A group of students completed two presentations, and received 77.1% on the first assignment and a 98.6% on their second assignment. In order to learn more about their significant improvement, a group interview was held with three of the four students. In addition, the two assignments were examined. It seemed that a mixture of assignment demands and student strategies supported their improvement.

Assignment #1: Conditions
- Development & Play
- Explain play for age group
- Review developmental factors for age group
- Describe how play emerges, grows, and is influenced by developmental factors
- Create and share the “essence” of your age group

Objectives: The student will:
1. Develop an understanding of play as it occurs at ages/stages across childhood.
2. Review typical developmental principles across ages and stages, and integrate that information with principles in occupational development and play performance.
3. Synthesize and apply this information to age appropriate play activity for children with a condition.
4. Practice prioritizing and sharing information in written and verbal formats.

Assignment Form
- Both Assignments had two components: a handout for their peers, and a formal presentation.

Additional Guidelines - Assignment #2
- Your presentation should answer the following question: What are the typical developmental milestones that allow the play for your particular age/stage, to emerge? And how does what is emerging relate to occupational development for that age/stage?
- Integration means combining information in order to get a picture different than what you would get if you considered only one piece of the information at a time. It does not mean “share typical developmental skills and milestones in the order that they appear.” Think about comparing and contrasting different areas.
- It may be easiest for you to identify the occupation of play for your age group, and then ask yourself “What must be necessary for this to take place?”

Assignment #2: Development & Play
- Explain play for age group
- Review developmental factors for age group
- Describe how play emerges, grows, and is influenced by developmental factors
- Create and share the “essence” of your age group

Objectives: The student will:
1. Become acquainted with various conditions and diagnoses that are typically found in the pediatric population.
2. Develop a foundation to support skills in synthesizing diagnostic information with occupational performance at various developmental ages/stages.
3. Practice prioritizing and sharing information in written and verbal formats.

Strategies for Assignment Development
- Personalized the assignment, e.g., they “sought to organize it in a way that made sense to us,” rather than using a framework already identified in their resources
- Used a white board to sort out their ideas, “got out of our heads.”
- Initiated and sought clarification from professor as needed

Crucial Strategy
- “...examined how the information was presenting itself, and chose the harder, more integrated route...”
- Divided material up so that each of them investigated one of the topic area listed below, but each person’s portion of the presentation included ALL topic areas.
- Types of Play (4)
- Intrinsic/physiological factors
- Contextual factors
- Typical developmental milestones

This required each student to present information that someone else had researched and compiled, therefore requiring each student to teach the others what they had discovered.

Practice for the Presentation
- Peer reviewed each others’ portions of the presentation - and asked questions about what they didn’t understand
- Rehearsed, considered timings, ensured from each other that what they were presenting was accurate

What Helped
- Clear guidelines for the assignment - they “liked that there were strict guidelines, but that they [guidelines] allowed for individual interpretation/creation
- Motivation: doing poorly on first assignment, and desire to do well was about a “50/50” ratio
- Desire that the work they were doing was truly reflective of the assignment

Summary

What Helped
- Clear guidelines for the assignment - they “liked that there were strict guidelines, but that they [guidelines] allowed for individual interpretation/creation
- Motivation: doing poorly on first assignment, and desire to do well was about a “50/50” ratio
- Desire that the work they were doing was truly reflective of the assignment

Assignment Form
- Both Assignments had two components: a handout for their peers, and a formal presentation.

Additional Guidelines - Assignment #2
- Your presentation should answer the following question: What are the typical developmental milestones that allow the play for your particular age/stage, to emerge? And how does what is emerging relate to occupational development for that age/stage?
- Integration means combining information in order to get a picture different than what you would get if you considered only one piece of the information at a time. It does not mean “share typical developmental skills and milestones in the order that they appear.” Think about comparing and contrasting different areas.
- It may be easiest for you to identify the occupation of play for your age group, and then ask yourself “What must be necessary for this to take place?”

Assignment #2: Development & Play
- Explain play for age group
- Review developmental factors for age group
- Describe how play emerges, grows, and is influenced by developmental factors
- Create and share the “essence” of your age group

Objectives: The student will:
1. Develop an understanding of play as it occurs at ages/stages across childhood.
2. Review typical developmental principles across ages and stages, and integrate that information with principles in occupational development and play performance.
3. Synthesize and apply this information to age appropriate play activity for children with a condition.
4. Practice prioritizing and sharing information in written and verbal formats.

