

STRATEGIES FOR

TEACHING STUDENTS

with Learning and Behavior Problems

NINTH EDITION



Sharon R. Vaughn | Candace S. Bos

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*To Jane Vaughn and Lucy Vaughn, who
practiced progress monitoring by asking
me regularly how far I was and whether
I would finish the book on time.*

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About the Author



SHARON VAUGHN (Ph.D., University of Arizona) holds the H. E. Hartfelder/Southland Corporation Regents Chair in Human Development and is the Executive Director of the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk at the University of Texas. She is a recipient of the CEC Research Award and the AERA Special Education SIG distinguished researcher award. She was the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* and the coeditor of *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*. Dr. Vaughn is the author of numerous books and research articles that address the reading and social outcomes of students with learning difficulties including *Teaching Students Who Are Exceptional, Diverse, and At Risk in the General Education Classroom* with Jeanne Schumm and Candace Bos (5th ed., Allyn & Bacon). Currently she is the principal or coprincipal investigator on several Institute for Education Science, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development, and Office of Special Education Programs research grants investigating effective interventions for students with learning disabilities and behavior problems as well as students who are English language learners.

Preface

While traveling by car on a typical Arizona scorcher between Phoenix and Tucson after attending a state Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities meeting, Candace Bos and I were discussing the content and assignments for the methods courses we taught at our respective universities. The conversation inevitably drifted to what we would like to do better. Because both of us were responsible for preparing teachers and potential teachers to work effectively with students who have learning and behavior problems, we spent a considerable amount of time discussing the content of our classes. We concluded that we would like the class and the textbook for the class to provide adequate background in procedures for teaching skill and content areas such as reading, math, oral and written expression, and social and study skills. We also would like our students to understand which methods are most effective with what types of students and why.

The first edition of this book was the result of that initial lengthy discussion, which focused on the ideal content that would prepare teachers to meet the needs of elementary and secondary students with learning and behavior problems. Each new edition continues to present fresh ideas and information, always while keeping sight of our original purpose.

New to This Edition

- Emphasis and integration of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) throughout the text.
- Coverage of response to intervention (RTI) has been updated to include the multitiered system of support.
- All academic areas have been updated to reflect the emphasis on higher-level thinking including reading comprehension and complex texts as well as problem solving, fractions, and algebra.
- Increased emphasis on classroom management and positive behavior support, both in the target chapters as well as throughout the book.
- Key research and practice opportunities have been updated and enhanced.
- The strategies infused throughout the text remain and have been extended, based on current knowledge.



Chapter-by-Chapter Revisions

Chapter 1: Monitoring and Teaching for Understanding

- Streamlined to ensure that the essential information is highlighted.
- A new *Web Resources* replaces the old *Tech Tips*.

Chapter 2: Approaches to Learning and Teaching

- Significant changes ensure that only the most relevant approaches to teaching students with learning and behavior problems are addressed.
- Revised to increase emphasis on how teachers can implement effective instruction for students with learning and behavior problems.

Chapter 3: Response to Intervention and Multi-Tier System of Support

- Updated with the most relevant research on RTI and with additional information on multi-tiered levels of support.

Chapter 4: Managing Behavior

- Updated to emphasize classroom management practices including how to effectively manage behavior problems as well as increasing on-task behavior to improve learning.

Chapter 5: Coteaching and Collaborating: Working with Professionals and Families

- Revised to reflect special education teachers' increasing co-teaching and collaboration with other professionals.
- Updated practices and strategies to ensure success in coteaching and collaboration.

Chapter 6: Assessing and Teaching Oral Language

- Updated with new practice ideas as well as videos to improve oral language instruction.

Chapter 7: Assessing and Teaching Reading: Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Word Recognition

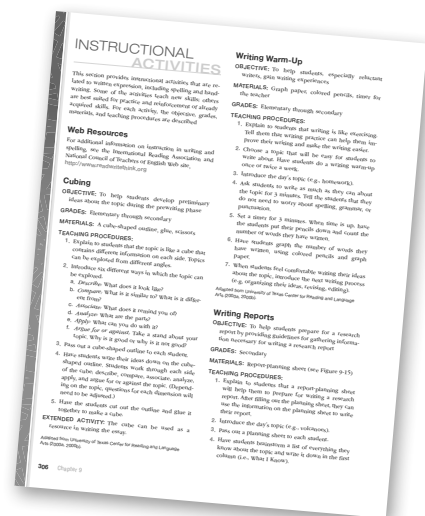
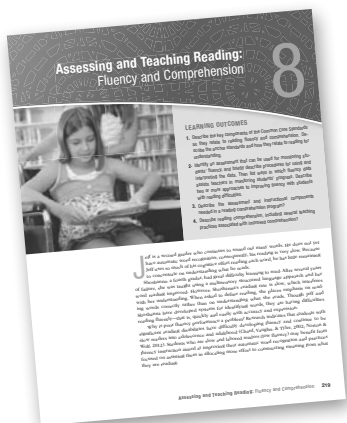
- Updated research and content to demonstrate the latest practices in assessing and teaching reading

Chapter 8: Assessing and Teaching Reading: Fluency and Comprehension

- Updated with increasing emphasis on comprehension and content area reading
- Updated with increasing emphasis on reading after grade 3.

