Using Mnemonic Strategy to Teach Completing Job Applications

Objective: To teach students to complete a job application.

Setting and Materials:

Settings: School classroom

Materials:
1. Entry level job applications
2. Job application information card containing this information:
    a) Birth date
    b) Social security number
    c) Complete address
    d) Telephone number
    e) Educational experience
    f) Previous work experience
    g) References
    h) Felony convictions {if applicable)
3. Overhead transparencies of job applications
4. Overhead transparencies of six step mnemonic called "SELECT"

Content Taught

Students are taught to fill out a six step job application using the mnemonic called "SELECT." The principle steps were sequenced into
1. **S**urvey the entire application
2. **E**mphasize words that indicate the type of information requested
3. **L**ocation cues that indicate where the information is to be entered
4. **E**nter the information requested
5. **C**heck to see of the information is accurate
6. **T**urn the application in to the appropriate individual

Teaching Procedures

1. Discuss goal of job application strategy (i.e., to help students accurately complete a job application) and why it is important to know how to accurately complete a job application.
2. Explain how they will be able to use the strategy whenever they apply for a job.

3. Overhead transparency is used to introduce and discuss six-step job application strategy until it is clear that students fully understood steps. This is accomplished through choral responding by students and informal checks by teacher.
4. Model job application strategy with overhead transparency of job application by completing a standard job application while "thinking out loud." To actively engage students, use prompts to encourage an interactive dialogue throughout demonstration, for example, "What is it I have to do? I need to . . ." and "How am I doing?" Students are encouraged to help teacher. After modeling, discuss the importance of using self-questioning statements while completing a job application.
5. Students are required to verbally practice job application strategy steps, including self-questioning statements, until they are memorized and students are able to do this correctly within a 15- to 20-minute rehearsal period.
6. Students are required to write down steps and associated self-questioning statements as they work through a job application. They are allowed to ask any questions and teacher provides corrective feedback only upon demand by students throughout training session.
7. Ask students to complete job application as if they are applying for an actual job. Explain that because there typically is no one there to help them complete job applications, they are to use only their job information card to complete the job application and that they have as much time as they needed to complete the application.
8. Ask students to independently describe the steps they used to check whether they have employed the learning strategy.

Evaluation

Evaluate the student's performance by collecting data number of items correct on the task analyses.

Lesson Plan Based on:

Nelson, J. R., & D. J. Smith (1994). The effects of learning strategy instruction on the completion of job applications by students. Journal of Learning Disabilities 27, 104-110.