

"Whatever it Takes": SWiFT Inclusive Academic Instruction film

Teacher: Good morning, everybody.

Students: Good morning!

Teacher: Alright. Now let's start in on our activity.

Teacher: You ready? What number is that?

Student: Two!

Teacher: Two. That was an easy one. Two trains.

Student: One, two, three, four, five...

Lamareshia Johnson: I need everybody looking this way. Crisscross applesauce, hands in the bucket. Right? OK. So what's the title of our story this week? "A bed for the winter." That makes me think about the story that we read last week.

LJ: Well, you know, kindergarten is such a huge responsibility. People think it's like coloring and take a nap and snack, but no. You know, I set the foundation for the rest of their lives. So, you know, I take that responsibility very seriously.

Lamareshia Johnson: I'm gonna put it up here. Can everybody see it up here? Alright. Now what did we say this was called?

Students: A stump.

Lamareshia Johnson: A stump. What happened to this?

Student: It got cut down.

Lamareshia Johnson: What got cut down?

Student: A tree.

Lamareshia Johnson: A tree got cut down. It left a...

Student: Stump.

Lamareshia Johnson: Stump. Very good.

LJ: This is a 98% free and reduced lunch school. It's a Title I school. So a lot of the kids come from a similar lower socio-economic background. One of the things that's really interesting to me is the lack of oral language development because that's the basis of reading. They don't talk very much because at home; it's mostly business talk. "Go put your shoes on. Get your book bag."

Lamareshia Johnson: A snake slides through the grass. He has hungry black eyes. He stares at the dormouse. His tongue flicks in and out. The dormouse is trapped. She's too scared to move.

LJ: But they don't have the enriching conversations that you would have in a more affluent household.

Lamareshia Johnson: Do you think this is the bottom of a tree? And I said that a tree trunk is the bottom of a tree, right?

LJ: And so once I get the data I can see who doesn't really know what they need to know coming into school.

Lamareshia Johnson: A tree trunk. Very good. Thank you. I'm sorry. Last word.

LJ: I try to differentiate my instruction based on what the data's telling me.

Lamareshia Johnson: Now looking at the pictures, do you think this is gonna be a story about make believe or real animals?

Students: Real animals.

Lamareshia Johnson: Real animals. Now look back...

LJ: And so I try to make sure that I kind of think about that when I'm planning my lessons, you know. If it's auditory learner or visual learner or kinesthetic learner,

can they learn something from what I'm doing? Especially when I'm doing the whole group lesson because everybody's looking at me at the same time.

Video: "An adjective is a word that describes a noun."

Lamareshia Johnson: You could get up.

Video: "A noun is a person, animal, place, or thing."

LJ: Some of the strategies or some of the scaffolds that I use are anchor charts and videos, technology, different programs...anything I think would be helpful to them...I try to bring it into the classroom.

My foster grandparent is Dessie Larkin. She's a wonderful asset to our classroom.

Dessie Larkin: Yeah, don't make it like that. You make it like that. OK? Yeah, that's good.

LJ: A lot of times she'd work with the kids who might need a little extra support or love or attention that I don't necessarily have because I have 20 kids in my classroom. So I give her specific assignments to work with two or three children who I can identify as needing extra help.

Dessie Larkin: And let's erase the other stuff on the back.

Alvin Taylor: For so many places in education, special needs children and general education students were always looked at as separate entities. SWIFT combines them and focuses on all the children.

Teacher: Good job. Let's give her a mirror this morning. Click, click, click. Ooh, aah, looking good.

AT: Many school districts endeavor to do that but true implementation with fidelity, that takes a lot of planning, a lot of training, a lot of strategizing, and SWIFT helps us do that. So it had to start from the top and we had to have buy-in from the leadership.

Candi Robertson: As an instructional leader of the school, my top priority is making sure that we promote an environment of academic success, making sure that everyone is looking at the data. Not the data just sitting on the shelf collecting dust, but digging in the data and figuring out how we can meet the needs of every single student.