Chapter 9: Assessing and Teaching Writing and Spelling

- Updated with instructional practices in writing that are associated with improved outcomes and that can be readily applied in both the general education and special education setting.



Chapter 10: Assessing and Teaching Content Area Learning and Vocabulary

- Revised to provide additional coverage of vocabulary instruction.

Chapter 11: Assessing and Teaching Mathematics

- Updated to reflect CCSS and emphasis on fractions and algebra.

Text Organization and Special Features

From that conversation many years ago, we determined three important goals for this text:


1. **Foundations.** To provide information about general approaches to learning and teaching so that the foundation for the methods and procedures for teaching all learners can be better understood.
2. **Detailed methods.** To supply descriptions of methods and procedures that include sufficient detail so that teachers and other professionals know how to use them.
3. **Organization and planning.** To present information about classroom and behavior management, consultation, and collaboration with families and professionals so that beginning teachers can develop a plan of action for the school year and experienced teachers can refine these skills.

To help meet these goals, a number of special features have been developed. *Apply the Concept* and *Evidence-Based Practice* features, for example, give special educators hands-on classroom implementations in reading, writing, content areas, and mathematics that are proven successful for all students, including those with learning and behavior problems.

Enhanced eText

One of the exciting developments in this edition is inclusion of its digital features. The eText for this *Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning and Behavior Problems* (Ninth Edition) is an affordable, interactive version of the print text that includes videos, interactive links to helpful Web sites, and interactive chapter assessment quizzes.

To learn more about the enhanced Pearson eText, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks.

- **Video marginal notes with reflective questions**  link to videos that show classroom footage and experts in the field elucidating concepts and strategies discussed in the text. Approximately 50 of these clips are interspersed throughout the text.
- **Via links to YouTube videos** within this eText, students will find occasional YouTube video clips that illustrate strategies discussed in the text.
- **End-of-chapter assessments** give students the opportunity to test their understanding of concepts and strategies that they have learned in that chapter. Questions are aligned with the chapter's learning outcomes, and feedback for incorrect answers is provided.
- **IRIS Center Resource links** provide readers access to The IRIS Center at Vanderbilt University, founded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), which develops training enhancements material for pre-service and in-service teachers. The Center works with experts from across the country to create challenge-based interactive modules, case study units, and podcasts that provide research-validated information about working with students in inclusive settings. This content has been integrated throughout the text, where appropriate.

5-3 APPLY THE CONCEPT

Coteaching Perceptions

Consider asking and answering these questions with your coteacher as a means for determining areas of strength and potential areas to focus on within your coteaching setting:

1. We both have equal access to all information about general education students in the class?
2. We both have equal access to all information about special education students in the class?
3. We both are perceived by key administrators as appropriate contacts for issues about the class?
4. We both are perceived by parents as appropriate contacts for issues about the class?
5. If a problem with a student arises, we are both comfortable addressing it and communicating with each other about it?
6. We have adequate time to plan?
7. We both have access to materials in the classroom?
8. The desks and chairs for both teachers are equivalent?
9. Decisions about what to teach are shared?
10. Decisions about how to teach are discussed and agreed upon?
11. Decisions about adaptations to meet the special learning needs of students are discussed and agreed upon?
12. Decisions about adaptations to tests and other evaluations are discussed and agreed upon?
13. We provide each other with feedback that is useful and improves our instruction?
14. We coteach effectively and with few difficulties?
15. We respect the contributions of our coteacher?
16. We communicate and problem solve problems effectively?

Evidence-Based PRACTICE

Word Study: Making Words, Word Building, and Word Walls

Each reading and special education teacher should understand the importance of word study as a means for building the vocabulary of students with reading difficulties. This chapter provides an overview of word study and offers strategies for teaching word study to students with reading difficulties. The chapter also provides information about word study and offers strategies for teaching word study to students with reading difficulties.


Evidence-Based PRACTICE

Word Study: Making Words, Word Building, and Word Walls

PROVIDENCE: Many activities and strategies are available to help students with reading difficulties build their vocabulary. This chapter provides an overview of word study and offers strategies for teaching word study to students with reading difficulties.

Word Study: Making Words, Word Building, and Word Walls

PROVIDENCE: Many activities and strategies are available to help students with reading difficulties build their vocabulary. This chapter provides an overview of word study and offers strategies for teaching word study to students with reading difficulties.

In this **video** , you will see children engaged in partner reading. How do they respond to this strategy? What are some advantages and disadvantages? How does the teacher support the students while they are partner reading?

WEB RESOURCES

For additional information on ESL students, check out the following Web sites:

- The Institute for Education Sciences publishes a practice guide with videos on English language learners: www.ies.ed.gov
- The Center for Research on Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners provides materials and resources: www.cal.org/create
- The Association of Supervisors and Curriculum Development provides information on English language learners: www.ascd.org

- *Web Resources* marginal notes, available throughout the chapters, encourage further exploration of chapter topics. You will find the URLs for these resources on the pages of your text.
- *Weblinks* in each chapter provides links to Web sites of organizations, institutions, and government resources that reflect the rich community and depth of assets that await students as they further their educational pursuits.

