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# **Inclusive Classroom**

**a practical guide for educators**

SiriNam S. Khalsa, NBCT  
Illustrated by Yoshi Miyake

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## Dedication

*This book is sincerely dedicated to all our children, which includes the many students I have had the privilege to teach in public schools, educational collaboratives, and summer camps. They all have and continue to inspire me to keep learning, growing, and developing as a teacher. Thank you.*

## About the Author

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## Preface

Since I wrote the first edition of this book, teaching in an inclusive classroom has become even more prevalent among the many educators across this country. The need for diverse academic instruction has also increased due to the makeup of the inclusive classroom. There are greater numbers of students who are English language learners, and therefore there is a greater need for our teachers to support and provide multiple, flexible methods of presentation and options for engagement in the curriculum.

During the past few years, teachers in my workshops have called for ongoing training in the teaching strategies, structure, environmental modifications, curriculum adaptations, and interventions that will allow all students to succeed. In today's schools, most if not all classrooms contain students diagnosed with learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder). Teachers are also realizing that all children possess unique strengths and have far more similarities than differences. They all can learn. They all want to be successful and achieve in school by gaining the skills and competencies necessary to move forward. All students want to enjoy themselves, be accepted, and feel part of the school community. In my very large school district, at all grade levels we are now making an effort to integrate the majority of students with special needs into the general education classroom or to achieve full inclusion.

Strategies that support the unique learning styles, readiness, and interests among our diverse student population are now being referred to as *differentiated instruction*. Therefore, I have included an additional chapter on this subject in this edition of *Inclusive Classroom*. I am grateful to Good Year Books for the opportunity to share these additional instructional strategies with educators who are dedicated to creating quality educational experiences for all students in the inclusive classroom. My goal was to add an extension to the practical strategies and material included in the first edition, giving teachers an understanding of differentiated instruction and how it can be used to create challenging and comfortable learning environments for all students. I feel this is the essential goal of all public education.

## Acknowledgments

This book evolved from a realization that the direction public school education has taken requires that all teachers have the skills and understanding of how to reach and teach all children in the mainstream classroom. As the material presented in this book developed, I was constantly rewarded by the pleasure of working with many individuals who are trying to meet this challenge set before us.

I wish to thank the following individuals for their support and influence. Thank you to those administrators, teachers, and counselors from Kennedy Middle School and the Springfield, MA, School District who are helping to achieve the goals of the inclusive classroom. Special thanks to an inspiring principal, Mrs. Veta Daley, for her leadership and support of the learning needs of all students. Thanks to Laura Strom and the editorial staff at Good Year Books. Appreciation to John Ryan for his early inspiration. And a heartfelt thank you to my wife, Kirn Kaur, and family for their never-ending love and support.

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## INTRODUCTION

# DEFINING INCLUSION

Inclusive education has arrived. The benefits of including students with special needs in age-appropriate regular education classes in neighborhood schools are making true believers out of parents, teachers, administrators, and students. I've been fortunate, for the past few years, to be part of a school system that has worked hard to make the inclusion process a success for all involved. However, I also have seen the need to give teachers more practical information so that they can develop strategies and environments to support inclusive classrooms.

A few years ago I realized that many parents, teachers, and students with disabilities were requesting more educational options. The walls of segregated classrooms started to fall down and the roles and responsibilities of all educators began to change. Initially, as a special educator, I was resistant to support a philosophy that I believed could be detrimental to the self-esteem of students with learning difficulties. I also didn't think I had enough time to investigate the possibilities inherent in inclusive classrooms, and I wasn't excited about having to team teach. In other words, I was content with the status quo.

After visiting a school where inclusion was being successfully implemented using a co-teaching model, however, my interest was piqued. I began attending conferences and listening to colleagues talk about the possible benefits of providing instructional and emotional support to children with disabilities in the regular classroom setting. I also discovered ways to assist teachers in these efforts with new ideas for instructional modifications.

Even though some school districts are very supportive of full- and part-time inclusive classrooms, it isn't always an easy journey for all involved. Classroom teachers may express concerns about



not being competent or trained to deal with children with disabilities. Not only are we bringing children with special needs into the regular classroom, but all teachers, regardless of their training, are now expected to serve all students regardless of their individual needs! The majority of teachers intrinsically appreciate that this is a positive direction for children and adults to take, but that does not make it any less challenging. Through my experiences with inclusive classrooms, I now realize that inclusion is like a mirror that reflects positively on all those who embrace it.

## What Is Inclusion?

*The American Heritage Dictionary* defines *inclusion* as “the act of including or belonging together from beginning to end.”

Inclusion is the natural process of living in a democratic society. Feeling part of and involved in our families, local communities, country, and humanity is the foundation of the life we lead. Unfortunately, for many years we have excluded children with disabilities from fully participating in the general school setting. Children with special needs have been sent to private schools, collaboratives, separate classrooms, or traditional pullout programs. Inclusive education is eliminating segregation of children who learn differently and is changing our perception about what we as educators can do to set the tone for acceptance.

Presently, inclusive education programs are being implemented across the nation in large and small urban, suburban, and rural districts. Many factors have influenced the movement of regular and special education toward closer cooperation. These factors include federal legislation (PL 94-142), student self-advocacy, and parental support for both access and equality for all children in school programs. In addition, there is growing concern about the economic implications of setting up substantially separate programs for students with disabilities. These factors have also helped educators realize that the traditional way of dividing students into two classifications, normal and special, is now neither realistic nor productive.

## What Are Some of the Qualities That Define Inclusive Classrooms?

- Students previously served by special education classrooms now being served in the general classroom setting for all or part of the day
- Special and regular education teachers working together as a team in the same classroom
- Special education and regular education staff planning lessons together

- All staff working together in designing a classroom to accentuate the success of all its members
- Regular classroom teachers being given relevant information on students with special needs in order to assist them in adapting or modifying classroom instruction, assessment, and behavior management

## The Illusion of Inclusion

It is equally important to understand what inclusion is not:

- “Dumping” students with special needs in regular classrooms without necessary supports and services
- Trading off instructional quality for inclusion goals
- Cutting back or eliminating needed special education services
- Expecting all students to learn at the same time, at the same pace, and in the same way
- Requiring regular education teachers to teach all students without the support needed to succeed
- Sacrificing the quality education of general needs students

Inclusion begins with the decision to educate as many students as possible in the regular classroom setting in their own neighborhood schools. *Neighborhood school* is defined as “the school the child would be attending if he or she were not disabled.”

Inclusion of special students in the general classroom is an ongoing process. This process may look different for each school, each teacher, and each student. However, there are some consistent qualities as well as practices that are interwoven within each classroom. Qualities such as **cooperation, communication, and commitment** to the inclusive process are essential for success.



Each unique situation should also have the flexibility to develop and make needed changes from year to year, month to month, week to week, and in some situations, day to day. Today, as more and more schools adopt inclusion, an increasing number of teachers are finding it difficult to understand “how to make it work.” It’s important to begin to understand the different options available to you and your school, to make inclusion work for all students.

Each student’s academic and social needs will determine the model option necessary for meeting those needs. The student also may be involved with a combination of model options throughout the school day. Facilitating a school environment that cultivates an openness around different model options, as well as acceptance for children with diverse learning needs, is an important first step. Successful inclusion will encourage schools to create programs around children’s academic, social, and behavioral needs rather than attempting to fit all students into existing programs.

When determining which model option is most appropriate for a student’s special needs, both regular and special education faculty need to work together in a unified manner in order to promote favorable inclusion environments.

*“All great minds DON’T think alike.”*

## What Does an Inclusive School Look Like?

Working toward specific educational goals for the included child will set a tone that supports shared responsibility, accountability, and concern for all children. Following are some characteristics of teams and schools that enhance collaboration:

- Shared ownership of the responsibility to educate all children by general and special educators
- A continuum of classroom model options
- A variety of teaching models, focusing on the possible advantages of each one
- Flexibility and openness to different teaching as well as behavior management strategies
- Shared goals and beliefs pertaining to the appropriate curriculum adaptations and modifications possibly needed for the success of the included child
- Shared awareness of all students’ abilities as well as disabilities—*All great minds don’t think alike.*

## What Are the Classroom Model Options?

- **Full inclusion model**—The student participates all day in a regular classroom with same-age peers. The special education staff co-teaches with the regular education teacher or provides consultative support.
- **Mainstreaming model**—This was one of the first terms used to describe the education of students with special needs within regular classrooms. The student takes part in activities in the regular class based on his or her acceptable level of performance and behavior.
- **Social mainstreaming model**—The student is included in the regular classroom for the main purpose of providing him or her with appropriate interactions with nondisabled students. The student can be given modified or parallel assignments, but is not required to complete instructional assignments.
- **Pullout (resource room) model**—Special education staff provides academic support to one or more students outside the classroom, as needed.
- **Nonacademic model**—The student participates in regular classes in the areas of physical education, music, and art.
- **Self-contained model**—The student remains in a special education classroom or resource room for all or part of the school day.

These terms represent many classroom model options considered appropriate for meeting the needs of students with special needs. It's important to remember that inclusion involves multiple model options. Other model options that are developed through the collaboration of faculty, parents, and administrators can only add to the flexibility necessary to support all children's ability to learn.





## This Book As a Tool for Teachers

Teachers need tools, or resources, to build successful programs in which all children have the opportunity for meaningful educational experiences regardless of learning styles and ability. The purpose of this book is to share practical guidance with you as you work toward achieving the often arduous but ultimately rewarding task of creating and running inclusive schools. As you strive to create learning environments where all children can experience success, develop lifelong friendships, and gain skills that enable them to become contributing members of society, you will also realize the need for practical strategies to support your goals.

***“Inclusion is not an end in itself.  
It is a means to an end, and that end is  
improved learning for every student.”***

*Inclusive Classroom* offers educators, parents, administrators, and other school personnel in the elementary and lower middle-school grades a basic understanding of what is involved in making inclusion work. This book will provide basic techniques to increase successful opportunities for the children being included in your classrooms. In chapter 1 there is an explanation of the types of disabilities and other factors determining achievement, reasons for trying inclusion, and factors in determining whether inclusion is appropriate. In chapter 2 you will find the most recent research on how to address students’ different learning styles and multiple intelligences in the classroom. In chapter 3, you will find teaching tools such as easy-to-use activities, staff communication forms, and effective behavior management strategies for immediate implementation. chapter 4 is dedicated to curriculum modification strategies and lesson designs that will assist all students in reaching your teaching goals. Included in chapter 5 is a curriculum entitled “How to Succeed in Eight Lessons,” which has been found successful in aiding children in learning how to learn. In chapter 6 you will learn how to manage classroom behaviors successfully. chapter 7 gives strategies for dealing with ten specific negative behavior types. chapter 8 discusses how to develop a partnership with parents and how parents can help. Finally, chapter 9 addresses strategies for differentiating instruction to meet students’ individual needs. The appendix contains a list of organizations you can join to provide additional support.