Strategies for Assignment Development
- Personalized the assignment, e.g., they “sought to organize it in a way that made sense to us,” rather than using a framework already identified in their resources
- Used a white board to sort out their ideas, “got out of our heads.”
- Initiated and sought clarification from professor as needed

Crucial Strategy
- “...examined how the information was presenting itself, and chose the harder, more integrated route...”
- Divided material up so that each of them investigated one of the topic area listed below, but each person’s portion of the presentation included ALL topic areas.
- Types of Play (4)
- Intrinsic/physiological factors
- Contextual factors
- Typical developmental milestones

This required each student to present information that someone else had researched and compiled, therefore requiring each student to teach the others what they had discovered.

Practice for the Presentation
- Peer reviewed each others’ portions of the presentation - and asked questions about what they didn’t understand
- Rehearsed, considered timings, ensured from each other that what they were presenting was accurate

What Helped
- Clear guidelines for the assignment - they “liked that there were strict guidelines, but that they [guidelines] allowed for individual interpretation/creation
- Motivation: doing poorly on first assignment, and desire to do well was about a “50/50” ratio
- Desire that the work they were doing was truly reflective of the assignment

Making Thinking Visible: Ritchhart, Church & Morrison

“The Thinking Moves... that are integral to understanding and without which it would be difficult to say we had developed understanding...”

1) observing closely and describing what’s there
2) building explanations and interpretations
3) reasoning with evidence
4) making connections
5) considering different viewpoints and perspectives
6) capturing the heart and forming conclusions
7) wondering and asking questions
8) uncovering complexity and going below the surface of things

Reflections - Future Implications
- Create assignments with contextual supports that allow for: more complexity
- opportunities for students to create their own organizing framework
- Provide assignment early in curriculum requiring an explicit organizing framework, that requires students to present each others’ works - make it an expectation
- Provide adequate instruction, time and resources to complete such an assignment
- Share results of this success, i.e., “Students who were successful in the past with this assignment, did the following things...”

WOW! It’s Better! What Did You Do?
Deborah Dougherty, OTD, OTR
Department of Health Professions, Occupational Therapy Program

Group Interview: Student Responses
What did you do differently this time? (for second assignment)

Preparation
- Allowed more time
- First meeting was for designing an organizational framework only

Strategies for Assignment Development
- Personalized the assignment, e.g., they “sought to organize it in a way that made sense to us,” rather than using a framework already identified in their resources
- Used a white board to sort out their ideas, “got out of our heads.”
- Initiated and sought clarification from professor as needed

Crucial Strategy
- “...examined how the information was presenting itself, and chose the harder, more integrated route...”
- Divided material up so that each of them investigated one of the topic area listed below, but each person’s portion of the presentation included ALL topic areas.
- Types of Play (4)
- Intrinsic/physiological factors
- Contextual factors
- Typical developmental milestones

This required each student to present information that someone else had researched and compiled, therefore requiring each student to teach the others what they had discovered.

Practice for the Presentation
- Peer reviewed each others’ portions of the presentation - and asked questions about what they didn’t understand
- Rehearsed, considered timings, ensured from each other that what they were presenting was accurate

What Helped
- Clear guidelines for the assignment - they “liked that there were strict guidelines, but that they [guidelines] allowed for individual interpretation/creation
- Motivation: doing poorly on first assignment, and desire to do well was about a “50/50” ratio
- Desire that the work they were doing was truly reflective of the assignment

Major Differences In Assignments
- Level of complexity - #2 more complex, and required students to question
- Explicit Organizing Framework Required in #2
- Integration Explicitly Explained in #2

Reflections - Future Implications
- Create assignments with contextual supports that allow for: more complexity
- opportunities for students to create their own organizing framework
- Provide assignment early in curriculum requiring an explicit organizing framework, that requires students to present each others’ works - make it an expectation
- Provide adequate instruction, time and resources to complete such an assignment
- Share results of this success, i.e., “Students who were successful in the past with this assignment, did the following things...”

Making Thinking Visible: Ritchhart, Church & Morrison

“The Thinking Moves... that are integral to understanding and without which it would be difficult to say we had developed understanding...”

1) observing closely and describing what’s there
2) building explanations and interpretations
3) reasoning with evidence
4) making connections
5) considering different viewpoints and perspectives
6) capturing the heart and forming conclusions
7) wondering and asking questions
8) uncovering complexity and going below the surface of things

Reflections - Future Implications
- Create assignments with contextual supports that allow for: more complexity
- opportunities for students to create their own organizing framework
- Provide assignment early in curriculum requiring an explicit organizing framework, that requires students to present each others’ works - make it an expectation
- Provide adequate instruction, time and resources to complete such an assignment
- Share results of this success, i.e., “Students who were successful in the past with this assignment, did the following things...”