Support Materials for Instructors

The following resources are available for instructors to download on www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular edition of the book, and then click on the “Resources” tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

Instructor’s Resource Manual and Test Bank (0133571157)

The Instructor’s Resource Manual and Test Bank includes key topics for mastery, lecture-discussion outlines, invitation for learning activities, and think-and-apply questions for the basis for class discussions or use in exams. Some items (lower-level questions) simply ask students to identify or explain concepts and principles they have learned. But many others (higher-level questions) ask students to apply those same concepts and principles to specific classroom situations—to actual student behaviors and teaching strategies.

PowerPoint™ Slides (0133801322)

The PowerPoint™ slides include key concept summarizations, to enhance learning. They are designed to help students understand, organize, and remember core concepts, skills, and strategies.

TestGen (0133801330)

Test Gen is a powerful test generator available exclusively from Pearson Education publishers. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options, such as over a local area network or on the Web. A test bank, which is also called a Test Item File (TIF), typically contains a large set of test items, organized by chapter and ready for your use in creating a test, based on the associated textbook material. Assessments—including equations, graphs, and scientific notation—may be created for both print and testing online.

The tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

TestGen Testbank file: PC

TestGen Testbank file: MAC

TestGen Testbank: Blackboard 9 TIF

TestGen Testbank: Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT) TIF

Angel Test Bank (zip)

D2L Test Bank (zip)

Moodle Test Bank

Sakai Test Bank (zip)

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Candace S. Bos and I launched this book together as junior faculty 30 years ago. Since her death, I have done one of the most challenging things of my professional career, writing and revising the book without my dear friend and colleague. I knew what an outstanding writer and teacher–educator she was; I know even better now. Working on this book is a clear reminder of how much she taught me and how hard it is to work without her. Ann Davis, editor, provided more than her usual excellent support and good ideas. Max Chuck, developmental editor, provided valuable suggestions and advice. Max is so capable and supportive that her assistance has made this the best edition yet. I would also like to thank Dr. Amory Cable for her careful and thoughtful work.

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Most important of all, we would like to thank the teacher whose observations, research, and thinking has done more to guide our development and the field of special education than any other: Samuel A. Kirk.

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Monitoring and Teaching for Understanding

1



LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Recognize characteristics of students with learning disabilities as well as those with behavior disorders.
2. Learn the multiple ways in which individuals with learning disabilities are identified.
3. Be able to complete an individualized education program (IEP) on a target student with disabilities.
4. Summarize the critical components related to effectively teaching students with learning and behavior problems.

This book is about children and adolescents who have difficulty learning and interacting appropriately in school. If you saw these children in school, it is very likely that you would not be able to readily identify them until they were engaged in an academic activity that challenged them (e.g., writing, reading) or they were exhibiting extreme behaviors (e.g., screaming out of control). What are these students like? Teachers describe them this way:

Servio is extremely sensitive and gets upset at the least little thing. For example, yesterday Jo'Jame walked by his desk and bumped into him, and he jumped up and starting screaming at him. He got very aggressive, and if I had not intervened I strongly suspect there would have been a fight. He used to throw things at school, but he doesn't do that anymore. He doesn't have any friends in the class, and most of the other students don't want him around them. Sometimes he is very quiet and almost cooperative, but these times only last until someone does or says something he doesn't like.

Dana has a great deal of difficulty with her work. She appears to have trouble remembering. Well, not always. Sometimes she remembers how to read a word; other days she looks at the same word, and it's like she has to scan all of the information in her head to try to locate the name of the word. I know she is trying, but it is very frustrating because her progress is so slow. She is also very easily distracted. Even when the instructional assistant is working with her alone, she will look up and stop working at the littlest things. Something like the air-conditioning going on and off will distract her from her work. I know she is bright enough, but she seems to have serious problems learning.

Tina is more work for me than the rest of my class put together. She has both academic problems and behavior problems. For example, after I have explained an assignment to the class, Tina always asks me several questions about the assignment. It's like I have to do everything twice, once for the class and then again for Tina. She has a terrible time with reading. She reads so slowly, and she often reads the wrong word. For example, she will say "carrot" for "circus" and "monster" for "mister." She often doesn't know what she's read after she's finished reading it. Also, she can never sit still. She is always moving around the room, sharpening her pencil, getting a book, looking out the window. It is hard for her to do the same thing for more than a few minutes. She's always bugging the other students. She's not really a bad kid, it's just that she is always doing something she's not supposed to be doing, and she takes a lot of my time.

The purpose of this book is to acquaint you with the teaching skills and strategies necessary to understand and teach students like Servio, Dana, and Tina. This chapter provides background information on students with learning and behavior problems and an overview of the teaching–learning process. This chapter also introduces response to intervention (RTI) as a framework for facilitating identification of students with learning and behavior problems.