Throughout this book, you will see how your school community can effectively work together in helping all children reach their learning potential. This may include children with learning disabilities; physical, social, and emotional problems; attention deficit disorders; and speech and language needs, as well as those who are underachieving for a variety of other reasons.



## Defining Inclusion

It is my belief, as well as experience, that most children with mild to moderate disabilities can have a successful educational experience in the mainstream of our school system. I also firmly believe that success cannot be achieved without two things in place:

1. A shared mindset that understands inclusion is a challenging proposition and one that no one is going to attempt if they do not truly believe that it is possible and necessary
2. A commitment to creating a collaborative partnership with all who are involved in the inclusion process

It's important to clarify one point in regard to teaching "all children in inclusive classrooms." This book was written with understanding and genuine respect for all teachers, parents, and students who are involved in the inclusion process. It was also written with the awareness that the regular classroom setting may not always be the best or least restrictive learning environment for every student. Every child is entitled to an appropriate placement that will offer him or her the most effective educational opportunity consistent with his or her needs.

Inclusion is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end, and that end is improved learning for every student. *Inclusive Classroom* was written to enable all educators who are participating in the challenging and exciting process of inclusion to build a solid foundation for success.



## CHAPTER 1

# GETTING STARTED

Diversity comes in many shapes, sizes, and forms. The inclusive classroom welcomes diversity and the wide range of student needs that accompany students' differences. Teachers who help children understand and discuss differences help create an educational environment that supports empathy for all individuals.

Educators and administrators understand that our laws sometimes require us to define children before we can serve them through special education programs. By definition, students with special needs are in need of and entitled to special approaches to learning from our schools. Special and general education teachers are being asked to meet the learning needs of all students who enter their classrooms. Categorizing can add some clarity in determining what type of instruction is needed for the student with learning problems. For example, because the type of instruction needed depends upon the nature of the difficulty, it's important to distinguish between children who have a learning disability and those who are educationally delayed. The child who is educationally delayed because of mental retardation, emotional disturbance, deafness, and so forth, may need a different kind of instructional approach than a child with learning disabilities. The special educator is trained to assist the regular classroom teacher with these distinctions.

To help teachers understand the differences in these classifications for instructional purposes, brief descriptions of the special needs categories follow.

## Defining Types of Disabilities

### Learning Disabilities

Children with learning disabilities require a different method of instruction to learn what is taught in class. For this reason some people refer to learning disabled (LD) as meaning "learning different." Students with learning disabilities are the largest, approximately 50 percent, and often the most misunderstood group of children receiving special education services. Children with LD are not less intelligent than most of their peers, yet they often need alternative learning strategies to experience success in school. Some of our greatest achievers, such as Albert Einstein, had a learning disability.

Some children with LD exhibit poor motor coordination and body image. These students are easily spotted in gym class, since they usually perform poorly in physical education activities for their age level. If this is the case, modified exercises and activities may be needed to help students with disabilities take advantage of the same physical, emotional, and social benefits of exercise, recreation, and leisure activities that other students enjoy. Many children with LD could learn more easily if taught how to better organize their materials and assignments and if given extra support in this area. Some simple and effective ways to help students get organized are described in “How to Succeed in Eight Lessons,” chapter 5.

*“Some of our greatest achievers, such as Albert Einstein, had a learning disability.”*

## Mental Retardation

A child who is identified as having mental retardation has difficulty in learning how to read, write, spell, or calculate at his or her age level. Presently, the degree of mental retardation is determined by the child’s IQ. It is known that a child whose IQ is 50, 60, or 70 has a mental level of 3 to 4 years at the age of 6. This means that the child possibly will be 9 to 12 years old before he or she has the prerequisite skills for reading. Mental retardation is not a disease, nor should it be confused with mental illness. Children with mental retardation grow into adults with mental retardation; they do not remain “eternal children.” All individuals who are mentally disabled have the capacity to learn, develop, and grow. The great majority can become economically productive, fully participating members of society. The student’s education should be general, practical, and adapted to the slower rate of development.

Mental retardation can be caused by any condition that impairs development of the brain before and during birth or in the childhood years. Some of the most common causes include



genetic irregularities; drug and/or alcohol abuse; problems before, during, or after birth; and environmental factors that, according to the President's Committee on Mental Retardation (1985), account for 75 percent of our nation's citizens with mental retardation.

Some children will use the term “retarded” to tease a peer who did something wrong. The teacher can use this as a learning opportunity to help children understand the implications of using this term, and the difference between having a mental disability and doing something annoying or inappropriate.

### **Speech and Sensory Handicaps**

This category includes visual, speech, and hearing impairments that affect the ability to learn. Deaf children, for example, are often delayed in reading because deafness interferes with the development of language. Children with speech difficulties have problems with pronunciation and speech fluency. Children with language disorders demonstrate difficulties in the use of language. Speech-language pathologists have developed ways to assess language disorders and teach those who have them. These children often need additional time to express themselves in class. A simple technique to facilitate verbal responses with this type of student is to offer him or her a choice of answers: “Is Boston a city or a state?”

### **Emotional Disturbance and Behavioral Disorders**

Students exhibiting an emotional disability are often delayed educationally as well. These children may demonstrate a variety of behavioral problems that may have existed for a long time across a range of environmental settings. Some of these behavioral problems include verbal aggression, confrontational behavior, impulsive and uninhibited behavior, resistance to change, and frustration, even when confronted with a simple task.

Certain behaviors, however, should be targeted as priorities in the inclusive classroom when working with children who have an emotional disturbance. These target behaviors include:

- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Defiance of authority
- Erratic and explosive outbursts
- Poor social relationships
- Poor attention span
- Low frustration level
- Inability to remain seated for a short period of time

Students who exhibit emotional and behavioral problems are often the most difficult to work with. For this reason, Chapter 6 is dedicated to managing behavior problems in the classroom. Possible causes and instructional considerations are provided. Many children who fall into this emotional and behavioral category are being identified today as having an attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This is diagnosed by clinical assessment and includes information from all those who know the child. (See chapter 6, “Managing Behaviors in an Inclusive Classroom.”)

## Physical Disabilities

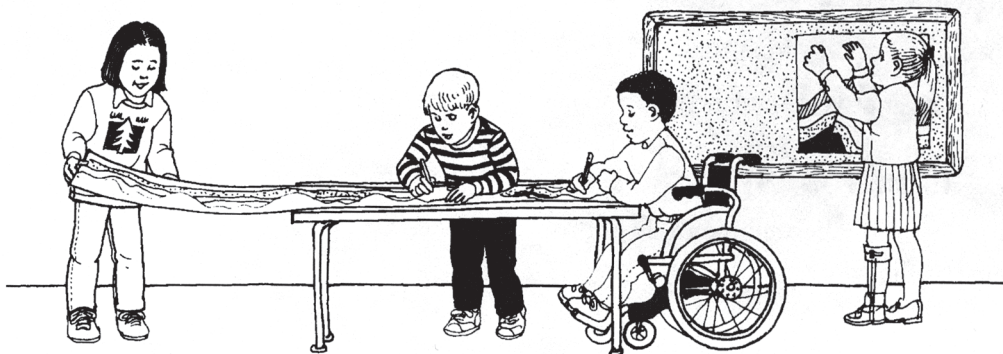
Children with a physical disability have difficulty using their bodies. The cause of their disabilities may be cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, or multiple sclerosis. Children with severe physical disabilities may receive services in motor development from specialists, such as occupational or physical therapists. Many children with physical disabilities are of normal intelligence, and thus should not be prevented from participating in class activities. The child in a wheelchair, just as one who brings an inhaler for chronic asthma to class, should be expected to participate as fully as possible.

## Other Factors Determining Achievement

There are other factors that result in children not achieving in school. The following are three of the most prevalent external reasons for underachieving. These children aren’t necessarily receiving special educational services.

## Lack of Opportunity

This refers to a child who has matured at a normal rate emotionally, socially, and linguistically, but who is behind academically. Although there is a difference between the student’s potential and achievement, the student is not considered learning disabled. Take, for example, a 9-year-old child who has moved several times during the past two years and who is consequently lacking



continuity in his or her schooling. This child will “catch up” if given consistent developmental reading and arithmetic tutoring, beginning at his or her level of competence.

## **Economic and Cultural Disadvantage**

Some children underachieve in school due to a lack of support from their home environments. They, therefore, develop a resistance toward learning as a result of low self-concept and a lack of positive role models and encouragement. Notable early education compensatory programs for at risk preschoolers exist, such as Head Start and Parent and Child Centers.

## **Why Try Inclusion?**

Many children across the country live in communities in which exposure to people with any kind of difference is limited. Interaction with children with disabilities at school can change how they view individual differences.

Why then should children with special needs be educated in regular classrooms? We have identified the types of students who would most likely participate in an inclusive program. But what are the possible benefits for children who participate in an inclusive classroom?

### **Benefits for Students**

- Interaction with regular education peers
- Increased social skills
- Labeling is de-emphasized
- Higher expectations for learning
- Increased sense of school community
- Increased real-world learning
- Opportunity for peers to see that the differences in students with special needs are superficial

### **Benefits for Teachers**

- Increased collegiality among special and regular education faculty
- Shared resources
- Special educators able to serve more students
- Teachers increase their instructional skills repertoire

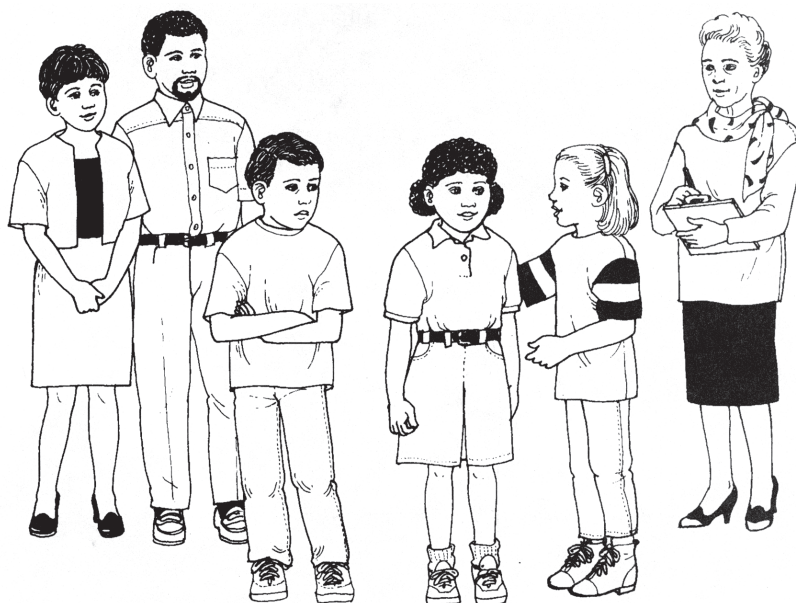


## When Is Inclusion Appropriate?

Before deciding when inclusion is appropriate, one must answer questions concerning the following four factors.

