



Focus: Students with the Most Complex Disabilities Working at the Initial Precursor Linkage Level

Total Time: 10 hours

Purpose

This package provides educators with 10 hours of important content and pedagogical knowledge pertaining to students with the most complex disabilities who are working at an Initial Precursor linkage level in the DLM alternate assessments in English language arts and mathematics. Divided across 10 modules, the content can be split across 10 sessions or combined to meet local needs.

Dynamic Learning Maps Claim Addressed

This package addresses Initial Precursor Linkage Levels for DLM Essential Elements related to the following Claims and Conceptual Areas:

ELA Claim 1: Students will comprehend text in increasingly complex ways

ELA Claim 2: Students can produce writing for a range of purposes and audiences

ELA Claim 3: The student can communication for a range of purposes and audiences

Math Claim 1: Students demonstrate increasingly complex understanding of number sense

Using the Modules

Each of the 10 modules takes approximately 45-60 minutes to complete depending on the level of interaction and engagement in the activities. The modules can be completed in two different formats:

Group sessions using the facilitated modules –

- This format requires someone to take the role of facilitator and prepare for each professional development session using the module-specific Facilitator Guides.
- Small groups of educators can complete the modules as part of professional learning communities and rotate responsibility to facilitate the sessions.
- These group sessions can be conducted in person or via distance with the facilitator streaming the video and managing interactions during activities.
- Paper/pencil or electronic post-tests are available to document successful completion.

Individual use of the self-directed modules –

- Educators independently complete the modules online, on-demand.
- They can be required to complete the optional post-test in order to receive a certificate (sent via email upon successful completion of the posttest) that can be provided as evidence of completion.

Combine the facilitated and self-directed modules to achieve the greatest flexibility.

CEU Information

DLM does not grant the CEUs, but information is provided in this package if you need to seek CEUs for educators who complete the 10 hours of training.

Modules

Beginning Communicators

This module describes symbolic and non-symbolic forms of communication, the distinction between pre-intentional and pre-symbolic communicators, and identifies additional sources of support for building communication skills.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Symbols

This self-directed module provides an overview of symbols to support communication and interaction. It also describes the use of symbols and photographs in text.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

DLM Core Vocabulary and Communication

This module focuses on the use of core vocabulary as a support for communication for students who cannot use speech to meet their face-to-face communication needs and require augmentative and alternative communication.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Speaking and Listening

This module addresses speaking and listening in the broader context of expressive and receptive communication for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The content in this module is important to understand the DLM Essential Elements in Speaking and Listening and across all of the strands of Essential Elements in English language arts.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Shared Reading

This module describes shared reading, a reading approach that emphasizes interaction and engagement with books. In the DLM alternate assessment in English language Arts, students frequently engage in a shared reading of a text before rereading a text to respond to questions.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Writing with Alternate Pencils

This module describes ways to get students started with writing when they cannot use a traditional pencil, pen, or computer keyboard. The content of this module applies to students at all levels of literacy understanding including students who do not yet know letter names or sounds.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Emergent Writing

Participants of this module will learn about alternate pencils, how to support emergent writers, what students learn during the emergent writing stage, and analyze samples of emergent writing.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Predictable Chart Writing

This module focuses on what predictable chart writing is and why it is important for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Participants will examine student and teacher roles and ways predictable chart writing can be adapted to meet the needs of students.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Unitizing

The module focuses on understanding units or groupings to help students develop a strategic use of units to deal with quantities and problem solving.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

Forms of Number

This module focuses on three representational forms of number concrete quantity, pictorial quantity, and symbol and numeral quantity and how all three of these forms support a student in developing number sense.

[Online Self-directed Module](#)

[Facilitated Module Materials for Groups](#)

CEU Information

Students with the Most Complex Disabilities Working at the Initial Precursor Linkage Level

Total time: 10 hours (1 hour per module)