Alyxshae Lomax: So the first one that we're going to start off with is, "What are clouds?" So I need everyone to take that one out. And once you have it, eyes on me, please. Clouds form when water condenses in the sky. There are many different types of...

Students: Clouds.

Alyxshae Lomax: Clouds are an important...

AL: Well, data is very important for us. I use data from exit tickets, so daily data. We use weekly data. We use bi-weekly, end of month, end of year. All that data. For exit tickets, for example, they help me to decide, ok do I need to alter my lesson for tomorrow to meet the needs of these students because maybe they mastered this skill, or maybe they didn't master the skill.

Alyxshae Lomax: The water in the clouds start off as small droplets and then they start to do what...get more...they collect more water.

AL: We also have students that are tested more frequently that are on progress monitoring, so we're able to see if those interventions and that extra help is really helping them to see if they're making growth.

Alyxshae Lomax: So I'm going to give you a question that I want you to turn and talk with your partners with. I want you to discuss, "What are clouds?" So you're going to have to look back at it, read over it, try to summarize those paragraphs to come up with that central idea...

AL: Another way that I use data in the classroom, I've actually started to make sure the children are aware of where they are and set their own personal goals. They have one central place where they can also keep track of how well they're doing.

Student: I think clouds...I think it is the main idea is about clouds because...

Coretta Miller: One of the things that I have found is the students at Crenshaw are happy to know that their principal is monitoring their progress, monitoring when they don't do as well as they should. When they took the STAR Assessment, they were coming up and down the halls to find me to tell me, "I grew one year. I grew a year and five months. Or I grew two years." And so, I was able to talk to them and congratulate them, and tell them, "I knew you could do it."

Coretta Miller: Morning, morning! You guys good?

CM: It's just a means of encouraging them, and letting them know I'm paying attention, and I want you to be successful, and I'm gonna push you until you give me what's inside of you.

Coretta Miller: So what we're going to do today is, we'll look at our data from our most recent progress monitoring. We're going to move the students on the data wall and kind of talk about the things we've been doing. Interventions we feel like have worked—those things that have not worked so well. And then we're going to be giving you guys some strategies from another chapter in this book that talks about some specific things that we can be doing.

After each assessment that is given, we move students along that data wall based upon where they fell with regard to that particular assessment. We talk about what strategies for intervention have been used, what things we are finding effective, and then what things we're finding that are not so effective. Because if the things that we have done with them are not helping them indeed be successful, we have to change and do something that is going to help them be more successful.

We have to dig deep and look at data to see where is this child's deficit, and what are research-based, instructional practices that are going to be best suited to help this student improve.

And I tell the staff here all the time, students do not have to learn the way we teach. We have to teach the way they learn.

Cedric Richardson: SWIFT gives us a structured model that's researched-based. We're not trying to recreate the wheel. With a multi-tiered instruction support, we're definitely seeing that come together. And so we want to create a system where we're meeting the needs of all the children, and not just a segmented group.

[children speaking]

Cedric Richardson: I see the issue with children with IEPs being segregated as a civil rights issue.

Teacher: So why would the author include a picture or illustration to a text?

Teacher: You can make predictions with pictures that can give us that vivid or visual image in our head of what we're reading about. So who would like to read the first paragraph?

CR: If I were a parent that had a child with a disability, I would want to make sure that my child is being challenged to the highest degree. There has to be a quality of learning in that classroom, and not just placing a child in a classroom for socialization.

Teacher: What do you think is going to happen at this point in the story? Write it down on the paper.

CR: And so we want to make sure that learning in our district is inclusive for all children.

Jennifer Amma: When I'm planning for a lesson, I try to give my students multiple access points. This involves different ways of visualizing the material. I know some students learn better by reading, so I make sure that there's an element of reading in there. Some students will learn better if they write it afterwards. Some students need to see it. Some students need to touch it. Sometimes it may feel like a circus, but it's trying to meet the needs of every student in the class.

Jennifer Amma: You will be getting a circle magnet to hold the train or bus onto the Newton scale. This is a new piece of equipment you're going to learn to use. What it does is measure force.