1. **The student:** What are his or her academic and social needs? What is the severity of the disability? What is his or her learning style? How adaptable is the student?
2. **The teacher:** How receptive is he or she to inclusion? What skills does he or she possess? Has the teacher been prepared to have students with disabilities enter his or her classroom? Is there adequate staffing? Is the teacher willing to create an environment that supports diversity in learning styles?
3. **The class makeup:** How resistant or accepting are the students? What percentage of students exhibit emotional immaturity when it comes to bullying, teasing, and making fun of others? Are there appropriate role models in the class? Are cooperative learning activities already being implemented?
4. **The parent:** Parents want the best educational program for their child. Inclusion isn't always the best option. Discussions surrounding inclusive and noninclusive steps that meet the student's academic, social/emotional, and behavioral goals need to take place. Communication between teacher and parent is an essential step.

These four factors can act as a guide toward more informed discussions about integrating children with special needs. With cooperative planning and an understanding of the student's needs, a solid foundation for successful inclusion can be built.



## Beliefs That Support Teaching in an Inclusive School

Liberate Learning	OR	Limit Learning
All children are capable of high achievement, not just the fastest or most confident children.	VS.	Only the few bright children can achieve at a high level.
Consistent effort and effective strategies are the ingredients for success.	VS.	Inborn intelligence is the determinant of success.
You are not supposed to understand everything the first time around.	VS.	Speed is what counts. Faster is smarter.
Mistakes help one learn.	VS.	Mistakes are a sign of mental weakness.
Successful students work together and solicit help from one another.	VS.	Competition is necessary to bring out the best in children...or...good students can do it on their own.

*As an educator, which column reflects your belief system?*



## Redefined Job Responsibilities in an Inclusive Classroom

Title	Traditional Responsibilities	Redefined Responsibilities
<b>Teacher</b>	<p>Students who do not “fit” into the mainstream class due to academics or disabilities are referred for diagnosis, remediation, and possible removal to a separate setting.</p> <p>Teaches all children in the same way, and at the same time.</p>	<p>Works with the special educators and other support staff as a team for teaching and reaching all children in the mainstream classroom.</p> <p>Collaboratively plans and teaches with other educators to meet the learning styles and needs of all children.</p> <p>Uses cooperative learning strategies to encourage peer support for one another.</p>
<b>Special Educator</b>	<p>Teaches students with special needs in resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, and special schools.</p>	<p>Collaborates with general education staff and other support personnel to meet the academic and social needs of all learners.</p> <p>Team teaches with general educators.</p>



## Diversity Acceptance Checklist

### My Attitude Toward Acceptance...

Accepting diversity in your classroom begins with being aware of your values, thoughts, and behaviors. Accepting diverse learning styles in your students will help create a learning environment that will erase labels and focus on individual talents as well as group cohesiveness. Ask yourself these questions and let them act as a guide as you check your attitude toward acceptance:

1. Do I see a student with special needs as an individual with disabilities or a disabled individual?
2. Do I try to support individual capabilities and adapt to students' needs?
3. Am I comfortable interacting with students with mental and physical disabilities?
4. Do I assist students in communicating their thoughts and feelings in alternative ways (e.g., drawing, sign language, communication board, etc.)?
5. Do I attempt to determine students' diverse learning styles and teach with them in mind?
6. Do I use a variety of instructional strategies that encourage group work (e.g., cooperative groups, learning buddies, peer reading, etc.)?
7. Do I understand where, when, and how to offer support to a student with special needs?
8. Do I know where to start in the process of choosing appropriate adaptations and modifications to classroom activities, curriculum, and materials?
9. Is my classroom set up to be responsive to a variety of instructional and behavioral needs?
10. Do I adjust the physical arrangement of the room for students with disabilities?
11. Do I try to use a variety of assessment procedures for all students (e.g., oral testing, contract grading, point systems, pass/fail, etc.)?
12. Do I set up student conferences to provide one-to-one feedback?
13. Do I view students with special needs as "my" students?
14. Do I use encouragement more than reprimands?
15. Do I use alternative approaches toward behavior management (e.g., active listening, planned ignoring, time-out, check lists, etc.)?
16. Do I feel comfortable communicating with parents of students with special needs?
17. Am I comfortable with support services provided in my classroom?
18. Am I comfortable with team collaboration (co-teaching, co-planning, etc.)?

- My personal action plan for growth:

[illegible]

## CHAPTER 2

**LEARNING STYLES AND MULTIPLE  
INTELLIGENCES—HOW CHILDREN LEARN**

All children do not learn in the same way. There is an increasing amount of information on how children learn and the different styles or modalities that facilitate the learning process. Special educators are trained to approach teaching in a variety of different ways to ensure that students with learning difficulties process the information being taught. Teaching strategies that include role-play, group discussion, visual aids, and hands-on activities are not necessarily new to the special educator. All teachers are now being exposed to the recent literature that addresses the importance of understanding how “learning styles” affect the way all children think, behave, approach learning, and process information. It is important that all children understand that uniqueness not only encompasses our likes and dislikes, culture, gender, and race, but also includes the way we learn.

I recommend to teachers that they share this important information with their students during the beginning weeks of school. This can be communicated to students in a very neutral and matter-of-fact manner such as, “Each of us is unique in that we learn in many different ways. To help all of you succeed, I will probably treat each one of you a little differently throughout the year and include a variety of ways of teaching you in class.”

*“A student’s style of learning refers to the student’s general behavior, attitude, and temperament when presented with a learning task. The learning styles in an academic situation influence the effectiveness of learning. The learning style of the student may be at odds with the style required to succeed in a traditional education system. Analysis of the student’s learning style can provide insight into the nature of the learning difficulties.”* (Carbo, M. R. Dunn; and K. Dunn. *Teaching Students to Read Through Their Individual Learning Styles*. Reston Publishing Company, 1986.)

**Five Learning Modalities and Teaching Strategies**

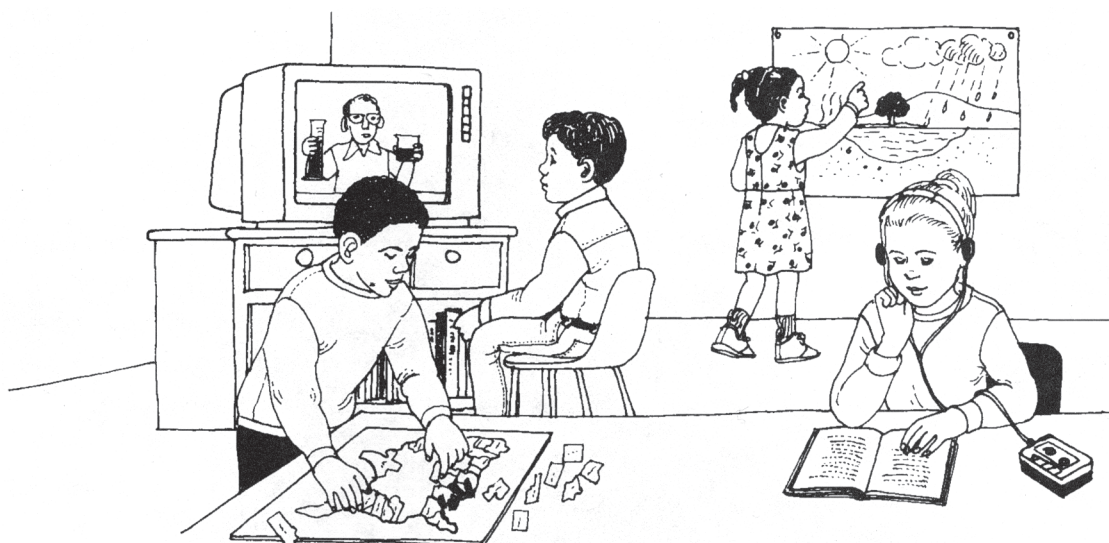
The following descriptions are of basic learning modalities and some suggested teaching strategies that can be used to support a student’s preferred style of learning. It’s important to understand that a student’s strength might be in one of these areas, or in several. When two or more areas are equally efficient, the result is mixed, or multimodality, strengths. Children with multimodality strengths seem to have a learning advantage in the classroom. They are better able to process the

information being taught regardless of its presentation. There are a number of checklists that can assist teachers in gathering information on students' learning modalities.

**Visual Learners:** Students whose preference is the visual channel learn best by looking, seeing, observing, watching, and visualizing. Research has shown that approximately 30 percent of elementary school-aged children are visual learners. To support these students, you can use these teaching strategies:

### Visual Learner Teaching Strategies

- Supplement lectures with visual aids such as color transparencies, maps, charts, graphs, filmstrips, and videos.
- Write information on the chalkboard as well as give it verbally. Provide a written copy of board work if needed. The use of graphs, pictures, key words, and important facts also should accompany verbal directions and presentations. Give a copy of assignments in written form, weekly or daily.
- Include the use of graphic organizers such as webs, outlines, and charts when giving instructions to assist visual learners in comprehending assignments.
- Provide books with illustrations that accompany text.
- Use colored flash cards as well as colored indicators on rulers and yardsticks, and highlight important passages in their texts.
- Use word searches, word cards to arrange in sentences, letter cards to spell words, word games such as Scrabble, and crossword puzzles to assist in reading skills.
- Allow students to give written reports or projects as well as oral ones.



- Have students observe experiments, demonstrations, animal behavior, and role-play.
- Use mnemonic devices and associations to aid memory (e.g., Italy is the shape of a boot).

**Auditory Learners:** These students make up approximately 25 percent of elementary school-aged children. They learn by listening to others and themselves. It's important to emphasize the difference between "hearing" and "listening" by playing direction-following games such as Simon Says. Having auditory learners repeat oral instructions will reinforce comprehension. To support auditory learners you can include these teaching strategies:

### Auditory Learner Teaching Strategies

- Audiotape textbook material for students to listen to while reading.
- Give verbal as well as written directions. You can tape-record your instructions or lecture and then play the tape back to the class or individual while they begin the assignment.
- Involve students in small- and large-group discussions; learning partners read important information (and do oral activities prior to independent/silent work).
- Give an oral rather than written test. For inclusive students, allow tests to be administered by special education staff in the resource room.
- Use phonetic approaches for reading and decoding skills.
- Use word games, spelling bees, audio tapes, and rhyming melodies to reinforce learning.
- Have students interact/verbalize through brainstorming, panels, partner work, and interviews.