As you read this book, we encourage you to reflect on how the information presented can be interwoven into your thoughts about the teaching–learning process. We encourage you to seek opportunities to work with students with learning and behavior problems and to use the research-based practices presented in this book in seeking supervision and feedback from well-prepared professionals. We also encourage you to use a reflective, problem-solving orientation to teaching. This model of teaching and learning serves as a framework for reflecting on what you do, consulting with others to seek better information and practices, and making adjustments to improve outcomes for students with learning and behavior problems.

Students with Learning and Behavior Problems

Most educators can recognize with little difficulty those students who have learning and behavior problems. They are students who call attention to themselves in the classroom because they have difficulty learning and interacting appropriately. Students with learning and/or behavior problems manifest one or more of the following behaviors:

- *Poor academic performance.* Students display significant problems in one or more academic areas such as spelling, reading, and mathematics. The key to understanding students with learning disabilities is that they display unexpected underachievement. What do we mean by unexpected underachievement? This means that students have the cognitive processes to succeed academically and perform well in one or more other academic areas but have a significant difficulty in one or more areas such as spelling, writing, reading, and/or math.
- *Attention problems.* Many students seem to have difficulty working for extended periods of time on a task. They may have trouble focusing on the teacher's directions. These students are often described by teachers as being easily distracted. They have a difficult time completing tasks, and because their mind wanders, they miss critical information.
- *Hyperactivity.* Some students are overactive and have a difficult time staying in their seats and completing assigned tasks. They move from task to task, and often from location to location in the classroom. When working on an assignment, the least little noise will distract them.
- *Memory.* Many students have a hard time remembering what they were taught. Often their difficulty remembering is associated with symbols such as letters and numbers. These students may remember something one day but not the next.
- *Poor language abilities.* Many students with learning disabilities have language difficulties that are manifested in a number of ways. As toddlers, these students may have taken longer in learning to talk. Often these language problems can be corrected through speech therapy. Many also have difficulty developing phonological awareness skills—hearing the sounds of language separately and being able to blend and segment them (e.g., hearing /b/, /a/, /t/ separately and then blending to say,

“bat”). Students may have difficulty with vocabulary, understanding the concept, using language to adequately express themselves orally or in writing, or developing age-appropriate math skills.

- *Aggressive behavior.* Some students are physically or verbally assaultive. They may hit, kick, get into fights, and/or verbally threaten or insult others. These children are easily upset and cope with being upset by acting out.
- *Withdrawn behavior.* Some students seldom interact with others. Unlike shy students, who may have one or two friends, these students are real loners who avoid involvement with others.
- *Bizarre behavior.* Some students display unusual patterns of behavior. They may stare for long periods of time at objects that they hold in the light, they may sit and rock, or they may display aggressive behaviors at times and withdrawn behaviors at other times.

Students with learning and/or behavior problems often exhibit more than one of these behaviors. Yet some students exhibit these behaviors and are not identified as having learning or behavior problems. There are other factors that teachers consider when determining how serious a learning and behavior problem is.

Factors in Determining the Severity of a Learning or Behavior Problem

From 15% to 25% of all students have some type of learning or behavior problem; however, students with learning disabilities and behavior problems that are identified as special education represent a much smaller percentage of the student population (typically less than 6%). Students with learning disabilities are five times more prevalent than those with behavior disorders. Of course, this could be because teachers and parents are not inclined to identify students as having a significant behavior problem that constitutes a disability. There are several factors to consider when you are determining how serious a problem is:

1. Persistence of the problem. Sometimes a student has a learning or behavior problem for a short period of time, perhaps while there is some type of crisis in the family, and then it disappears. These behaviors and feeling states are not considered problems if they occur occasionally. Other students display persistent learning and behavior problems throughout their schooling experience. These problems have more serious consequences for the students.

2. Severity of the problem. Is the student's learning or behavior problem mild, moderate, or severe? Is the student performing slightly below or significantly below what would normally be expected of him or her? Is the behavior slightly different or substantially different from that of the student's peers?

3. Speed of progress. Does the student appear to be making steady progress in the classroom despite the learning or behavior problem? We do not expect all students to learn at the same rate. In fact, in an average fourth-grade classroom, the range of performance varies from second-grade level to seventh-grade level. However, a critical question is whether the student is responding appropriately to classroom instruction and making at least 1 year's growth academically every year.

4. Motivation. Is the student interested in learning? Does the student persist at tasks and attempt to learn? Does the student initiate and complete tasks without continual praise and encouragement?

5. Parental response. How do family members feel about a child's academic and/or behavioral progress? How do they think it compares with the child's progress in the past? Are they concerned about how their child's abilities compare with those of other children the same age? How have siblings performed in school?

6. Other teachers' responses. How did the student perform in previous classes? What do previous or other teachers say about the student's learning style, academic abilities, and behavior?

7. Relationship with the teacher. What type of relationship does the student have with his or her present teacher? Sometimes a poor interpersonal match between the student and the teacher may interfere with the student's academic performance and/or behavior.

8. Instructional modifications. What attempts has the teacher made to modify the student's academic and/or behavioral program? Does the student seem responsive to attempts at intervention? If the student is not performing well in a traditional reading program, has the teacher tried other instructional approaches to reading? Has the student had opportunities to work with different students in the class? If the problem is behavior, what behavior change programs have been implemented? Have any been successful?