JA: I've worked with Ashley for two years now. I taught her in seventh grade science, and now in eighth grade science. It was difficult for her to learn how to use the eye gaze machine. Once we started doing that, I started making notebook files so she could look at and switch between the screens. The eye gaze has definitely helped her to become more a part of the class.

Jennifer Amma: I want you to write a question for Ashley. And I want you to...OK, I'm going to give you a marker. We need to try to help her figure out if the new ramp is going to have more or less. So will the new ramp have more or less effort?

Student: A: More or B: Less?

Ashley: I'm not sure what the answer is.

JA: She'll work with her peers and she will also be able to go around to different lab stations. So she is capable of learning grade level content, as it's relevant.

Having students like Ashley with severe disabilities in my classroom benefits every student because they see what the real world is like. They are going to be out in society with people who have different challenges than them. But the more that you are exposed to people with different challenges...different disabilities...the more you're able to show compassion and to help each other out.

Student: Yogurt is the best food in the world.

Katherine Johnson: That is an opinion but Daniel gets to share his.

KJ: I'm a word person. I feel great when we're all reading and discussing and writing papers. That feels super comfortable to me. But it's not successful for all my students. So I need to disrupt that for myself.

Katherine Johnson: Now, right before we sample it, Nick, tell everybody what is it that you need to be able to do by the end of class today.

Student: I can describe the process of milk turning into yogurt through fermentation.

Katherine Johnson: OK. Here is a job that I need. I need every person in this room to get a plastic cup.

KJ: Within any single day, you'll have a variety of access points for the content, and I do find that it deepens engagement for gen. ed. kids, for special education kids, for all different kinds of students because there's more to do. Like, we gotta keep it moving, otherwise it gets really boring.

So it's trying to find a way where there's something that's video, where there's something that's audio, where there's something that's visual, where there's something that's read. It is about that many paths. Many, many paths.

Katherine Johnson: Floatin' around. Floatin' around. Nobody's connected to anybody else. Floatin' around. We're floatin' around. Now make one milk protein. One milk protein.

KJ: I really learned how important it was to introduce more visual cues for my students who are English Language Learners, where you do an action related to vocabulary, or related to a concept.

Katherine Johnson: We're going to stretch out...stretch out...stretch out...

KJ: The learning gains that I saw from my ELL learners were so huge when I started to disrupt a purely language-based and word-based type of instruction.

Katherine Johnson: But what do I want now?

Katherine Johnson: Connect. Connect.

Students: Connect. Connect.

KJ: It matters less to me how we arrive somewhere. What matters to me is that a student develops the conceptual understanding around something.

Katherine Johnson: Get tiny. Get tight. Get small. You're a tiny, tight, little milk protein.

KJ: I just saw my students really be able to shine. It was beautiful to watch.

Monique Cocroft: Who can tell me what we have been discussing in social studies. What's one thing this week we have learned about? Jeremiah, do you remember?

Students: Communities?

Monique Cocroft: Great job. What's that big question?

Students: Communities.

Monique Cocroft: Communities.

MC: My classroom is very diverse and the abilities are very diverse. The diversity has definitely improved my teaching.

Monique Cocroft: We're getting ready to start group work. You know in your group you do not get out of your seat without...

Students: Permission.

Monique Cocroft: Thank you. Great job. We have to make sure we do what?

Students: Stay on task.

Monique Cocroft: Stay on task.

MC: I have learned different ways of approaching every learning style.

Data affects the way that I plan or lead my instruction because it helps me to know exactly what my students' weaknesses are and what their strengths are. I will take their weaknesses and that's what I would emphasize more and elaborate on or decide to go back and reteach. And use my centers to teach those different lessons in small groups.

The students in my centers today were in different groups based on their learning styles and their instructional reports.

Every day at 2:30 another worker at the school, they come in to keep the rest of my class while I take those four students out just to work on what they need the

most help in: reading, literature, and reading informational text. And using story elements: who, what, when, where, why, and how questions can really help them to understand what is being read in their texts.

Monique Cocroft: Now that's a good evidence. She said when that truck came back, what did Tammy do?

Student: She duck her head...