**Kinesthetic or Tactile Learners:** Approximately 15 percent of elementary school-aged children are kinesthetically oriented. The remaining 30 percent of children have a mixed, or multimodality, strength. Kinesthetic learners learn by moving, touching, and directly experiencing through hands-on activities. These students need to use manipulatives to activate their ability to process information. They are usually very energetic children who have difficulty sitting for a long period of time. Their energy needs to be directed through activities that require them to translate verbal instruction into bodily kinesthetic expression. For example, in a vocabulary lesson about prefixes, one child is the prefix "un" and another is the root word "like." They stand next to each other to make the word "unlike" and apart to demonstrate how the prefix changes the meaning of the root word. The range of topics is endless. To support kinesthetic learners, you can use the following:

## Kinesthetic Learner Teaching Strategies

- Use role-play and simulations to reinforce the lesson.
- Allow students to use body movements to demonstrate teaching concepts such as raising arms to demonstrate a right angle, horizontal and vertical lines, or the  $x$ - and  $y$ -axis of a graph.
- Allow students to build models, draw pictures, make bulletin boards, design collages, and so on. (You may want to have a piece of clay or spongy ball ready for the tactile student to hold when they're expected to sit and pay attention. They're usually so grateful for the opportunity to touch and manipulate something that they return the object without a problem.)
- Let students move about, for example, to another seating area during class or to deliver something to another teacher in the building.

**Impulsive Learners:** This type of learner responds very quickly to a given problem with very little consideration to the possible outcomes. Students with learning disabilities often respond in an impulsive manner that is usually detrimental to their school performance. These students need guidance and practice in approaching their work with more deliberation, and considering alternatives before choosing a response to a problem. To promote a more reflective approach to their schoolwork, employ self-monitoring strategies using high-interest materials to promote active involvement in the learning process (e.g., stopping after each paragraph and asking, "What did I just read?").

**Active Versus Passive Learners:** Successful experiences in learning require an active or involved dynamic in the learning process. Students who are active learners use many effective thinking strategies (e.g., organization and self-questioning) that promote their involvement in the work and increase their motivation to learn.





On the other hand, students who lack the interest, skills, and/or self-concept to be active in the learning process will usually approach the learning task in a passive manner. Consequently, they become frustrated and uninvolved. These students need encouragement and small successes to build up their confidence.

In summary, knowing the learning styles of your students will help you develop cognitive empathy, or a way of getting into your students' heads. Learning styles help us to identify the comfort zones of our students, but should not act as an excuse for them not to participate in class. Teaching to different learning styles will enhance your ability to effectively teach all students.

*“Teaching to different learning styles will enhance your ability to effectively teach all students.”*

## Creating a Responsive Classroom Environment

Creating a classroom environment responsive to the learning styles of your students is oftentimes a challenge. Classroom space is scarce in many of our overcrowded schools. Due to space restrictions, it is often difficult to be creative with seating arrangements and learning centers. Nevertheless, it's important to evaluate how you set up your classroom and its effect on the students' ability to learn. Students sitting in neat rows of desks facing the front of the room, where a teacher either sits or lectures from, is one way to organize a classroom, but by no means the only or best way.

Arranging a classroom environment that supports the different learning styles of all students takes some brainstorming, but the results are worth it. The effects of a well-planned classroom area will undoubtedly show as students' participation and cooperation increases.

The following questions serve as guidelines for arranging a responsive classroom environment.

### Checklist for Creating a Responsive Classroom Environment

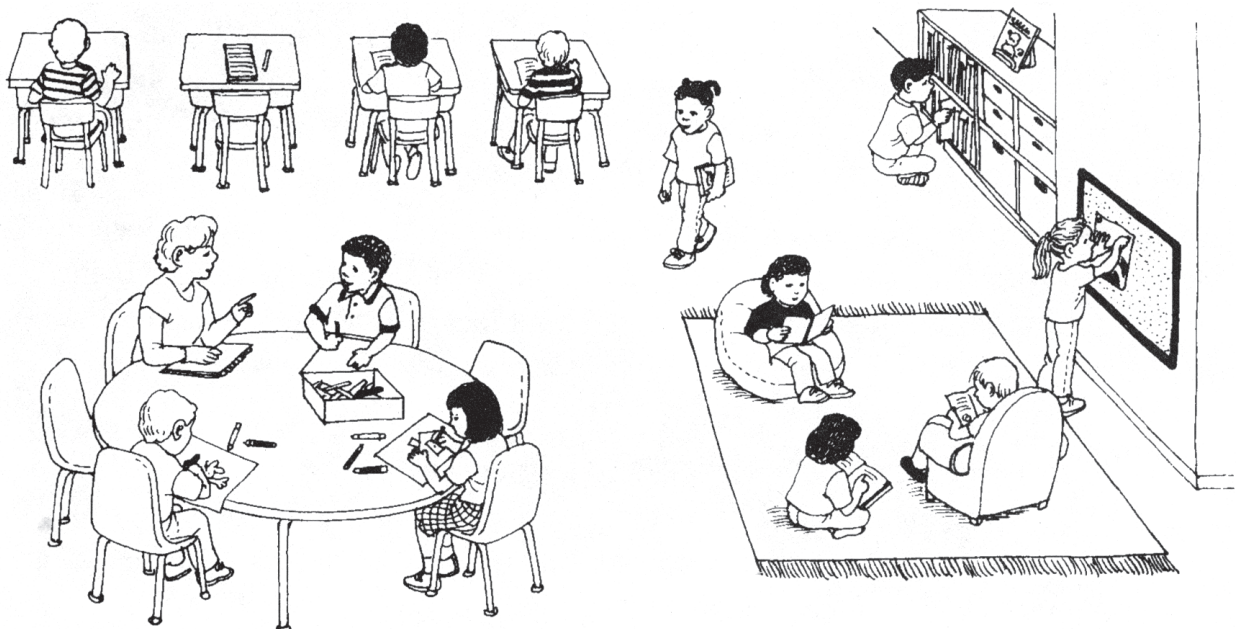
- ✓ Are there clearly defined interest and storage areas for materials that are easily accessible to students?
- ✓ Is the room attractive to the eye (displays of selected pictures or materials that relate to children's interests or class studies, plants on windowsills, etc.)?
- ✓ Are students taught how to display work and how to label and describe this work?



- ✓ How is the furniture arranged? Does furniture (shelves, desks, tables, bulletin boards) throughout the entire room create defined work areas that are appropriate to the age and development of the children?
- ✓ Are there active and quiet areas as well as a carpeted area for informal learning?
- ✓ Is the furniture arranged so you can see the entire room from any part of the room?
- ✓ Can you move around the room without feeling crowded?
- ✓ Is there a meeting area (in elementary grades) large enough for the whole class to sit in a circle that can be used at any time of the day?
- ✓ Is material rotated on shelves and in interest areas to reflect and enhance themes of study and to keep students interested and challenged?
- ✓ Are there centers for group and individual learning?

The classroom environment provides much of the clarity, comfort, and structure needed for students to be actively engaged in the learning process. Many teachers are incorporating learning centers in their classrooms to expand the opportunities for reaching a variety of learning needs.

It is highly recommended that you involve your students in the process of experimenting with different arrangements to determine what works best for your classroom.



*“Almost eighty years after the first intelligence tests (IQ tests) were developed, a Harvard psychologist named Howard Gardner challenged this commonly held belief. Saying that our culture had defined intelligence too narrowly, he proposed in the book *Frames of Mind* (Gardner 1983) the existence of at least seven intelligences. In this theory of multiple intelligences (MI theory), Gardner sought to broaden the scope of human potential beyond the confines of the IQ score. Gardner suggested that intelligence has more to do with the capacity for (1) solving problems and (2) fashioning products in a context-rich and naturalistic setting.” (Armstrong, Thomas. “Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom,” Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1994.)*

## Seven Types of Intelligences

***Linguistic Intelligence “Word Smart”***—These people are very good at using their verbal and language skills and are often storytellers, journalists, poets, editors, playwrights, or politicians. Linguistic learners enjoy word games like Scrabble®, anagrams, Password®, and crossword puzzles. These children usually have a good vocabulary for their age and excel in reading, spelling, and verbal communication.

***Logical-Mathematical Intelligence “Number Smart”***—These individuals have a natural talent for using numbers effectively (e.g., as a mathematician or tax accountant) and are able to reason well (e.g., as a scientist or computer programmer). These learners are adept in problem solving, calculation, inference, and hypothesis testing. These learners enjoy playing chess, checkers, or other strategy games (in preschool, board games requiring counting squares).

***Spatial Intelligence “Art Smart”***—These learners have a talent in perceiving the visual-spatial world accurately (e.g., as a scout), and in re-creating that world they see so clearly (e.g., as an artist, interior decorator, architect, or inventor). These children enjoy art activities, puzzles, mazes, Where’s Waldo?, or other similar activities. They get more out of pictures than words while reading and are usually found doodling on workbooks, worksheets, and other materials.

***Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence “Body Smart”***—These individuals do very well in physical activities such as sports, dance, and acting. They might be found moving, twitching, tapping, or fidgeting while seated for a long period. They learn best by doing and often exhibit good fine-motor coordination (e.g., woodworking, sewing, mechanics).

***Musical Intelligence “Music Smart”***—These learners are sensitive to and talented in musical expression, rhythm, pitch, and melody. Students have a rhythmic way of speaking and/or moving

as well as being sensitive to environmental noises (e.g., car horns or rain on the roof). They enjoy singing in a choir or joining other musical groups (e.g., playing percussion instruments).

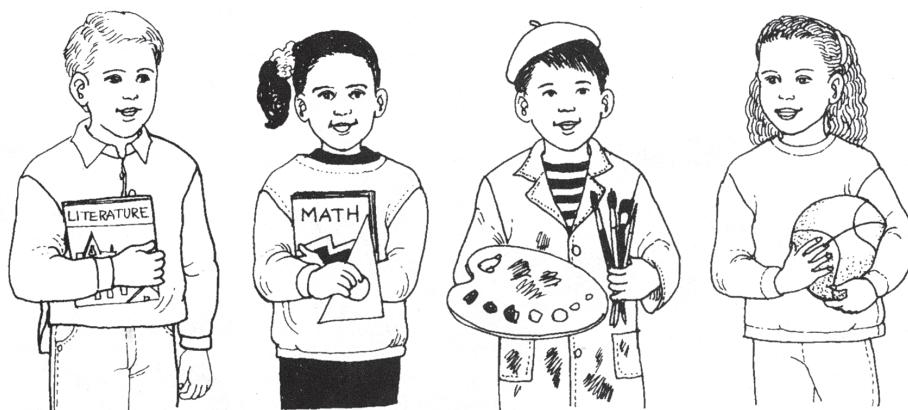
**Interpersonal Intelligence “People Smart”**—People who exhibit this intelligence have the ability to perceive and understand the moods, intentions, motivations, and feelings of other people. They enjoy socializing with peers and belonging to clubs, committees, and other organizations (younger children seem to be part of a regular social group).

