

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT**  
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING NEEDS**  
**2009 Level III Distance Course Syllabus**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a lecture and practicum course designed to give experienced educational therapists continued training in accordance with the NILD intervention model. Five broad topics are addressed in the NILD Level III Distance Course:

- A. *Cognitive Functioning*** – The development of a basic understanding of cognitive functioning and its relationship to particular techniques used in educational therapy
- B. *Technique Instruction and Refinement*** – Practicum experience reviewing techniques taught at the Level I and Level II courses including further instruction in reading comprehension, written expression, and morphology
- C. *Language Stimulation*** – Instruction in the importance of interactive language in the stimulation of cognitive processing with focus upon the role of the mediator in the learning process
- D. *Assessment*** – Introduction to further diagnostic aspects of educational therapy in light of Feuerstein’s cognitive functions
- E. *Student Evaluation*** – Focus on a particular student presently under educational therapist’s instruction with emphasis upon assessment, individualization of instruction, and appropriateness of program

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- A. *General:*** Successful completion of this course should equip the educational therapist to more effectively implement NILD techniques and to have a beginning understanding of the science of cognitive function.
- B. *Specific:*** Upon completion of this course, the educational therapist should be able to:
  - 1. Articulate how specific techniques impact cognitive functioning
  - 2. Communicate a personal understanding of the theoretical constructs underlying NILD Educational Therapy®
  - 3. Demonstrate the ability to stimulate and question students in order to develop effective thinking and language skills
  - 4. Develop language competencies in reading comprehension, written expression, and morphology
  - 5. Interpret ongoing student evaluations in light of Feuerstein’s cognitive functions
  - 6. Demonstrate proficiency in core and advanced NILD techniques
  - 7. Further develop skills of questioning, pacing, transitions, and bridging
  - 8. Define cognitive functions and prescribe appropriate techniques to counter existing weaknesses
  - 9. Continue development as a consumer of research
  - 10. Refine assessment competency in report writing and evaluation of student needs

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

NILD has partnered with **Knowledge Elements** to develop this course in an online format, offering a qualified faculty, flexible scheduling, the user-friendly appeal of consistent course formats, and reliable and easily accessible web-based interface. This is a distance learning class combining six weeks of online interaction and assignment submission, one residency week of classroom instruction, and two post-residency assignments. Throughout the course, participants must have a valid email account where they can receive initial registration information, internet access, and a functioning web browser. We strongly recommend that you use a high-speed internet connection. **A dial-up connection is not recommended for this course.**

If you have never taken a distance course before and are unsure if this format is right for you, please complete the brief assessment found at [www.knowledgeelements.com/assessment.php](http://www.knowledgeelements.com/assessment.php).

## III. COURSE RESOURCES

### A. Textbooks to be obtained by participants:

1. *Learning Disabilities and Related Mild Disorders*, Lerner
2. *Mediated Learning, Teaching, Tasks, and Tools*, Mentis & Dunn-Bernstein
3. *How the Brain Learns*, Sousa
4. *Speech to Print*, Moats
5. *Sounds of Meaning*, NILD
6. *Mediating Math*, NILD
7. *NILD Level I Manual* (rev. 2008)
8. *NILD Level II Manual* (rev. 2008)

### B. Supplementary material provided by NILD at the course:

1. *NILD Level III Manual* (2007 ed.)
2. *Sounds of Language*
3. *Mathercise*
4. *Exercises in Arithmetic* (Red Book)
5. *Rules of the Game*
6. *Analogies* (Book 2)

## IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### A. *Prerequisites*: Bachelor's degree in education or related field, and:

- Successful completion of Levels I and II training
- Participation in required NILD regional conference sessions
- Minimum educational therapy student contact of 2 years/200 hours

### B. *Pre-Course Preparation*: Prior to attending the residency week, the educational therapist is to:

1. Complete reading assignments for *Learning Disabilities*, *Mediated Learning*, and *How the Brain Learns*. Be prepared to discuss all assigned sections in class.
2. Complete reading and written assignments for *Speech to Print*.
3. Locate an appropriate research article and write a one-page paper relating the research to your educational therapy practice.
4. Prepare a videotape of a second or third year student and complete a Video Self-Critique of the taped therapy session.
5. Create a rough draft of your Theoretical Constructs of Educational Therapy.

The self-critique, *Speech to Print*, and research response assignments are to be sent to your instructor no less than two weeks before the residency week, preferably as an MSWord email attachment. The rough draft of the theoretical constructs paper should be brought with you to class.

## V. COURSE ACTIVITIES

### *Distance Weeks:*

- Review Level I and II techniques
- Complete weekly activities and assignments
- Read texts as assigned
- Submit weekly assignments on time and contribute to on-line forums
- Complete and submit video self-critique
- Read and respond to articles

### *Residency Week:*

- Read Level III Manual in its entirety
- Work with a partner in practicing NILD Educational Therapy techniques

### *Post-residency* (all work due three weeks from the last day of the residency week):

- Complete final course assignment

## VI. COURSE WORKLOAD:

The time required for the various assignments has been estimated as follows:

Reading <i>Learning Disabilities</i>	5 hours
Reading <i>Mediated Learning</i>	5 hours
Reading <i>How the Brain Learns</i>	2 hours
Reading <i>Speech to Print</i>	4 hours
Reading research article and writing paper	3 hours
Preparation of Videotape & Self-Critique	8-10 hours
Reading articles assigned in class	5 hours
Daily Assignments	30 hours
Final Assignment	3 hours

## VII. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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