

We have looked at different ways to engage students, yet you are saying to yourself, “**Have you seen my class and the mix of students I have?”**

So this week I would like to address the [diverse-needs](http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2014/12/02/ctq-george-iep.html) student. As a teacher, you may be faced with a class that has Individualized Education Program students mixed in with the rest of the students. You can use some basic strategies to keep them more engaged with your classroom activities.

* Seating assignments: There are two basic scenarios. First is the student who needs positive role models. Pair this student with a good role model. Second is the student who just needs a little motivation to stay on task. Pair this student with a student who can gently nudge him or her to move together through the task. Take care to switch the seating chart and project teams often, so you won’t overburden any one student.
* Checklist: Whether you are doing long- or short-term projects, develop a plan with due dates. The plan will keep students from being overwhelmed. Place several checkpoints between the dates so that you are assessing the students’ work as they progress and giving them much needed feedback.
* Behavior cues: Work with the IEP student to create a plan for when things **don’t** go as planned. Have a special pass ready for when the student may need a time-out to cool down. Create an item that can be discreetly dropped on the student’s desk or work area when he or she is working appropriately that may be redeemed for a reward at a later time. Likewise, create an item that can be shown to the student when he or she is not working as he or she should and needs to stop.
* Alternative testing and differentiated rubrics: Do not be afraid to work with the special education teacher to develop different methods of successfully testing a student and differentiate rubrics that will allow IEP students to see success.
* Organizational tools: These can be good for all students. Folders with color-coded pockets are useful along with color-coded handouts and fill-in-the-blank notes. Reach out to the special education teacher in this area also to get more ideas to keep students organized.
* Co-teaching: Co-teaching works best with a lab class such as we find in CTE. Working with a special education teacher who is assigned to co-teach your class can help meet the modifications of the special needs population. Co-teaching does take planning as much as a year in advance to make schedules work and let the co-teacher to find a niche in class so he or she is not just dealing with those students but also truly co-teaching.

Even though they may have unique learning styles or needs, these students can be successful in your class. Making use of these strategies can make it less scary for you as a CTE teacher.

Please take a few minutes to give me some feedback about the Teacher Tips to give valuable direction for the future of Teacher Tips. You will find a survey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V9RK97M>.