Philosophy and Theoretical Basis

Research indicates that:

- most students with learning difficulties make only small gains in learning and classroom performance in their middle years of schooling; and
- the academic achievement gap between students with learning difficulties and their peers widens year after year. (Cawley, Fan Yan, & Miller, 1996; Hempenstall, 2005; Swanson & Hoskyn, 2001)

The need for effective interventions to support middle school students with learning difficulties is clear. The QuickSmart intervention and research program attempts to fill some of the identified gaps in research and practice regarding middle-school students with persistent learning difficulties related to literacy and mathematics.

The QuickSmart program combines a theoretical perspective incorporating a hierarchical view of students' learning of academic skills and the role of automaticity in learning (La Berge & Samuels, 1974) with examples of basic research and practical applications.

The structured approach of the QuickSmart program, with its use of technology and emphasis on practice and strategy, is very much in tune with how many researchers consider students with learning difficulties can be most usefully supported (Ellis, 2005; Hay, Elias, & Booker, 2005; Swanson, 2000).

Reference List


Ellis, L. A. (2005). Balancing approaches: Revisiting the educational psychology research on teaching students with