These people are very empathetic and can accurately express how they feel. They are social learners and benefit most from cooperative learning strategies.

**Intrapersonal Intelligence “Self Smart”**—These learners know themselves well and display a sense of independence and strong will. They work well independently or in small groups. You might need to spend some time with this child to find out about his or her hobbies and interests. These children are able to learn from their successes and failures in life and exhibit high self-esteem.

### *Key Points in Multiple Intelligences Theory*

1. Each person possesses all seven intelligences.
2. Most people can develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency.
3. Intelligences usually work together in complex ways.
4. There may be more than seven kinds of intelligence.
5. Effective education should honor these differences among children, teach with the various intelligences in mind, and assess students’ strengths and weaknesses in ways that are “intelligence fair.”
6. The concept of multiple intelligences is diametrically opposed to the theory of general intelligence or IQ scores.



## Using Learning Centers That Support Each of the Multiple Intelligences

An approach that is being used more often in the elementary grades is organizing learning centers that are dedicated to specific intelligences. Learning or activity centers can take a variety of forms. Following are examples of how learning centers can be organized and the activities that can support each center's objectives:

### *Linguistic Center*

- Area for books and magazines—comfortable chairs, beanbags, loft, etc., with tape player and earphones for taped books and posters that promote reading for enjoyment
- Writing area—large or small tables, typewriters, computer, and pencil and paper
- Board games—e.g., Scrabble® and Boggle®

### *Logical-Mathematical Center*

- Math activities—calculators, worksheets, manipulatives
- Class store—where students can “buy” items, computing cost and sales tax
- Science area—simple experiments, books, and videos
- Games—e.g., dominoes, Uno®, Sorry®, Monopoly®

### *Spatial Center*

- Art projects—drawing materials, collage materials, clay, “how to draw” books, and table loom
- Games—Pictionary®, Connect Four®, Lincoln Logs®, and Legos®
- Visual media—videotapes, maps, and puzzles

### *Bodily-Kinesthetic Center*

- Open space—with rug for movement activities, e.g., mini-trampoline, Twister®
- Drama center—puppets, costumes, and Roll a Role\* game
- Hands-on activities—blocks, sandpaper and wood, tools for dismantling an old appliance

### *Musical Center*

- Music lab—cassettes, earphones, and tapes
- Performance area—electric keyboard, earphones, percussion instruments, rhythm machine, homemade instruments

***Interpersonal Center***

- Round table—for small group activities and discussion
- Socialization games—Roll a Role\*, Ungame, Life Stories
- Communication skills—“Talking on Purpose,”\* tape recorder

***Intrapersonal Center***

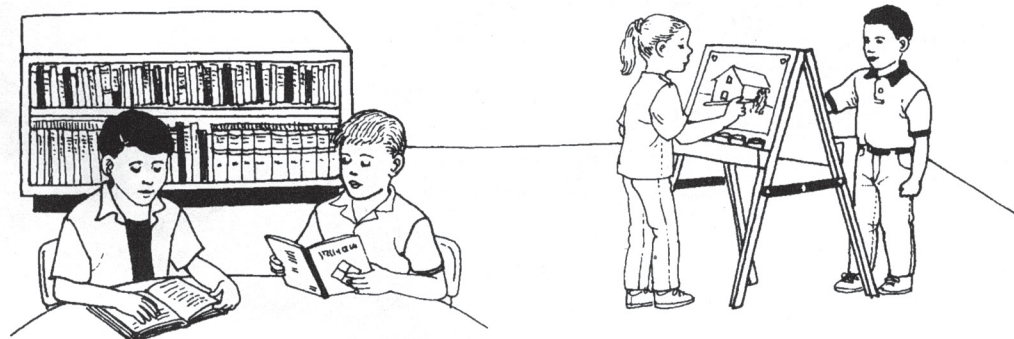
- Individual desks and/or study carrels
- Area for “alone work”—loft or corner with partition
- \* You can order Roll a Role from Youth Specialties, 1224 Greenfield Dr., El Cajon, CA 92021. (619) 440-2333. “Talking on Purpose” is from Communication Associates, P. O. Box 586249, Oceanside, CA 92058. (619) 758-9593.

**Setting Up Learning Centers**

Each learning center should be clearly labeled (e.g., “Word Smart Center” or “Art Smart Center”). One method of labeling is to laminate the signs and on the backs put Velcro® tabs. This makes it easier to “move centers” when needed. Centers are named for the intelligence that is used most in that area; integration of different intelligences will naturally occur (e.g., drawing a picture for a poem they wrote in the “Word Smart Center”).

**How to Introduce Students to Learning Centers**

Students should be given information throughout the year on the different types of learning styles and intelligences they share. This can be achieved through discussion as well as activity sheets, such as “Looking at Learning Styles” and “Finding Out My Preferred Learning Style,” located at the end of this chapter. One teacher made a game out of guessing “what intelligences are used in these areas?” and then asked the students to put the correct labels on the corresponding centers. Introducing one center or intelligence at a time, while letting each student try one of the activities available, is another option. Whatever method you choose to introduce centers, your enthusiasm about getting started should be felt and shared by the students.



## How Do Students Choose Where to Go and What to Do?

There are several ways you can approach the idea of learning centers that address the unique intelligences of each child. Each day can be dedicated to several areas of intelligences. Students can spend time at different centers selecting activities they choose. There can also be a day(s) of teacher-directed activities. Once you, the teacher, become familiar with the different learning styles and unique intelligences of your students, you can direct them to different areas.

It is also an option to combine centers and at times offer children open-ended activities. Games such as Scrabble®, Twister®, and Monopoly® lend themselves well to open-activity centers. Open-ended centers are also useful for introducing students to the idea of multiple intelligences.

In addition, learning centers can be made available to students after they've completed their other schoolwork or during break and recess times. When used in this way, information pertaining to their preferred intelligences can be easily collected. For example, students who always gravitate toward the "Word Smart" area and engage in reading and writing activities convey to you the importance of written language in their lives.

## Integrated Learning Curriculum Centers

Another approach to integrated learning is to choose a topic or theme for all centers, which could last for a day, week, or month. For example, the topic could be "Cloud Formations." Each center would have written instructions on how to contribute to this class theme.

### *Word Smart Center*

Please choose an assignment:

- Read and then write about how clouds are formed.
- Write a poem about clouds.
- Describe what it would be like to be inside a cloud.
- Make up your own activity.

### *Art Smart Center*

Please choose an assignment:

- Make a display of cloud formations, using cotton, glue, and tag board.
- Draw a colored illustration of the water cycle.
- Design a new type of cloud formation.
- Make up your own activity.



***People Smart Center***

Please choose an assignment:

- Discuss with a learning partner how to identify cloud formations.
- Have a group discussion about how clouds are formed and select a spokesperson to summarize your conclusions to the entire class.
- Make a list of five different cloud formations and let each student choose one and share all he or she knows about it.
- Make up your own activity.

***Music Smart Center***

Please choose an assignment:

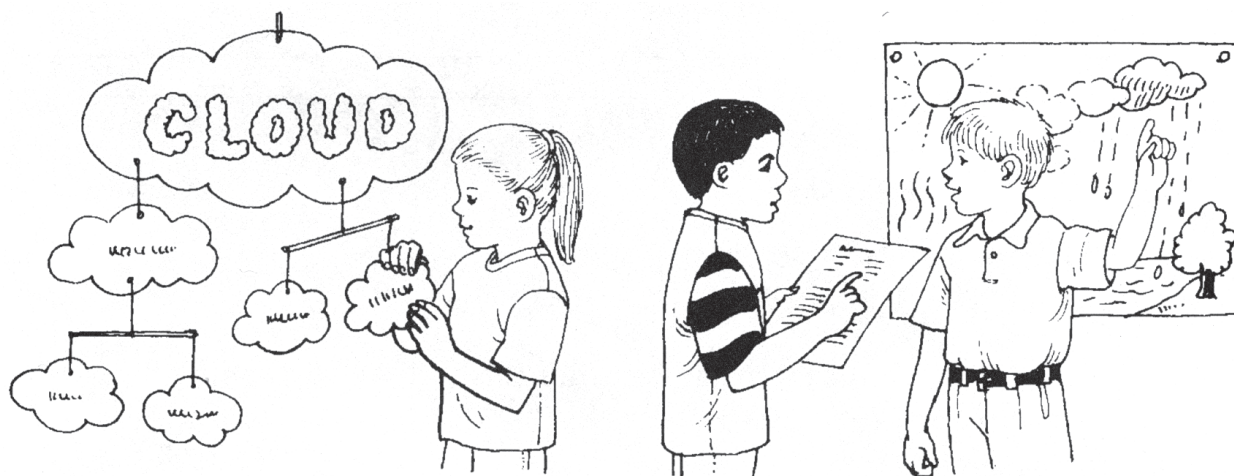
- Make up a rap song about how clouds are formed.
- Pick out different musical instruments that sound like the different cloud formations.
- Make up your own activity.

Learning Centers can stimulate a wide range of learning potential in students. The aforementioned descriptions have been structured to incorporate one intelligence per center, but there is no reason that centers cannot be structured to combine intelligences in a variety of ways. These suggested examples are just that, suggestions, and I hope will stimulate your creative ability to design centers that support your students' success and involvement in the learning process.

## Using a Five-Day Lesson Plan to Integrate Support for Multiple Intelligences

Another approach to integrating support of the multiple intelligences theory in your daily curriculum is to develop a five-day lesson plan that addresses a different intelligence each day. On pp. 31–32 is an example of what a five-day lesson plan might look like for a regular forty-five-minute class weekly schedule. Poet Shel Silverstein was chosen for the example because of his contemporary feel, which is lively, fun, and child-centered. Children seem to easily engage themselves and become active participants in this style of poetry. Jack Prelutsky is another poet who writes fast-moving rhyming poetry that kids can relate to easily.

As you can see, the theory of multiple intelligences can be applied to the curriculum in many different ways. There are no standard guidelines. Reaching students through their individual learning styles and intelligences is the goal. If this approach to teaching a diverse population of children makes sense to you, then continue to explore and have fun creating additional ways to present information so that every child has the opportunity to succeed.





