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## Improving Performance and Participation of Elementary School Students through a Coteaching Model

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## Improving Performance and Participation of Elementary School Students through a Coteaching Model

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### BACKGROUND

The current school-based practice model requires school-based OT practitioners to have large caseloads with limited administrative support and time (Wilson & Harris, 2018). The current model also over-relies on the pull-out method, which involves removing an individual student or small group from the general education classroom for interventions (McWilliam & Scott, 2001). The pull-out method has led to OT practitioners and general education teachers feeling frustrated. This frustration stems from the lack of communication and context for OT interventions.

### PROBLEM

Given the demands of school-based practice, many occupational therapists provide services outside the authentic classroom context, which limits performance and participation of students with and without disabilities.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this capstone project was to develop a coteaching program in which occupational therapists and general education teachers work together in classrooms to improve performance and participation of students with and without disabilities.

### METHODS

This program took place in a fourth-grade classroom at an elementary school in the Midwest region of the United States. The participants included the general education teacher and the 22 students in the classroom. The project consisted of five phases:

#### Strengths and Needs

- Observed students and staff
- Interviewed staff
- Presented analysis

#### Development

- Revised program outline
- Developed content
- Created schedule

#### Implementation

- Reflected on experience
- Sought feedback

#### Evaluation

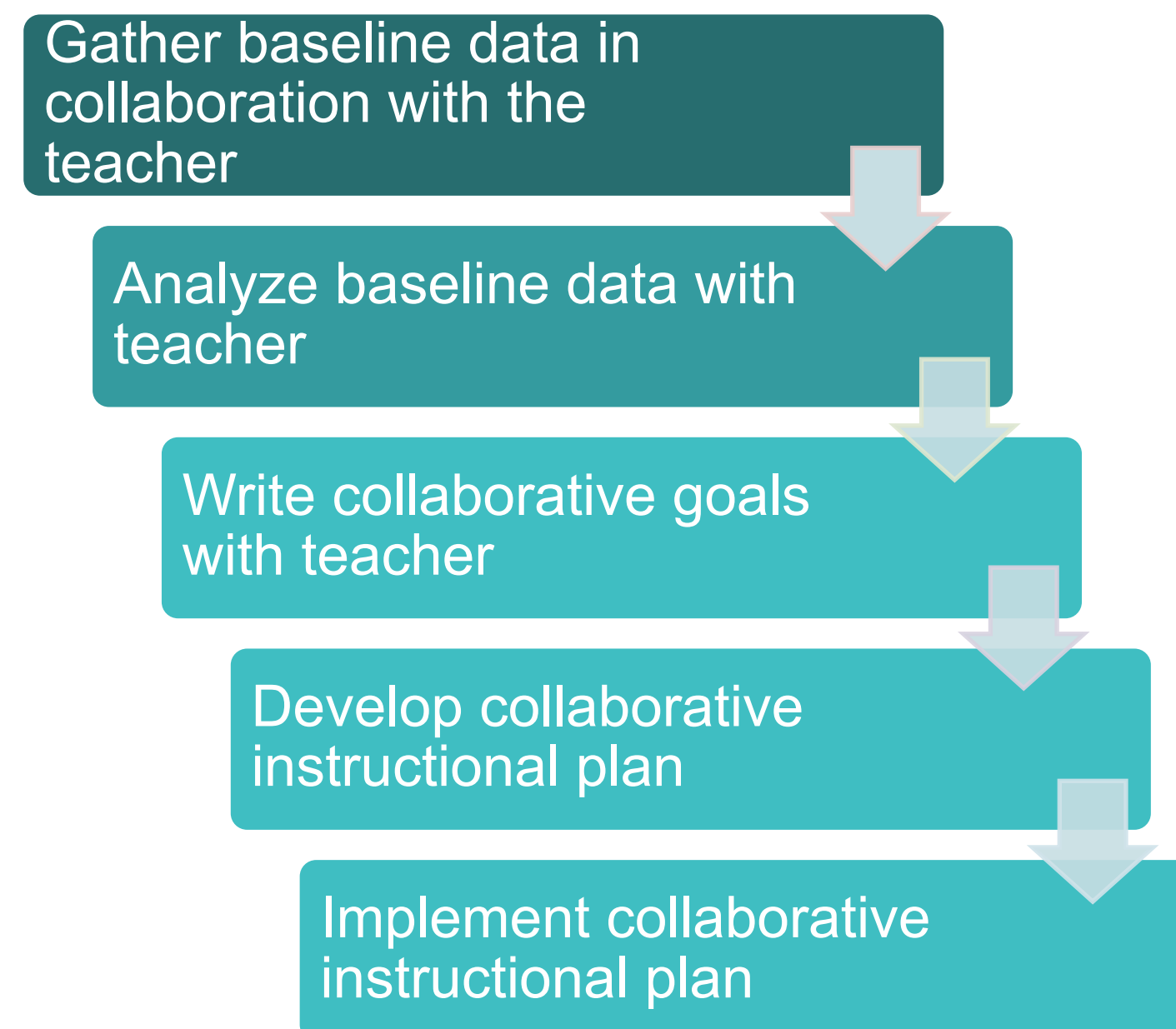
- Analyzed personal reflections
- Discussed findings with teacher

#### Dissemination

- Assembled guidebook for coteaching program
- Presented on experience and analysis to school stakeholders

### PROGRAM

#### Coteaching Process:



#### Coteaching Tools:

1. Observation
2. Interviews
3. Collaboration

#### Example Coteaching Interventions:

1. Team-building activity addressing gross-motor skills and social-emotional learning skills.
2. Team-building activity that involved effective communication and social-emotional learning skills.
3. Re-arrangement of the classroom to create room layout more conducive to learning.

### DISCUSSION

#### Significance

- Raised awareness with a general education teacher on implementing OT modifications and interventions into classroom
- Provided a guidebook for OT practitioners
- Improved relationship between general education teacher and OT practitioner

#### Implications

- Conduct research on the benefits of a coteaching program utilizing an OT practitioner
- Advocate for a change in the service delivery model
- Promote increased collaboration between general education teachers and OT practitioners
- Initiate coteaching relationships at the beginning of the school year

#### References

- McWilliam, R.A. & Scott, S. (2001). Integrating therapy into the classroom. *Individualizing Inclusion in Child Care*. <https://www.med.unc.edu/healthsciences/ocsci/nc-school-based-ot/wp-content/uploads/sites/765/2018/06/IntegratingTherapy.pdf>
- Wilson, A.L., & Harris, S.R. (2018). Collaborative occupational therapy: Teachers' impressions of the partnering for change (P4C) model. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics*, 38(2), 130-142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01942638.2017.1297988>