

What is the Arrowsmith PROGRAM?

The Arrowsmith Program is based on neuroscience research demonstrating that it is possible to treat learning disabilities by identifying and strengthening weak cognitive capacities.

Arrowsmith School has used this program successfully since 1978. The goal of the Arrowsmith Program is to help students strengthen the weak cognitive capacities underlying their learning dysfunctions and to enable them to become effective, confident and self-directed learners for life.

The Arrowsmith Program deals with the root causes of the learning disability rather than managing its symptoms. Students become effective learners without having to compensate for their learning disabilities. Their ability to perform complex tasks is improved when the weak cognitive areas are strengthened.

Students return to a full academic program at their appropriate grade level following completion of a three or four year program.

For further information about the Arrowsmith Program and the learning dysfunctions it addresses, or if you are an educator and are interested in having the Arrowsmith Program at your school, please visit our website at www.arrowsmithschool.org



Do These Problems sound Familiar?

The Arrowsmith Program may benefit your child if there is a match between his or her areas of difficulty and the symptoms described below:

■ Motor Symbol Sequencing

Messy handwriting, miscopying, misreading, irregular spelling, speech rambling, careless written errors in mathematics, poor written performance

■ Symbol Relations

Difficulty with reading comprehension, trouble with mathematical reasoning, trouble with logical reasoning, difficulty reading an analog clock, problem understanding cause and effect, reversals of 'b'-'d'; 'p'-'q' (younger students and in more severe cases)

■ Memory for Information or Instructions

Trouble remembering oral instructions, difficulty following lectures or extended conversations, problem acquiring information through listening

■ Predicative Speech

Problem putting information into one's own words, speaking in incomplete sentences, difficulty using internal speech to work out consequences, trouble following long sentences, breakdown of steps in mathematical procedures

■ Broca's Speech Pronunciation

Mispronouncing words, avoiding using words because of uncertainty of pronunciation, limited ability to learn and use phonics, difficulty learning foreign languages, difficulty thinking and talking at the same time, flat and monotone speech with lack of rhythm and intonation

■ Auditory Speech Discrimination

Mishearing words and thus misinterpreting information, difficulty understanding someone with an accent, extra effort required to listen to speech

■ Symbolic Thinking

Problem being self-directed and self-organized in learning, limited mental initiative, difficulty keeping attention relevantly oriented to the demands of a task necessary for completion, difficulty thinking, planning, problem solving, trouble seeing the main point

■ Symbol Recognition

Poor word recognition, slow reading, difficulty with spelling, trouble remembering symbol patterns such as mathematical or chemical equations

■ Lexical Memory

Problem with associative memory, trouble following auditory information, trouble learning names of things such as animals, places, people, colors, days of the week

■ Kinesthetic Perception

Awkward body movements, bumping into objects due to not knowing where body is in space relative to objects, uneven handwriting with variable pressure

■ Kinesthetic Speech

Lack of clear articulation of speech, some speech slurring

■ Artifactual Thinking

Problem interpreting non-verbal information such as body language, facial expression and voice tone, weak social skills, difficulty perceiving and interpreting one's own emotions, difficulty thinking, planning, problem solving non-verbally

■ Narrow Visual Span

Slow, jerky reading with errors, eyes fatigue when reading, problem navigating in the dark

■ Object Recognition

Trouble finding objects, problem remembering visual cues such as landmarks, difficulty remembering faces and recalling the visual details of pictures

■ Spatial Reasoning

Frequently getting lost, losing objects, messy disorganized workspace, trouble constructing geometric figures

■ Mechanical Reasoning

Difficulty understanding the mechanical properties of objects, problems constructing or repairing machinery such as taking apart and putting together a bicycle or repairing a car

■ Abstract Reasoning

Trouble understanding the proper sequence of steps in a task such as sewing, cooking or computer programming

■ Primary Motor

Poor muscle tone which results in some degree of awkwardness and slowness of body movement

■ Supplementary Motor

Finger counting, trouble retaining numbers in one's head, difficulty making change, problem learning math facts, poor sense of time management, difficulty with time signature in music



ARROWSMITH PROGRAM

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Strengthening Learning Capacities



The typical student in the Arrowsmith Program:

- is of average or above average intelligence
- has a combination of the learning dysfunctions that are described in this brochure and on the Arrowsmith School website
- does not have severe intellectual, cognitive, emotional or behavioural disorders that would significantly affect his or her ability to participate in the Arrowsmith Program
- does not have acquired brain injury or an autism spectrum disorder
- is of elementary, secondary or postsecondary school age

What the Arrowsmith Program accomplishes for students with learning disabilities

- builds and strengthens cognitive processes that are necessary for more efficient learning
- trains visual and auditory memory as well as attention and concentration
- improves fine motor skills necessary for writing and note-taking
- strengthens working memory, processing speed and cognitive efficiency
- strengthens executive functions
- builds the capacity for both verbal and non-verbal thinking, reasoning and problem solving

The Arrowsmith Program tailors interventions to the specific learning dysfunction profile of each student



OUR FRAMEWORK FOR RESULTS

- detailed assessment and identification of nineteen learning dysfunctions
- innovative methods which include specialized cognitive exercises
- clearly defined and individualized goals
- a positive, supportive and structured learning environment
- low student to teacher ratio
- building self-esteem by developing competence
- ongoing supervision, support and professional development that will ensure that the Arrowsmith Program is delivered at a consistently high level at all participating schools

Excerpt from a study of the Arrowsmith Program prepared for the Toronto Catholic District School Board:

"The study strongly supports the Arrowsmith Program. The Arrowsmith Program changed the developmental course of the majority of the children in this study."

Comments from a 15-year-old student at Arrowsmith School:

"I now find it much easier to write and much easier to copy things down. I can now understand concepts in math without much effort and apply them to problems."

I am better at taking instructions and doing the job that needs to be done as it is supposed to be done. What I am most happy about is that before I could hardly read and now I can read almost anything! I can remember things I couldn't remember and understand things I couldn't understand before. I think that this has really changed my life."

A cognitive program for students with learning disabilities including:



Reading
Writing
Mathematics
Comprehension
Logical reasoning
Visual memory
Auditory memory
Dyslexia
Non-verbal learning
Auditory Processing
Attention

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