Is there a good match between the student and the classroom setting? Some children function best in a highly structured classroom where the rules, expectations, and assignments are very clearly stated. Other children function better in a learning environment where there is more flexibility.

9. Adequate instruction. Has the student had adequate exposure to the material and enough time to learn? Some students have little experience with formal learning situations before coming to school. Other students have multiple experiences, including preschool programs that teach letters and letter sounds. Students who have less exposure to school learning situations or whose parents provide few school-like learning experiences may need more time and exposure to the learning environment before they make gains. Determine what prerequisite skills are missing and how they can be acquired.

10. Behavior-age discrepancy. Does the student display problems that are unusual or deviant for the student's

age? What types of behaviors is the student exhibiting that are or are not age appropriate?

11. Other factors. Are there other factors that might be contributing to the student's learning and/or behavior problems? For example, how closely do the student's background experiences, culture, and language match those of the teacher and other students in the class? Are there any health-related factors that might be interfering with the student's learning or behavior? Have the student's vision and hearing been adequately assessed to determine whether they might be affecting the student's learning or behavior?

Considering these factors will help you to identify the severity of the student's problems and determine whether the student needs additional classroom supports.

The Defining Features of Special Education

How does special education for students with learning and behavior problems differ from a good general education? Consider the following six features of instruction that, according to Heward (2013), define effective instruction for students with learning and behavior problems:

1. *Individually planned.* Instruction, materials, and setting of instruction are selected or adapted on the basis of student needs.
2. *Specialized.* Instruction and adaptations include related services and assistive technology that are not often a part of the general education curriculum.
3. *Intensive.* Precise, targeted instruction is designed to assist students in making efficient progress toward gaining necessary skills and strategies.
4. *Goal-directed.* Instruction focuses on individual goals and objectives necessary for student success.
5. *Employ research-based methods.* Selection and application of effective teaching methods are supported by research.
6. *Guided by student performance.* Student response to instruction is continually assessed for use in evaluating the effectiveness of instruction and adjusting instruction when necessary.

Heward (2013) further states that teachers may hold misunderstandings about teaching and learning that interfere with successful delivery of special education for students with disabilities. For example, many educators and administrators are taught that a structured curriculum including instruction and practice in individual skills is unnecessary and harmful to students' general learning. Contrary to this belief, students with learning and behavior problems often need academic tasks broken down into smaller, obtainable skills in order to progress.

A guiding principle of special education is that it is goal directed and guided by student performance.

Evidence-based instruction is the ongoing alignment of appropriate instruction based on an ongoing system of measuring students' progress. Therefore, assessment of student outcomes is needed to guide appropriate instruction and to move students as quickly as possible to ensure student success in academics and related areas. This means that instruction must be focused and provided with a sense of urgency. Unstructured lessons and activities without regard for effectiveness can be detrimental to students with learning and behavior problems. These students need the very best instruction using research-supported techniques to ensure that time is not wasted and teachers are providing opportunities for students to gain the necessary abilities and obtain the motivating experience of success. One of the primary goals of a special education is to accelerate the positive behavior and educational outcomes of students with learning disabilities and behavior problems. Throughout this book, we will demonstrate effective instructional techniques in reading, written expression, math, and other content areas for students with learning and behavior problems.

Learning and Educational Environments for Students with Learning and Behavior Problems

Most students with learning and behavior problems are educated in the general education classroom. But students who have severe learning and behavior problems may receive a range of support services, including reading or math support, counseling, individualized instruction with a teaching assistant, and special education.

In many schools, reading or math specialists assist students with learning problems. These specialists typically provide supplemental instruction to the regular reading or math instruction the students receive in the general education classroom. Such additional instruction can help students with learning problems make sufficient progress in reaching expected performance levels. Often, specialists and classroom teachers collaborate to ensure that the instruction they provide is consistent and follows a similar sequence of skills.

Some classroom teachers have a teaching assistant who provides supplemental instruction for students with significant learning or behavior disorders. You may find yourself in a situation where you are supervising one or more teaching assistants. Teaching assistants often do not have the instructional background that specialists do. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers provide teaching assistants with sufficient guidance. This includes planning lessons, training in effective instruction for students with learning problems, and monitoring instruction. When teaching assistants are given appropriate instructional tools for teaching students with learning problems, the supplemental help they provide often helps students to make the necessary progress to learn at expected levels.

Students with disabilities receive services through special education. PL 94-142, reauthorized in 2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), ensures that a continuum of placements is available for students. This continuum is conceptualized as proceeding from the least to the most restrictive. The term *restrictive*, in an educational sense, refers to the extent to which students are educated with nondisabled peers. A more restrictive setting is one in which students spend no part of their educational program with nondisabled peers. In a less restrictive setting, students may spend part of their educational day with nondisabled peers. IDEA mandates that all students should be educated in the least restrictive educational environment possible (IDEA, 2004).