Module Name	Objectives	Author(s)
1. Beginning Communicators	a. Participants will recognize and name symbolic and non-symbolic forms of communication. b. Participants will understand the distinction between pre-intentional and pre-symbolic communicators. c. Participants will describe what it means to attribute meaning in early communication intervention. d. Participants will identify additional sources of support for building the communication skills of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are pre-symbolic and/or pre-intentional communicators.	Karen Erickson, Ph.D.
2. Symbols	a. Participants will review the myths and realities of symbol use. b. Participants will determine additional individuals and additional contexts where modeling symbol use could be increased. c. Participants will compose communication phrases using a core vocabulary overlay. d. Participants will discuss the practice of pairing symbols with words in text.	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
3. DLM Core Vocabulary and Communication	a. Participants will review the development process of the DLM Core Vocabulary. b. Participants will discuss uses for the DLM Core Vocabulary for students who require augmentative and alternative communication. c. Participants will learn about and apply vocabulary instruction strategies to 3 core vocabulary words.	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
4. Speaking and Listening	a. Participants will discuss the skills needed to for students to communicate and collaborate with each other. b. Participants will plan and describe collaboration activities for their students. c. Participants will recall a variety of media options students may use to present their knowledge and ideas.	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.

Module Name	Objectives	Author(s)
5. Shared Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants will review what shared reading is and why it is valuable for students with significant cognitive disabilities. b. Participants will consider potential challenges faced by students with significant cognitive disabilities during shared reading activities and ways to address those challenges. c. Participants will review and discuss the role the teacher plays during shared reading activities for students with significant cognitive disabilities. 	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
6. Writing with Alternate Pencils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants will identify multiple forms of alternate pencils. b. Participants will determine the intended messages communicated with an alphabet eye-gaze frame. c. Participants will describe the goals of alternate pencils for students with significant cognitive disabilities. d. Participants will identify three key principles related to the use of alternate pencils for students with significant cognitive disabilities. 	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
7. Emergent Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants will review what emergent writing is and what students learn during this stage. b. Participants will learn about alternate pencil options for students who cannot control a conventional pencil for writing. c. Participants will discuss how to support emergent writers by providing interesting topics to write about and informative feedback. d. Participants will analyze writing samples to determine what an emergent writer understands about writing. 	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
8. Predictable Chart Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants will review what predictable chart writing is and why it is valuable for students with significant cognitive disabilities. b. Participants will examine both the teacher and student role during predictable chart writing activities. c. Participants will consider the ways that predictable chart writing can be adapted to meet the various needs and abilities of students. 	Karen Erickson, Ph.D. Allison Dennis, Ph.D.

Module Name	Objectives	Author(s)
9. Unitizing	a. Participants will understand the concept of unitizing. b. Participants will understand the relationship between categorizing and naming a unit. c. Participants will learn about the levels of understanding students may experience as they develop an understanding of unitizing.	Claire Greer, Ph.D. Chris Cain, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.
10. Forms of Number	a. Participants will identify forms of number, concrete, pictorial, numerical. b. Participants will discuss the ways forms of number could be applied to the classroom setting to enhance student understanding. c. Participants will apply new knowledge in the planning of a lesson.	Claire Greer, Ph.D. Chris Cain, Ph.D. Penny Hatch, Ph.D.

Author Bios:

Chris Cain, Ph.D., Coordinator of the Mars Hill University Master of Education, Academically & Intellectually Gifted, and Integrated Education Programs. He is National Board Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certified and a NPBTS assessor. He has licensure and teaching experience in general, AIG, and Special Education settings. Dr. Cain is a Mathematics consultant to the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Allison Dennis, Ph.D., At the time she supported the development of the DLM professional development modules, Allison was a Research Assistant at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a former classroom teacher of students with multiple and severe disabilities and students in the Occupational Course of Study. Currently, Allison is a curriculum specialist with Don Johnston, Inc.

Karen Erickson, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, is a Professor in the Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences, and the Yoder Distinguished Professor in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research addresses literacy assessment and instruction for struggling readers of all ages including those with significant cognitive disabilities. Karen is co-developer of the Tar Heel Reader online library of accessible books for beginning readers, as well as several other assistive and learning technologies. She is a former teacher of children with significant disabilities.

Claire Greer, M. Ed., is a Research Associate at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has worked for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as Consultant for Autism, Severe Intellectual Disabilities and Multiple Disabilities and was the Director of the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project. She has worked for the States of North Carolina, Kentucky and Wyoming as a Classroom Teacher, Program Specialist, Educational Director, and Exceptional Children Consultant.

Penny Hatch, Ph.D., is a Research Assistant Professor at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research includes language and literacy development for students with significant cognitive disabilities and complex communication needs. Prior to earning her Ph.D., Penny worked as a school-based speech-language pathologist, specializing in augmentative and alternative communication and assistive technology.