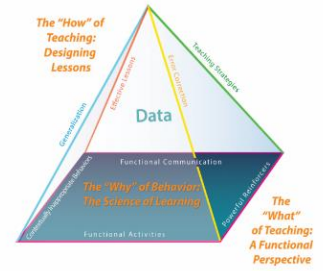# THE PYRAMID APPROACH TO EDUCATION®

The Pyramid Approach to Education is a comprehensive framework for establishing and supporting effective learning environments. Designed by Andy Bondy, PhD, and based on the principles of functional applied behavior analysis (ABA), The Pyramid Approach offers a solid foundation for those who teach in education, work, home, or community settings. This unique model benefits individuals with developmental differences, autism, communication challenges and/or other learning complications across all ages.

Maximizing learner outcomes requires not only information about what and how to teach – it requires a plan to put all the pieces together. The Pyramid Approach provides a clear guide for everyone on the team to determine what elements to address in a specific order. Just as building a pyramid begins with establishing a firm foundation before constructing the body of the building, the Pyramid Approach begins with a strong foundation, relying on a science-based approach to teaching.

The Pyramid Approach involves a distinction between structural and instructional components. The structural elements form the base, creating an environment conducive to learning.

Base elements	Brief Description
Functional Activities	Lessons to develop independence using materials designed to promote practical use and long-term skill development
Powerful Reinforcement Systems	Visual systems to mediate access to powerful reinforcers
Functional Communication and Social Skills	Communication skills necessary to develop independence embedded within activities across the day
Contextually Inappropriate Behaviors (CIBs)	Identification of the functional control of CIBs with a focus on teaching and supporting equivalent replacements

The instructional elements form the top of the Pyramid and include information relevant to the creation of effective lessons.

Top elements	Brief Description
Generalization	Long term goals are planned before the start of teaching, addressing both stimulus and response features
Lesson Formats	Identifies and distinguishes between lesson types including discrete versus sequential lessons as well as teacher versus learner led lessons
Teaching/Prompting Strategies	Describes a set of evidence-based strategies that may involve shaping or the use of prompts along with clear effective strategies to remove prompts
Error Correction	Systematic use of error correction strategies designed to promote learning opportunities and to match the strategy to the lesson type

All elements involve data-based decision making, requiring both systematic data collection and analysis. When all of the elements are combined, the approach results in success for staff, parents, and students. By implementing the Pyramid Approach to Education, you will build an effective learning environment that will result in progress and increased independence.

Visit https://pecsusa.com/the-pyramid-approach/ for more information about the Pyramid Approach to Education. To watch videos about the Pyramid Approach go to https://pecsusa.com/videos/.   For information about Pyramid Approach training and consultation please contact Pyramid Educational Consultants at **888-732-7462** or **pyramidus@pecs.com** .