Including Students with Learning and Behavior Problems

When students with special needs are included in the general education classroom, either their specialized services are provided within the general education class, or they are pulled out of the classroom for a portion of the day to receive the services. How do schools and teachers decide if a student should be included for all or part of the school day?

The decision to include a student with special needs is made by an individual educational planning and placement committee. This committee is typically made up of one or both of the child's guardians, the special education teacher, the general education teacher, relevant professionals such as the school psychologist, and the administrator who supervises the special education program in which the student participates. At the recommendation of the special education and general education teachers and the professionals who evaluate the student's progress, the committee collectively decides whether the student's social and educational needs would best be met in the general education classroom and writes up the individualized education program (IEP) accordingly. What types of information do special education teachers use to determine inclusion in general education? The answer varies by district and school, and several essential information sources are helpful:

- Based on classroom observations, how is the target student performing in the general education classroom? What supports does the student need to ensure success?
- Based on progress monitoring and other assessment data, how effectively is the student learning

In this [video](#), a 4th grader with learning disabilities shares his experiences in the general education classroom. Do you feel the supports and services that were put in place for him were successful and, if so, how is this demonstrated?

in the general education classroom? What supports does the student need to ensure success?

- Has the target student been provided intensive interventions? If yes, how has the student responded to these interventions?
- What types of classroom-based interventions have been provided, and how effective have they been?
- What views and insights do the parents hold about the student's performance and inclusion in the general education classroom?
- What views do previous teachers and educational specialists hold about the student's performance in the general education classroom?

The goal is to provide students with an appropriate education with access to the general education classroom. For students to receive special education that is outside of the general education classroom, evidence that the students' educational and social needs are better met in the special education classroom is required. Most students with emotional and learning disabilities spend at least some of their school day in general education classrooms with their nondisabled peers. Therefore, both general education and special education teachers are often responsible for the instruction and outcomes of students with disabilities.

In 1975, Public Law 94-142 was passed, providing an opportunity for all students with disabilities to achieve an appropriate education. Thirty-five years later, [The Department of Education](#) reported on the national impact of IDEA, including the following key impacts from the report, *Thirty-Five Years of Progress in Educating Children with Disabilities Through IDEA, 2004*:

- More young children with disabilities receive high-quality early intervention.
- More children with disabilities are attending neighborhood schools and receiving access to the general education curriculum.
- More youth with disabilities are graduating from high school.
- More youths with disabilities are enrolled in post-secondary programs.
- More young adults with disabilities are employed.

For students between the ages of 3 and 5 years, 49% spent 80% or more of their time with typical achieving peers. Where were students with learning disabilities and behavior disorders educated? Almost 59% of students identified as having specific learning disabilities spent 80% of their time in general education classrooms, whereas only 37% of students identified as emotionally disturbed were in general classrooms for that same amount of time. It is quite likely that fewer students identified as seriously

emotionally disturbed are in general education because their behavior interferes significantly with the academic progress of others in the classroom.

IDEA introduced the concept of a continuum of placements, including the *least restrictive environment* (LRE). Since its passage in 1997, there has been a growing interest in educating students with disabilities with their peers who are nondisabled. IDEA contained a strong mandate to provide greater access to the general education curriculum. As more students with special needs are placed in general education classrooms, with special education teachers consulting or collaborating with classroom teachers, the emphasis on consultation/collaborative models has grown.

Why is inclusion important for students with learning and behavior problems? Students want to succeed in the general education classroom with age-similar peers. The vast majority of students with learning disabilities and behavior problems profit from extensive time in the general education classroom when instructional and behavioral supports meet their needs. Because students with learning disabilities exhibit significant difficulties in one or more academic areas (e.g., reading, math, writing), it is likely that they will also require more intensive academic support in their areas of need.

Lawmakers intended for students with special needs who are included in the general education classroom to receive accommodations for their learning and/or emotional needs within the classroom. The special education teacher, as consultant/collaborator with the general education classroom teacher, is to facilitate the implementation of the student's IEP and then promote effective practices and planning to ensure appropriate instruction is given. Working cooperatively with the special education teacher, the general classroom teacher is responsible for planning, monitoring, and delivering the instruction or intervention the student needs.

Most secondary-level (middle and high school) classroom teachers stated that they had not used IEPs or psychological reports to guide their planning for special education students. They had, however, gathered information from the families and former teachers of students with special needs. Some teachers said that they had very little contact with the special education teacher who monitored their students with special needs, and they were not aware that the students had IEPs. A few teachers had no contact with a special education teacher and were unaware that they even had a student with special needs in their class. In such cases, there was clearly a lack of communication between the special education teacher responsible for monitoring the progress of the students with special needs and the general classroom teacher.

See Chapter 5 on coordinating instruction with families and other professionals.

WEB RESOURCES

For further information on inclusion issues and activities that may be helpful in the classroom, take a look at The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities at www.nichcy.org.