## Sample Five-day Multiple Intelligences Lesson Plan

**Level:** 6th Grade

**Subject:** Language Arts

**Objective:** Students will be introduced to Shel Silverstein's poetry and interpret its meaning.

**Materials:** Overhead projector, transparencies, cassette player, art materials

**Monday:** Read a poem to the students while their eyes are closed (this facilitates concentration on the poem itself). Then show the students the poem on the overhead projector and ask them to read it aloud together. Read the poem again while the students write down their own interpretations of the poem. Ask volunteers to share their interpretations with the class.

**Tuesday:** Ask the students to divide the words of the poem into syllables. Explain that syllables determine the rhythm of the poem and beats per line. Have students clap hands to different beats or syllables. Present open-ended "Socratic" questioning to the students (e.g., "In what ways are \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ alike or different?" or "What would you do or say if you were \_\_\_\_?"). Answers can be discussed in pairs or written on paper first and then discussed.

**Wednesday:** Write the poem on the chalkboard or on an overhead for the students to read. Hand out a variety of drawing materials (pencils, markers, crayons, etc.) and ask them to quick-draw the first image that comes to mind. Display the drawings and have each student interpret their drawing for the class, if they choose.

**Thursday:** Bring in a variety of music (e.g., classical, jazz, rock, country). Ask students to bring in some of their favorite music. Have volunteers read the Silverstein poem with different musical selections as background music. Ask students to listen and comment on how the mood of the poem changes when accompanied by the different music. Transcribe comments so they can be discussed after each reading.

**Friday:** Form groups of four to six. Give each student a card with a section of the Silverstein poem written on it. As a group, perform the poem through role-play, pantomime, or any other theatrical form. Allow time for practice. A time limit should be set for each group's practices and performances.

Divide students into groups of three to six. Ask them to write a group poem in a style similar to Shel Silverstein's. Give the theme of the poem—friendship. Then ask each group to have one person read the finished poem to the class.

Show students another Silverstein poem and ask them to find something (an image, word, sound, etc.) in the poem that means the most to them. Have them express their ideas in any mode of expression or form that seems right to them (e.g., writing, drawing, collage, song, dance).

## Sample Five-day Multiple Intelligences Lesson Plan

This activity can be used to introduce your students to the idea of different ways of learning. Begin this lesson with a discussion of learning styles by introducing these ideas:

1. “Because our brains are all a little different, we each have our own ways of learning. Each of us have things that come easily to us and other things that are more difficult to do or understand. For example, I have difficulty figuring out my taxes because of all the numbers involved, but I knit a sweater because I really enjoy working with my hands.”
  - *Discuss with your students things that are easier for them to do in school and at home and other activities that they find more difficult.*
2. “The way we are most comfortable learning is called a learning style. Some of you learn easiest by seeing things with your eyes. You are visual learners. Those of you who learn best this way enjoy watching videotapes and filmstrips, looking at graphs, using webs, and seeing pictures of things you are learning.”
  - *Discuss any other activities that may be enjoyable to visual learners.*
3. “Some of you learn easiest by listening. This is auditory learning because auditory means ‘hearing.’ Auditory learners really enjoy listening to stories, and they often can remember directions and people’s names after hearing them only one time.”
  - *Discuss any other activities that auditory learners might enjoy, and why.*
4. “Then there are those of you who learn best by moving and using your hands or bodies. This is kinesthetic, or tactile, learning, because kinesthetic means ‘movement’ and tactile means ‘feeling.’ If you’re a kinesthetic, or tactile, learner, you probably really like building, drawing, and doing things rather than listening or watching.”
  - *Discuss other possible activities these children might enjoy, and why.*



## Finding Out My Preferred Learning Style

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

✓ Check the answer that is most like you.

1. ☐ I like to listen to stories and books on tape.  
☐ I would rather read about things and look at pictures.
2. ☐ I remember the messages I hear.  
☐ I like to write things down, otherwise I tend to forget them.
3. ☐ I like doing things with my hands.  
☐ I prefer talking about things.
4. ☐ During my free time I like to be physically active and play a game.  
☐ During free time I would rather draw, read, or write.
5. ☐ When I begin an activity, I like to take my time and think about what I'm about to do.  
☐ I like to get things done quickly.

*Now draw a picture or write about your favorite activity in the space below.*

**My Favorite Activity**

## CHAPTER 3

# TEACHER TEAMWORK

When you are faced with the challenge of including children with a diversity of learning needs, disabilities, and unique gifts into your class of twenty (or maybe more!) children, it's inevitable that thoughts such as, "Can I reach all these children?" will enter your mind. The answer is yes, through conscious teamwork. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts. Collaborative teams are an essential part of the inclusion process. As teams meet, individual members begin to understand how their roles are interrelated to form a larger educational partnership.

In the teaching profession, the concept of teaming makes a lot of sense. An elementary teacher is expected to teach all core subjects, plan special activities, coordinate parent conferences, and now attempt to meet and cooperatively work with special education staff and specialists. At some point we begin to realize that we "cannot do it all." One of the main complaints from elementary teachers is that all "this" must get done with very little paraprofessional assistance, and with little or no prep time built into the week's schedule. These are very real concerns.

The classroom door can become a barrier, cutting off communication between the teacher and the rest of the school community. Teachers find that their classrooms can become a home away from home—a place where the entire day is filled up with the responsibilities of being a teacher.

Many teachers in schools across the country are realizing that *collaborative planning* is a way to decrease the isolation and barriers that are inherent in self-contained classrooms. There are many benefits as well as challenges when beginning the collaboration process. The benefits do greatly outweigh the challenges, but the issues that accompany the teaming process are important to address.



## Collaborative Teams

In some schools, the team consists of a regular and special education teacher, guidance counselor, school psychologist, parents or guardians, and student. Teams can begin with only two teachers, for example, the fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, and grow as desired. Try to keep the team size limited to five or six members. Many schools begin to include children who are nine or ten years old in team meetings. It's important to include the student, especially when he or she begins to show interest in knowing what is being discussed.

It will be very helpful if your school principal will support the teams and consequently arrange schedules to accommodate at least three forty-five-minute collaborative planning periods per week. This time can be filled with discussions concerning answers to problems team members face. Some elementary schools arrange for team time on Friday afternoons. A parent volunteer group can provide students with activities or an assembly every other Friday afternoon so teachers can meet with their team members. Some teachers need to arrange time before school starts to begin the collaborative process. Whatever the situation might be, scheduling is always a challenge for teachers who are committed to working together. As teachers begin to experience what it takes to make an inclusive classroom successful, the idea of working together to meet the challenges that arise becomes a priority. Many schools have developed creative approaches to developing cooperative teams and the time it involves to get started. Change happens, but it takes time and commitment.

## Strategies for Working Well Together

Collaborative teams allow a group of concerned people to address issues and student needs that may be too large or too overwhelming for individuals to handle themselves.

Developing trust in each other encourages teachers to seek needed support. The team becomes a reflection of the cooperative values being taught in the classroom. In order to build trust among educators, all members must agree on a philosophy, which should include

- Meeting in teams will increase the development and opportunities for all students
- Meeting in teams will build a sense of collegiality among team members
- Meeting in teams will improve each member's ability to problem-solve creatively

In some middle schools, teachers are put into collaborative teams at the beginning of the school year, and team time is built into the weekly schedule. In other schools where this doesn't occur,

teachers should look for other possible team members who have complementary teaching styles and personalities. An uncooperative person can create an imbalance that will affect the motivation of team members to work together. Consensus building is important for a team to be effective, and for consensus building to occur there needs to be a balance among team members. Putting the effort into the initial stages of team building will only enhance the ability of members to reach their individual as well as group goals. Other factors that enhance the team effort include

- Lateral decision making
- Professionalism
- A shared desire to work together
- A professional respect for others' teaching styles
- A common vision that all students have the ability to succeed
- A sense of humor!

## How Are Team Meetings Conducted?

Each team will take on its own personality as well as develop its own intrinsic and extrinsic rules of conduct. However, it's important to agree on some basic expectations that will guide the team process throughout the year.





These suggestions are the basis for developing an atmosphere of collaboration:

1. Meet in a large enough environment that all participants can see each other.
2. Introduce all team members by name and job title to parents.
3. When sending a written invitation to parents, arrange with a school secretary or guidance counselor to act as a facilitator for scheduling team meetings (get administrative support).
4. Encourage all members to arrive on time.
5. Welcome parents when they arrive.
6. Ask the parents if they have any specific issues that need to be addressed at the beginning of the meeting.
7. Allow enough time for all members to share and offer comments without feeling rushed.
8. Get an idea of the goals and objectives for the student(s) before the meeting starts. This can be done informally during the week at lunch times or recess, or by memos.
9. At the end of the meeting, check to make certain that all team participants understand the decisions agreed upon and identify any unfinished business that needs to be addressed at the next meeting.
10. Support the collaborative process by expressing your appreciation for the commitment team members have toward it. For example: "Mrs. Jordan, I appreciate your input and the concern you've shared about your son's grades. I'm certain with all of us working together as we've done so far, we will find ways to help him succeed."

You may find that one of the most enjoyable *and* challenging aspects of your teaching career will be co-teaching, or working collaboratively with colleagues in the classroom. Co-teaching has helped many teachers realize a few very important personal truths that are worth sharing:

### ***Co-teaching Is***

- Planning lessons together
- An opportunity for two teachers to create an exciting learning environment
- Two teachers working cooperatively in the regular classroom
- Not a way to judge or criticize another teacher's style or skills
- Not the sole solution to inclusion in the regular classroom
- A commitment to working through any conflicts or problems that arise
- A learning process
- Worth the work

Collaborative teaming is analogous to the development of inclusive classrooms in that it is ongoing. As teachers begin to understand the process of brainstorming, which allows for multiple solutions, each meeting becomes its own adventure. Any needed changes to the process can be worked out over the course of time. Teacher ideas can be implemented, tried, and changed when necessary. The “Team Meeting Planning Form,” p. 41, was developed to help ensure an efficient use of team time.

When you begin to co-teach, it's important to allow time for planning. What would it be like if a professional football team began a game without having agreed on any plays? The quarterback would probably try to look as if he knows what he's doing so the other team doesn't catch on. Some passes would be completed out of chance and maybe a few points would be scored. The rest of the players would probably try to keep out of each other's way and anxiously look forward to the game being over.

This unlikely scenario is not that different from two teachers attempting to co-teach without planning. As teams begin to function smoothly by gaining experience, the need for daily structured team planning may lessen. Collaborative planning time is certainly a challenge to both regular and special educators as more students with special needs are being served in the regular classroom. However, if teachers are to collaborate for the benefit of all students, they must find the time to meet and share information. The “Co-teaching Planning Forms,” pp. 42–44, can facilitate productive planning time.

