out that he was a little behind, and yet, and when she tested him as all of us do, when we test our own children, she found a 25 point discrepancy with his verbal score way below his performance scale. That was in the days that we did that. And she said, it's probably a combination of low receptive language as well as inattentiveness. And he tended to rush through things. His teacher, when interviewed, said, I think Matt's biggest problem is he tries to get everything done first. He flies through everything, because he didn't know what was going on. He claims to check his work, but his finished products often have errors. He's not certain whether he misses a lot because of rushing or underlying skill deficit, and this is not uncommon with kids with specific comprehension difficulties. People think they're not trying, when it's that they aren't really comprehending. He's a good kid, but he has gotten into fights on the playground. Matt said it's pretty hard in fifth grade. Hardest subject is spelling, primary goal is not to rush through his work, worst part of school is recess, and he sometimes gets in trouble for fighting. So we said, you know, this playground thing came up more than once. This must really be a problem for you. Maybe we can work together to try to figure out what to do about it. So, this problem-solving approach, helping kids think that they can solve their problems, but they're not automatic and you don't have all the answers, is important. He fidgeted, and didn't know what to say. So, we asked, you know, Matt, so tell us what happened today on the playground. And
he said, well this kid, Deshaun, he called him four eyes, window pane eyes, and he, you know, like, the playground monitor did nothing, and I want to go back to my previous school, and we said, well it sounds like Deshaun might be acting like a bully. We don't know what to do about bullies either. We wish we did, because it's a problem for a lot of kids. Perhaps we could experiment, which is another little tip I share with you. Experiment with your kids. Get them to experiment about different ways to handle their problems. And so, do the opposite of what you usually do. If he usually cried, like he did today, and tell someone you might try not crying and walking away. Get him to construct that. Comes back the next session, he says, Deshaun and I are cool now. And yet, he constructed this page on how to deal with bullies in his tool book. You could just walk away, do the opposite of what they expect, say something nice, just ignore, or try writing a note to him or her. So he brainstormed multiple solutions. Do you see that? And he can experiment with different ones. It gives him a sense of power and control. These were his goals, and in kid language, one of his goals was to move from the state of rushing through his work-- remember, that came up multiple times as well, to taking his time to finish it. And he had some goals to read Riddle books, and to read books about go-karts, because he hated reading, because he couldn't understand it when he read. So, the group project that semester was to write a newsletter, and so he took the page of writing a riddle, and so we brainstormed. We used this as an example, this riddle book, and then he came up with this. Why did the window say ow? Because it was in a pane. And he needed word form knowledge for that, so that's the kind of thing you can do. And this was his final story, that he and his colleague wrote this story and they acted it out. This was one of our presentation days. They came in full hockey regalia, and they read this story, and it's about driving home from a party, and they ran off the road, and they were okay. And update, the famous person was Wayne Gretzky, and I had a chance to interview him. Here's the interview. Brandon says, I'm here with Wayne Gretzky, who has just been traded. So Wayne, how does it feel to be traded? Matt says, I'm really not sure yet, but so far it has been good. Matt had on the hockey regalia, he was Wayne Gretzky. Brandon said, how many goals did you score at last night's game? Matt, I scored about, he had 14, and decided to modify it to 6. Brandon, how does it feel to have kids admire you? It feels pretty good. How did you break the world record? It took a lot of hard work, if you ask me. Brandon, thank you for the interview. Matt, you're welcome. So, that's just an example of authentic communication, needing words, needing language. And I just encourage you all to have fun with your kids, help them find their voice, help them to find their meaning, and realize that they can make an effect on other people. So, as I said, I will be at the Brooks booth tomorrow morning, maybe not right at 7:30, but during that early session. And thank you for coming. I know I ran us out of time for questions now, but I would be happy to answer individual questions and the end. Thank you again.