Identifying Students with Learning Disabilities

What issues relate to appropriate identification of students with learning disabilities? Individuals with learning disabilities have typically been identified through referral by classroom teachers or families, followed by a complete battery of assessments designed to identify whether the students meet criteria as learning disabled. Typically, these assessments include an IQ and an achievement test. If students' IQ scores are a certain number of points above their achievement scores (i.e., a large discrepancy between the IQ and achievement scores), the students are identified as having a learning disability because of their "unexpected underachievement." There has been considerable concern about the appropriateness of administering IQ tests to students, particularly minority students. Additionally, there may be no justification for administration of IQ tests because the extent to which the IQ–achievement discrepancy is an appropriate measure for identification of learning disabilities has been questioned (Bradley, Danielson, & Hallahan, 2002; Branum-Martin, Fletcher, & Stuebing, 2012; Stuebing et al., 2002).

WEB RESOURCES

The International Dyslexia Association provides excellent background information on students with reading disabilities: <http://www.interdys.org>.

What is IQ–achievement discrepancy, and what are the concerns about using it? IQ–achievement discrepancy is the common practice by which the IQ test (e.g., a cognitive or intelligence test that is typically individually administered and provides an estimate of overall ability) and standardized achievement scores (e.g., an individually administered test of reading or math that typically is norm referenced) of students are compared, in the belief that a significant discrepancy (higher IQ scores than achievement scores on one or more relevant outcomes) is a strong indicator of learning disabilities. The four specific concerns about this practice are as follows:

1. The discrepancy is difficult to determine with young children and may unnecessarily postpone identification until second grade or later; this concern highlights why some refer to the IQ–achievement discrepancy as the "wait to fail" model.

2. Many young children aged 5 to 7 benefit greatly from prevention programs, particularly in reading, that could keep them from developing greater difficulties in reading or math.
3. Formal IQ and achievement tests are expensive to administer and interpret, and the money might be better used to provide instruction.
4. IQ tests provide little information to teachers to assist them in improving or modifying their instruction.

What alternatives are there to traditional IQ–achievement discrepancy approaches for identifying students with learning disabilities? The most frequently suggested

Further information about RTI is presented in Chapter 3.

alternative is RTI. Though the exact use and application of RTI vary somewhat depending on who is describing it, RTI typically involves a multitiered system of interventions, a data collection system that informs decision making, and ongoing progress monitoring. The number of tiers, what data are collected, and the measures used to determine if a child is “responding” to an intervention might differ depending on the school and content area. RTI can also be conceptualized as a systematic application of data-based decision making to enhance outcomes for all children (D. Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2012; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012). RTI provides a preventive approach to special education and promotes early screening and interventions so that students at risk for academic or behavior difficulties are provided with timely and appropriate services.

RTI addresses concerns about the IQ–achievement discrepancy because students begin to receive help as soon as they start demonstrating academic or behavior difficulties, regardless of what grade they are in. In addition, many students need only an “extra boost” in order to succeed in the general education classroom. For those students, future reading difficulties may be prevented by early intervention. Students who respond adequately to the intervention and can make appropriate progress in the classroom are considered high responders to the intervention; typically, they do not need further intervention and are unlikely to require special education. Students whose response to the intervention is low may be referred for further evaluations and considered for special education (L. S. Fuchs & Vaughn, 2012; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2006). To determine if a student has responded to an intervention, the measures used for screening and progress monitoring are typically quick and easy to administer and are directly related to skills needed for academic or behavior success in the classroom. Therefore, these measures help teachers pinpoint where a student is having difficulties and alter or improve their instruction accordingly (see Apply the Concept 1-1).

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) has developed readily accessible guides to RTI that are available on its web site, as well as the publication *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation* (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2006). Also, the [National Center on RTI](#), provides numerous resources related to assessment and identification as well as RTI.

Developing an Individualized Education Program

What is an IEP, and what is the process for developing and updating an IEP? Procedures for setting goals and planning instruction are designated by law for students who have been identified as requiring special education services (including students with learning or emotional disabilities). IDEA requires that an IEP be developed for each student with special educational needs. A multidisciplinary team develops, implements, and reviews the IEP, which is both a process and a document. The process involves a group of individuals, often referred to as the IEP team, using assessment information, eligibility, and the needs of the student to establish an appropriate specialized educational program for a student with disabilities. The document is a record of the decisions that have been agreed upon by the team and a guide for improving student outcomes. The IEP must be reviewed annually and can be revised at any time to address lack of expected progress, the results of any reevaluations, or other relevant information provided by either the school or family members. Figure 1-1 presents a sample IEP completed for John, a fifth grader with learning disabilities.

The members of the multidisciplinary team include the following people:

- A representative of the local education agency—an administrator who is qualified to supervise services to students with disabilities and who is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum as well as resources and services available.
- Parent(s) or guardian(s).
- Special education teacher.
- At least one general education teacher if the student is participating or is likely to participate in general education classes.
- Evaluator—someone who can interpret the results from the student’s educational, psychological, and/or behavioral evaluations.
- Student, if the teachers and parents determine that it is appropriate for the student to attend the IEP meeting. If transition services are being discussed, the student must be invited to participate.

1-1 APPLY THE CONCEPT

Adopting an RTI Model to Identify Students with Learning Disabilities

The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA recommends that states and schools abandon the IQ–achievement discrepancy to identify students with learning disabilities and instead use an RTI approach. However, IDEA does not require that schools use RTI. Your principal asks your opinion on what your school should do to identify students with learning disabilities.