## Roles, Responsibilities, and Options

Co-teacher roles and responsibilities are going to be different. Everyone has and prefers to use his or her individual strengths. One of the great benefits of a co-teaching model is that it allows the individual teacher to do what he or she does best. This also can be an opportunity for students to observe how teachers or adults can appreciate differences and support each other's strengths.



The message that everyone has something he or she does best and something special to contribute will be clear in a successful co-teaching experience.

For example, an English teacher on your team has strengths that are different from yours. When teaching a unit in novel reading, for example, you set aside time each week for everyone to read out loud. After every few pages ask comprehension questions to check for understanding. During co-planning time, read the novel and ask others to do the same while the English teacher asks comprehension questions. This helps acknowledge your individual teaching styles and strengths, and utilize them to the fullest.

The increased flexibility of elementary and middle-school curricula and structuring of classroom practices permits a creative co-teaching experience. It is also becoming increasingly more acceptable among classroom teachers to allow children to work at their own pace and on different topics and learn in different ways. In many schools the special education teachers team teach in the classrooms—working as co-teachers with some teachers throughout the year, and in a consulting capacity with others. Instructional aides can provide direct service, support, and monitoring of the underachieving students. Although they are usually directly supervised by the special educator, they can assist all staff.

Pullout services can be effective as well. You may utilize the resource room or “Student Learning Center” to address the stated Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals (reading, writing, and math) while working with students in small groups. In keeping with the inclusive classroom philosophy, include regular education students who need extra help. When co-planning with the math teacher, for example, schedule two “pullout” periods per week. Elementary and middle-school students are often eager to work in a resource room that can offer small-group instruction. There are times when students with learning disabilities need to work in an environment where there are few distractions, especially when working on new or challenging material. They can be more focused in a resource room setting for part of their instruction.

### *Author's Experience*

Recently, my school system has developed Student Learning Centers (SLCs) in all elementary and middle schools. The SLC is for students who need additional assistance with classroom assignments, projects, homework, and so on. It is this type of flexibility that creates an atmosphere of acceptance for all learners within the mainstream of the school community.

## Team Meeting Planning Form

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Team Members in Attendance:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The parents \_\_\_\_ will or \_\_\_\_ will not attend.

The agenda for this meeting is (include names of student[s]):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Co-teaching Planning Form

Teachers: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject Area \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson Objective(s):**

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**Materials Needed:**

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**Activities:Teacher**

**Responsible:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Student(s):**

**Adaptations/Modifications:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observations and Comments:**

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## Co-teaching Planning Form

Teachers: \_\_\_\_\_

Ms. Thoa

Mr. Khalsa

Subject Area Math (Graphs)

Date: 3/05

### Lesson Objective(s):

- To increase understanding and use of a bar graph
- Have students work cooperatively to show cars teachers drive

### Materials Needed:

- Paper, graph paper, writing and drawing materials, rulers, crayons, markers

### Activities:Teacher

1. Introduce bar graph and lessons
2. Data collections, stem and leaf
3. Review graph set-up/collect data
4. Design graphs using data, display

### Responsible:

- Mr. Khalsa
- Ms. Thoa
- Mr. Khalsa, Ms. Thoa
- Mr. Khalsa, Ms. Thoa

### Student(s):

1. Joseph G.
2. Luis A.
3. Kathy S.
4. Michael D.

### Adaptations/Modifications:

- Assist with drawing lines on graph paper
- Pair with a learning partner who comprehends objective

### Observations and Comments:

Students tend to comprehend bar graphs more readily than other forms of graphs and tend to enjoy making them when given a choice.

Students are able to verbalize (or graph) about what they can actually see. "I see more teachers driving Toyotas than Fords," etc.

## Co-teaching Evaluation Form

Please answer the questions that apply to you and your co-teaching experience.

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching position (special or regular education, instructional aide, other): \_\_\_\_\_

When did your co-teaching team plan together? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions for co-planning: \_\_\_\_\_

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Personal benefits of co-teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

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Suggestions for improving co-teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

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Next semester/year, I would prefer to:

\_\_\_\_\_ continue with my team and co-teacher(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ change my team and co-teacher(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ other:



## Student Introduction Form (confidential)

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

This form was completed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

What are the approximate independent functioning grade levels?

Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Social Skills \_\_\_\_\_

Math \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom Behavior \_\_\_\_\_

Spelling \_\_\_\_\_ Other Subject(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any physical limitations that may require any classroom adaptations/modifications:

Vision: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Motor: \_\_\_\_\_

General Health: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the student's preferred learning style(s):

\_\_\_\_\_ Visual \_\_\_\_\_ Tactile (hands-on activities)

\_\_\_\_\_ Auditory \_\_\_\_\_ Kinesthetic (whole-body involvement)

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the student's work habits in the classroom:

\_\_\_\_\_ Works independently

\_\_\_\_\_ Needs extra time on classwork

\_\_\_\_\_ Needs occasional prompting to stay on task

\_\_\_\_\_ Is usually late for class

\_\_\_\_\_ Is easily distracted by loud sounds, talking, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Asks for help when needed

\_\_\_\_\_ Needs help with organizing classwork, notebook, homework, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Gives up easily

Works best when:

\_\_\_\_\_ Working with peers

\_\_\_\_\_ Needs to move about occasionally

\_\_\_\_\_ Working alone

\_\_\_\_\_ Tends to be an impulsive learner

\_\_\_\_\_ Working with an adult

\_\_\_\_\_ Tends to be a passive learner

\_\_\_\_\_ Working in a cooperative team

\_\_\_\_\_ Tends to be an active learner

## Student Introduction Form (confidential)

Student Sarah Grade 5 D.O.B. 11/15/95

This form was completed by Spl Ed Teacher Date 8/15/05

What are the approximate independent functioning grade levels?

Reading Approximately 2 grade Social Skills 2-3 grade level

Math Approximately 3 grade Classroom Behavior 2-3 grade level

Spelling 2.5 grade Other Subject(s) N/A

Describe any physical limitations that may require any classroom adaptations/modifications:

Vision: Wears glasses

Hearing: Normal

Motor: N/A

General Health: Complains of stomach aches, otherwise normal

Other: Uses inhaler for relief of allergies

Check the student's preferred learning style(s):

☐ Visual ☒ Tactile (hands-on activities)  
☒ Auditory ☐ Kinesthetic (whole-body involvement)

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the student's work habits in the classroom:

☐ Works independently  
☒ Needs extra time on classwork  
☐ Needs occasional prompting to stay on task  
☐ Is usually late for class  
☒ Is easily distracted by loud sounds, talking, etc.  
☒ Asks for help when needed  
☒ Needs help with organizing classwork, notebook, homework, etc.  
☐ Gives up easily

Works best when:

☒ Working with peers ☐ Needs to move about occasionally  
☐ Working alone ☐ Tends to be an impulsive learner  
☒ Working with an adult ☒ Tends to be a passive learner  
☐ Working in a cooperative team ☐ Tends to be an active learner

## Student Modification Worksheet

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Regular Classroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Special Education Teacher/Personnel \_\_\_\_\_

List the subject area and describe modifications needed.

Regular Education Activity/Content	Options* 0–4	Modifications Needed Description of Considerations	IEP Goals

### \*Modification Options

0—No Adaptation/Modification Needed

1—Reinforcing the Activity/Content

2—Adapting/Modifying the Activity or Content

3—Developing Parallel Activity or Content

4—Developing Alternative Activity or Outcome

## Student Modification Worksheet

Student Chris M. Grade 7 Date 1/14/05

Regular Classroom Teacher Regular Education Teacher

Special Education Teacher/Personnel Special Education Teacher

List the subject area and describe modifications needed.

Regular Education Activity/Content	Options* 0–4	Modifications Needed Description of Considerations	IEP Goals
Tests	2	May need extra time to complete in Resource Rm. Vocab. List for questions	2a
Essays/Reports	1/2	May need extra time to complete in visual aids, use of peer buddy for guide	2b,c
Classroom behavior	2	Ignore noncompliant behavior. Give encouragement and praise frequently for cooperation	1a
In class reading	0		
Homework organization skills	2	Simplify directions Check assignment book daily	3a,b

### \*Modification Options

0—No Adaptation/Modification Needed

1—Reinforcing the Activity/Content

2—Adapting/Modifying the Activity or Content

3—Developing Parallel Activity or Content

4—Developing Alternative Activity or Outcome

## SAMPLE—Staff Questionnaire on Special Education and Inclusion at Kennedy Middle School

As many of you know, today's schools are undergoing a re-evaluation and restructuring of how to effectively educate all students, especially those who have difficulty learning in traditional ways. Regarding special education, the trend is toward developing a partnership of special and general education teachers. Some of the staff at Kennedy have already experienced the benefits as well as the challenges of this partnership. With the understanding that the success of inclusive programs is based on **cooperation**, **communication**, and **commitment** to the process, we are asking you to fill out this short questionnaire, which will give us information for a workshop we are developing on this topic.

**Circle the number that best reflects your belief.**

**(Please return questionnaire to the teacher who gave it to you. Thank you.)**

**1-Strongly Agree 2-Mildly Agree 3-Mildly Disagree 4-Strongly Disagree**

### 1. Inclusion is:

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | For students who would previously have been served in special education classrooms, but now may benefit in regular classrooms |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Special education and general education staff working together as a team in the same classroom                                |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Special education staff and general education teachers planning lessons together  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | All students learning at the same time, at the same pace, and in the same way   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | A favor from one teacher to another to work with students with special needs  |

- 1 2 3 4 For all students with Individual Education Plans
- 1 2 3 4 Sacrificing the quality of education of regular education students
- 1 2 3 4 Using classroom and curriculum modifications so that the opportunity for success is available to each student

## 2. Students with:

- 1 2 3 4 Learning disabilities should be included in the regular classroom
- 1 2 3 4 Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder should be in the regular classroom
- 1 2 3 4 Mental handicaps should be included in the regular classroom
- 1 2 3 4 Behavior problems should be included in the regular classroom
- 1 2 3 4 Physical handicaps should be included in the regular classroom

## 3. Select three topics you'd like covered in a workshop(s):

- (a) Understanding the Law: PL94-142 and IDEA  
(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- (b) Increasing awareness of the challenges faced by those with disabilities
- (c) Defining my beliefs about inclusion by looking at two opposing views
- (d) Identifying the broad benefits that inclusion can bring
- (e) Knowing when inclusion is appropriate

## CHAPTER 4

**MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS—  
WHAT TO TEACH**

This section focuses on helping teachers develop an understanding of not only what to teach when including all children in their classroom, but how to vary what they teach. Many of the modification suggestions are critical for the success of students with disabilities, especially those with learning disabilities. These modifications can also be considered when writing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or “Student Modification Worksheet,” discussed in chapter 3. The key element in determining the learning environment for an individual student is that student’s IEP. The IEP is a plan with goals and objectives, specifically designed for an individual student, that takes into consideration the student’s academic, social/emotional, and behavioral strengths and weaknesses, and designs an individual intervention program for that student. Many of these interventions consist of academic and environmental modifications. The “Student Modification Worksheet” is a tool that provides an easy-to-follow guide to the goals and modifications stated in the IEP.

