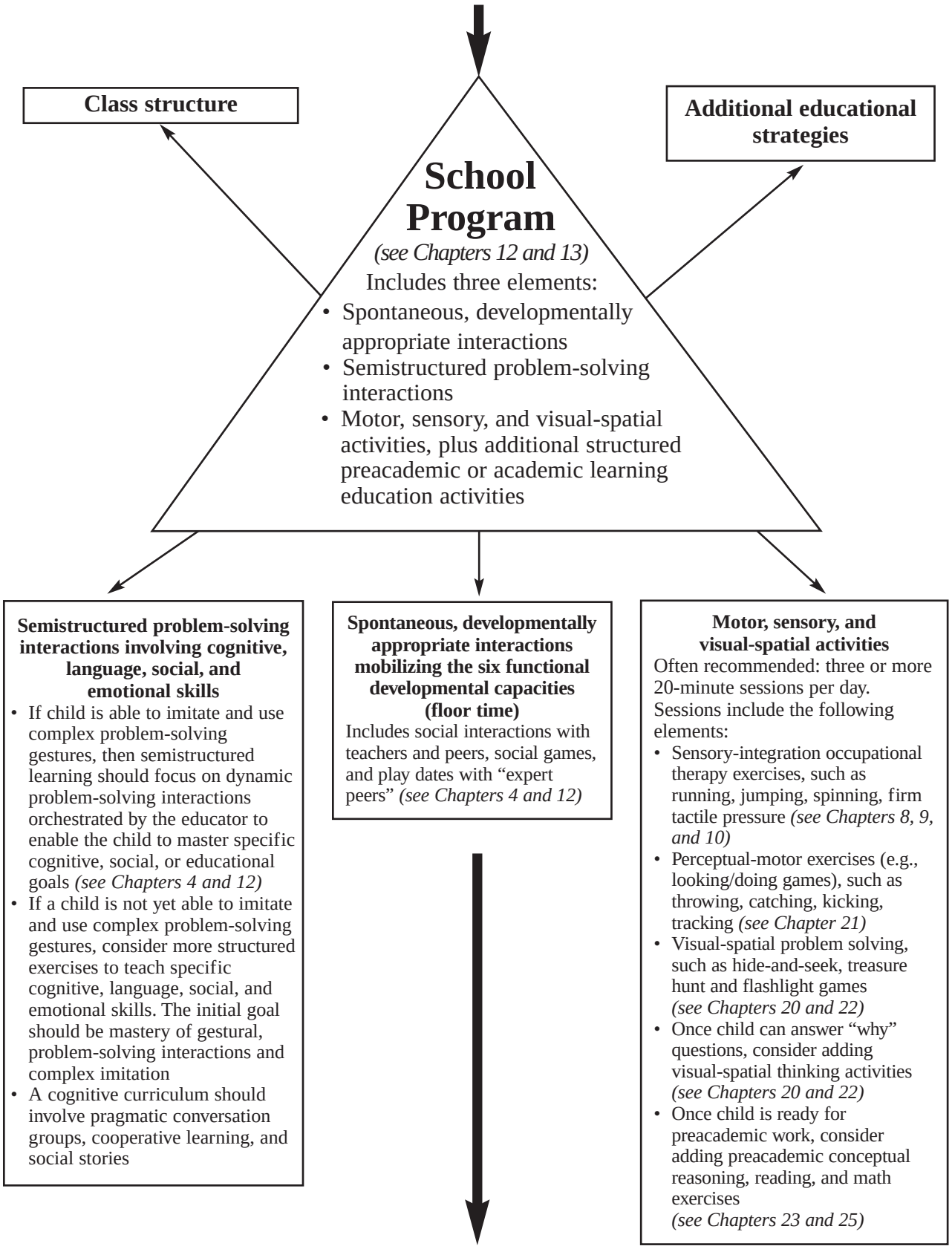
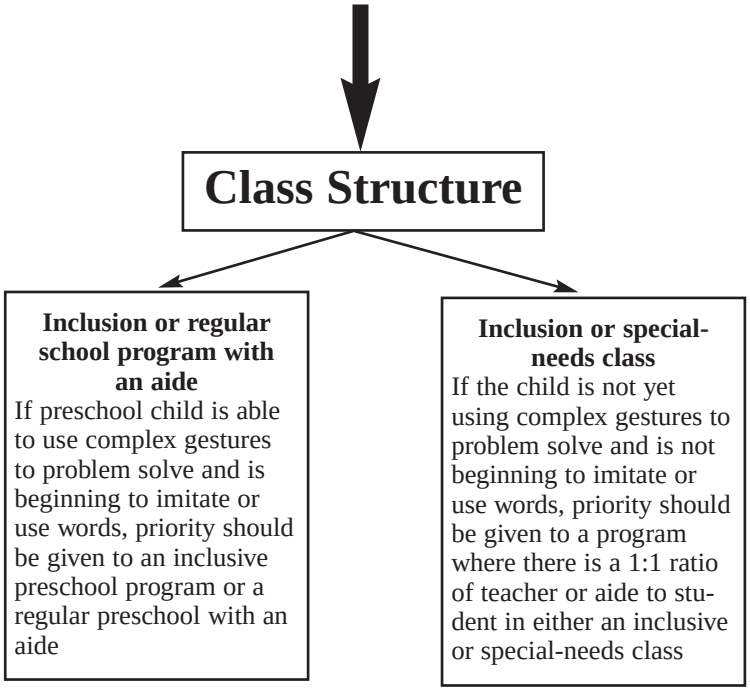
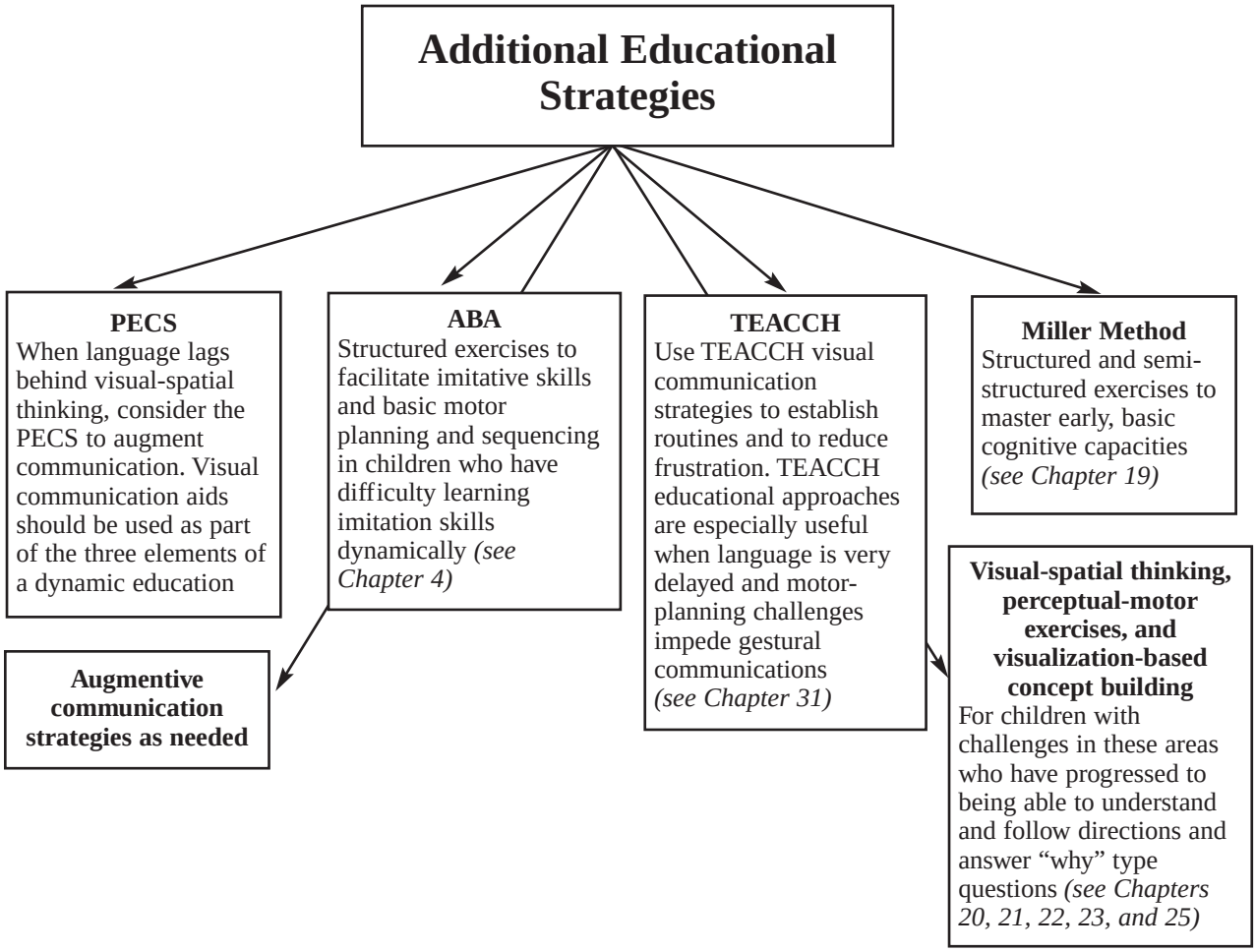

Class structure
Additional educational strategies
School Program
(see Chapters 12 and 13)
Includes three elements:
• Spontaneous, developmentally appropriate interactions
• Semistructured problem-solving interactions
• Motor, sensory, and visual-spatial activities, plus additional structured preacademic or academic learning education activities
Semistructured problem-solving interactions involving cognitive, language, social, and emotional skills
• If child is able to imitate and use complex problem-solving gestures, then semistructured learning should focus on dynamic problem-solving interactions orchestrated by the educator to enable the child to master specific cognitive, social, or educational goals (see Chapters 4 and 12)
• If a child is not yet able to imitate and use complex problem-solving gestures, consider more structured exercises to teach specific cognitive, language, social, and emotional skills. The initial goal should be mastery of gestural, problem-solving interactions and complex imitation
• A cognitive curriculum should involve pragmatic conversation groups, cooperative learning, and social stories
Spontaneous, developmentally appropriate interactions mobilizing the six functional developmental capacities (floor time)