Monique Cocroft: And who has a shell?

Student: The turtle!

Monique Cocroft: Right, because do we walk around with shells on?

Student: No.

Angela Winters: I said, "Ok, these interventions has to be done. I will be responsible for assigning a custodian to go keep your class every day for 30 minutes so that you can make sure these interventions are being done."

Teacher: And what have we been talkin' about the wild animals? What have they been doing? Helping their babies. How they protect their babies. OK, we're going to go over...we're going to review...

Debra Dace: The children come to us at different levels...varied levels...with different disabilities. I truly believe and practice as a teacher that all children can learn. They may not be able to learn at the same time...at the same rate...the same way.

Teacher: What is that letter, buddy?

Student: D.

Teacher: And what sound does that D make?

Student: Duh.

Teacher: Very nice.

DD: Districtwide, we're implementing Multi-Tiered System of Support. We talk about what's working at the schools...what are some of the issues and concerns...and what helps drive some of those conversations. Working with SWIFT...those climate surveys and parent surveys...we're able to glean that data and make some decisions about what do we need to do as a district to make parents feel more involved. And so whatever it takes for our children to learn, that's what we're gonna do.

Katie Wich: The way I look at differentiation is providing access to the content. So the first thing I do is ask myself, "What's the goal of the lesson?" If the goal of the lesson is for them to understand the history of Oregon, I don't care if they read it, if they write it, if they listen to it, or if they research it.

Once I get most of my students settled after the mini-lesson, I then pull a small group to the carpet. These students particularly struggle with reading. And since I was wanting to assess their comprehension, I let them listen to the story on tape. And so we listened to a chapter and then we stopped and we talked about it, and we focused just really specifically on the characters.

Katie Wich: What type of kid is Bradley? Look at me.

Student: He's a mean kid. He's a bad kid. He's bad like me.

Katie Wich: There's no such thing as a bad kid, but there are such things as making bad choices. Does Bradley make bad choices?

Student: Yes. Yeah.

KW: For them, I really wanted to set a very specific goal so that they could show me their successes without having to struggle through their weaknesses.

Katie Wich: What normally happens if you break something of somebody else's?

Student: Get in deep, deep trouble.

Katie Wich: Yeah.

Student: Big, big, big, really big trouble.

Katie Wich: Absolutely.

KW: I do a lot of speech to text, too, so the kids are able to verbalize what they want to say, and then the application will write it for them. But generally you really have to think about what is that goal, and then how can you remove those road blocks that the kids are struggling through.

Katie Wich: Josephine, let me see your picture. Good job.

KW: I focus on building a really strong community, so that the kids automatically help one another. And that's a universal resource that the kids use every day, all the time.

Maya: With the kids with disabilities, they were kind of in their own class and they only came in for like the special things. But now they're in our class all the time. They got a little less problems than we did on our homework sometimes and the tests were a little bit different, but that's it. It's really fun when we're all together.

Nat Crosman: Oh boy, here we go. Here we go.

Hannah: I'm friends with Sarah, Isabel, and Elizabeth. They're fun and then they're nice, and then they care about me.

Nat Crosman: If we look back at the data table, we can find 90 decibels at typical factory work and how long can she listen to 90 decibels for safely according to our graph?

Student: Eight hours.

Hannah: If I don't know how to spell a word then they help me to spell it.

Nat Crosman: How long is a typical work shift?

Student: Eight hours.

Nat Crosman: Eight hours. So she's right on the edge.

NC: I've read the research that students who get involved in helping others get more motivated and also have better knowledge acquisition. I know from my own practice that when I teach a subject I do have to learn it better myself, and so the fact of teaching it to another person or in a class of kids in my case, is itself a way of learning that's very, very effective.

Hannah: ...forgets to bring them to work.

Nat Crosman: Very good. Hz is short for hertz. Does anybody know what hertz means?

Hannah: It's a good school to be at.

KW: I love the idea of inclusion because it really does set the bar high for all kids. You know, we all have different abilities and we all have different strengths, and being around people who are different than us allows us to grow every single day. And the possibilities are endless.



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