What are the pros and cons of the IQ–achievement discrepancy and RTI? Which model do you recommend that your school use in determining special education eligibility?

In August 2006, regulatory guidelines for implementing RTI were published (U.S. Department of Education, 2006a, 2006b). Key aspects of the guidelines include the following:

- State criteria must not *require* but may *permit* school districts to use a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement to identify students as learning disabled.
- State criteria must permit the use of a process based on children’s responses to scientific, research-based intervention, that is, an appropriate RTI model.
- When determining specific learning disabilities (SLDs), personnel must determine whether children are making age-appropriate progress or making progress to meet state-approved grade-level standards.
- Lack of achievement may not be due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math. Thus, if the student has had inadequate or inappropriate instruction in the general education classroom, significant and intensive supplemental instruction is required before placement in special education.
- There are many models or frameworks for implementing RTI. To illustrate, some districts use a problem-solving model in which they implement research-based practices by using a team of professionals to make ongoing decisions, whereas other school districts use a standardized approach in which research-based interventions are provided routinely by well-trained professionals.
- Though specific procedures are not described, the importance of timelines and structured communication with family members is emphasized.
- Frequent and ongoing assessments to determine response to intervention can be determined by the state.
- RTI as a means for identifying students with learning disabilities is not a substitute for a comprehensive evaluation.
- No single procedure can be relied on to determine whether a student qualifies for special education.

- Other professionals as appropriate. Parents or the school may invite others who can provide information or assistance, such as an interpreter, therapists or other personnel who work with the student, or a student advocate such as parents’ friends or lawyers.

What should be included in the IEP? According to Section 514(d)(1)(A) of IDEA (2004), as of July 1, 2005, the IEP must include the following nine elements:

1. The student’s current levels of educational performance and social-emotional functioning, including how the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in general education settings.
2. Measurable annual goals that address the student’s individual learning needs and that, to the extent possible, enable the student to participate in and progress in the general education classroom.
3. Special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, including program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student.
4. An explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate in general education classes.
5. A statement indicating how the student will participate in state- or districtwide assessments and outlining any modifications and accommodations to be provided during testing. If the student will not participate in state or district assessments, the IEP must include an explanation of why the student will not participate and how the student will be assessed.
6. When special education services will begin, as well as the frequency, location, and duration of services and modifications.
7. How progress toward annual goals will be measured and how the family will be regularly informed of progress toward these goals. IDEA mandates that parents/guardians be updated on their children’s progress toward IEP goals and objectives when report cards are issued for all students.
8. Explanation of transition services at age 16, including measurable postsecondary goals, to help the student prepare for a job or college by taking appropriate classes and/or accessing services outside of school.
9. A list and signatures of the committee members present.

FIGURE 1-1 Sample Individualized Education Program

Individualized Education Program			
I. Demographic Information			
Last	First	M.I.	Date
Smith	John	E.	May 12, 2014
Student I.D.	Address	Home Phone	Work Phone
2211100	23 Lakeview St. Collier, MN 32346	(459)555-5555	(459)555-5000
Age	Grade Level	Home School	Program Eligibility
11	5	Lakeview Elementary	Learning Disabilities
Reason for Conference:	<input type="checkbox"/> Staffing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review		
II. Conference			
Parent Notification			
Attempt #1:	Attempt #2:	Attempt #3:	
Letter: 3-02-14	Phone call: 3-13-14	Notice sent home with student: 3-22-14	
Parent Response:	Will attend as per phone call on 3-13-14		
III. Present Levels of Educational Performance			
John is a 5th grade student whose disability inhibits his ability to read required material. John can read 35/100 in two minutes from a 4.0 grade level paragraph and 45/100 in two minutes from a 3.0 grade level paragraph. John can answer 8/10 literal questions and 4/10 inference questions from a 4.0 grade level passage read to him.			
IV. Annual Goals and Short-Term Benchmarks			
1. John will increase reading fluency to the 4.0 grade level.			
John will read orally a passage at the 4.0 grade level in 2 minutes with 50 or more words correct.			
John will use correct intonation and prosody when reading orally a passage at the 4.0 grade level 50% of the time.			
2. John will improve the percentage of accuracy when responding to literal and inferential questions.			
John will answer literal questions from a 4.0 grade level passage read to him with 75% accuracy.			
John will answer inferential questions from a 4.0 grade level passage read to him with 90-100% accuracy.			
Describe the extent to which the student will not participate in general education settings and explain why the student cannot be placed in general education settings.			
John will not participate in general education settings for language arts, science, and social studies instruction. John requires close supervision when completing tasks, high levels of assistance, and intensive, systematic instruction.			
V. Related Services			
Type of Service, Aid or Modification			Location
Assistive Technology:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Adaptive PE:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Audiology Services:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Counseling:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Interpreter:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Medical Services:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Occupational Therapy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Orientation/Mobility:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Physical Therapy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Psychological Services:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Special Transportation:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Speech/Lang. Therapy:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Self-contained class, 30 min./wk
			<i>(continued)</i>