Includes social interactions with teachers and peers, social games, and play dates with "expert peers" (see Chapters 4 and 12)
Motor, sensory, and visual-spatial activities
Often recommended: three or more 20-minute sessions per day. Sessions include the following elements:
• Sensory-integration occupational therapy exercises, such as running, jumping, spinning, firm tactile pressure (see Chapters 8, 9, and 10)
• Perceptual-motor exercises (e.g., looking/doing games), such as throwing, catching, kicking, tracking (see Chapter 21)
• Visual-spatial problem solving, such as hide-and-seek, treasure hunt and flashlight games (see Chapters 20 and 22)
• Once child can answer "why" questions, consider adding visual-spatial thinking activities (see Chapters 20 and 22)
• Once child is ready for preacademic work, consider adding preacademic conceptual reasoning, reading, and math exercises (see Chapters 23 and 25)


Class Structure
Inclusion or regular school program with an aide
If preschool child is able to use complex gestures to problem solve and is beginning to imitate or use words, priority should be given to an inclusive preschool program or a regular preschool with an aide
Inclusion or special-needs class
If the child is not yet using complex gestures to problem solve and is not beginning to imitate or use words, priority should be given to a program where there is a 1:1 ratio of teacher or aide to student in either an inclusive or special-needs class


Additional Educational Strategies
PECS
When language lags behind visual-spatial thinking, consider the PECS to augment communication. Visual communication aids should be used as part of the three elements of a dynamic education
ABA
Structured exercises to facilitate imitative skills and basic motor planning and sequencing in children who have difficulty learning imitation skills dynamically (see Chapter 4)
TEACCH
Use TEACCH visual communication strategies to establish routines and to reduce frustration. TEACCH educational approaches are especially useful when language is very delayed and motor-planning challenges impede gestural communications (see Chapter 31)
Miller Method
Structured and semi-structured exercises to master early, basic cognitive capacities (see Chapter 19)
Augmentive communication strategies as needed
Visual-spatial thinking, perceptual-motor exercises, and visualization-based concept building
For children with challenges in these areas who have progressed to being able to understand and follow directions and answer "why" type questions (see Chapters 20, 21, 22, 23, and 25)