**How to Choose the Appropriate Modifications**

Modifications and adaptations are changes in curriculum and classroom activities that accommodate the student with disabilities. They are needed in classwork, homework, assessment, the classroom environment, and interactions. Success cannot be guaranteed; but it should also not be denied due to an inability to learn in traditional ways. Effective modifications bring success within the grasp of children who are otherwise denied it. A successful modification or adaptation will help the student bypass as much as possible his or her areas of disability.





Knowing how to choose the appropriate modification(s) as well as deciding if and when it should be implemented in the classroom, will take some co-planning. The following questions may be helpful when considering which modifications to use:

- What is the student's learning style(s) (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)?
- What are the activity or subject content expectations?
- What are the options for modifications and adaptations?
- Will content be given in the same manner to all students?
- How and when will the content be tested?
- Will alternative forms of assessment be used?

## **How Do We Begin?**

To begin the process of deciding what modifications and adaptations would accommodate the student's full participation in the class, certain information about the student needs to be shared among team members. This information includes independent functioning grade levels, preferred learning style(s), work habits, physical limitations, and any modifications used in the past.

To facilitate this process, the "Student Introduction Form" (at the end of chapter 3) can be used. This form will help create a student profile based on descriptions of services provided; instructional preferences and suggestions; preferred learning styles; and specific skill competencies in the areas of reading, writing, math, and social behavior. The special education teacher should complete this form with the student before or during the first few weeks of entering the regular classroom, and then review the form with all team members. The purpose of this form is to cooperatively meet the student's academic and behavioral needs.

Teachers need tools that will assist them in knowing a student's modification needs at a glance and that act as a reference point from which they can build. This should be an informal but effective process for defining the child's individual needs within the regular classroom at both the elementary and middle-school levels. The "Student Modification Worksheet" can be used for this purpose. It provides:

1. A clear means of identifying specific areas in which the included student needs support;
2. A means of communicating needed modifications/adaptations among team members;
3. A method of identifying and integrating IEP goals into the regular classroom; and
4. A system of accountability for all teachers.

## Ongoing Collaboration

When the student has been integrated into the regular classroom, it's essential that the special education teacher maintain an ongoing dialogue with the general classroom teacher(s) regarding the included student's progress. The "Daily Student Report," p. 62, can be used to facilitate this dialogue. It can be used daily, weekly, or on an "as needed basis."

Teachers who use this form have commented on its usefulness as well as the clarity it can bring to the collaborative process. Many times all that is needed to support a successful collaborative team effort is a system of communication and accountability. It is equally important that teachers agree to support this method of communication, establishing a relationship of mutual support.

## Modified Lesson Designs and Case Studies

Lesson designs are included for instructional strategies that correspond to each area of modification. Children's learning styles and "intelligences" have been taken into account when writing these lesson designs. These lessons can provide a basis for teachers to work from. With ongoing collaboration, creative modifications or adaptations can be developed to meet an individual student's learning needs.

## Classwork Modifications: Case Study

### Sara's Story

Sara was included in Ms. Bernard's fourth grade. Her educational plan (IEP) referred to difficulties in short-term or working memory, as well as following directions. When it came time to take a test, she became very anxious and would begin talking to other students. In reviewing her Student Introduction Form, Ms. Bernard also learned that Sara was primarily a visual learner.

The following are suggested modifications that could be implemented in the regular classroom to assist students having similar instructional needs:

#### *Following Directions*

- Give directions in writing and verbally.
- Allow extra time for completion of work normally done in the classroom.
- Speak more slowly and paraphrase using similar language.
- Assign a "learning buddy" to facilitate following directions and comprehension.
- Increase amount of checking for understanding and guided practice.
- Keep instructions and presentations lively using visuals, graphics, and demonstrations.
- Use worksheets, calculators, and other visual materials to support learning style.

**Memory Difficulties**

- Use acronyms (K.I.S.S. = “Keep it short and simple”).
- Teach students how to make up fun sentences with the beginning letter of each word in the sentence standing for the information needing to be memorized in sequence. For example to remember notes on the musical staff (E, G, B, D, and F), students can remember the saying “Every Good Bird Does Fly.”
- Ask the student(s) to repeat the information back to you or to a partner before beginning.
- Highlight concepts and information needed to learn.
- Expect use of assignment books.
- When reading, encourage use of sentence strips and word cards.
- Encourage use of graphic organizers (webs, outlines, etc.).
- Use a 10-2 structure, which means the teacher presents material for *ten minutes* then stops for *two minutes*. During the “pause,” students pair up and help each other clarify concepts.
- Teach strategies that extend the time information will remain in short-term memory such as:

**1. Rehearsal, or repeating the information.**

When you repeat something, it slows down the process of forgetting and gives the information time to transfer into long-term memory. For example, repeating a telephone number may help you to remember it long enough to dial it.

**2. Chunking, or grouping information.**

Grouped information is easier to remember than isolated bits of information. A good example of this strategy is how most of us have remembered our Social Security number, by chunking it into three groups: 123-45-6789.

**3. Making the information meaningful.**

A child with memory difficulties needs to activate other parts of the brain to help retain the information coming in. For example, refer to a slice of pizza as a fraction, or part, of the whole.

## Assessment Modifications: Case Study

### Joshua's Story

Joshua's education plan called for modified testing, specifically, on essay-type exams. He had moderate to severe reading and writing difficulties. Whenever a test or quiz was mentioned, he would become anxious and would begin talking to a classmate or ask to go to the bathroom. When he entered Mr. Reese's fifth-grade classroom, the teacher noted that Joshua had difficulty paying attention.

Every child learns all the time. What they learn and what they do with what they learn needs to be assessed. Quality of work and individual student growth should provide a sound basis for student assessment. If it is accepted that all children learn at a different pace, at different times, and in different ways, it doesn't make sense to assess them all by the same standard. The following list of possible modifications and adaptations can be considered for students demonstrating learning difficulties.

- Prepare the student mentally and emotionally for the test by informally discussing it the day before, emphasizing its purpose versus grade importance.  
(See "A Helpful Hint for Teachers" at the end of this chapter.)
- Allow for oral testing to be given in the resource room.
- Make tests easy to read by eliminating unnecessary and confusing language.
- Provide multiple-choice or matching questions.
- Allow for extended time.
- Give the test as homework in the form of "study notes" in which questions are asked in a different way (e.g., Test: Who invented the telephone? Study notes: What did Alexander Graham Bell invent?).



- Allow the special education teacher to test the student in a small group or individually.
- Read the test to the student; answers are written by the student.
- Have students keep a portfolio of their best work and encourage them to continue working on making those pieces better. At the end of the grading period, the portfolio is graded based on the quality of learning demonstrated.
- Enlarge print.
- Divide the test into short segments, and administer on different days.
- Have certain days for testing or “checking for understanding.”
- Do not deduct for spelling, neatness, sentence structure, and so on, unless those are the things being tested.
- Allow the student to retake tests and quizzes a second time.
- Give credit for what has been done correctly.
- Allow for student contracts. The contract outlines clearly what the teacher expects from the student. You may agree with students that “by completing X number of lessons, you’ll receive an A, for Y amount of work, you’ll receive a B,” and so on. The terms of the contract should adjust as work progresses. Otherwise, students who initially overestimate their ability may become frustrated and discouraged from continuing. Likewise, students who underestimate their ability may lose incentive to work to their fullest capacity (see “Grading Contract” form, p. 73).
- Collaborate with special educators to rewrite tests for students with special needs. For example: shorter sentences, fewer questions, simplified vocabulary (see “Newton’s Laws of Motion” worksheets, pp. 64–65).
- Avoid trick questions.
- Color-grade tests: **Blue** = “You understand it all,” **Green** = “Nice work,” **Brown** = “Needs improvement.” Review the color key with students before testing.
- Utilize pro-active grading. Students accumulate points based on what they accomplish rather than having errors count against them. This encourages students with learning difficulties to take more chances.
- Use tests to discover what the student has mastered and to determine what he or she needs to continue developing. Reduce weight of test grade.
- Give parents and students an option of receiving number grades or Pass/Fail. *Pass* indicates mastery of material; *Fail* indicates the need to continue working toward understanding. This system is especially effective in elementary grades.
- On math tests, allow the use of a multiplication table or calculator if assessing problem-solving skills.

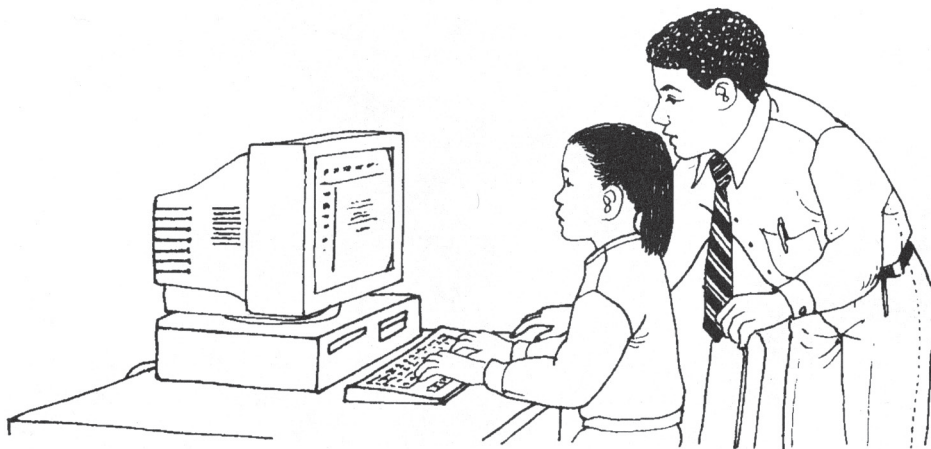
*“If it is accepted that all children learn at a different pace,  
at different times, and in different ways,  
it doesn’t make sense to assess them all  
by the same standard.”*

## More Case Studies with Modified Lesson Designs

The following case studies and modified lesson designs are effective not only with students with special needs but with all children who have demonstrated a need for alternative teaching methods. Prior to referring a student for possible special education services, these modifications should first be initiated when appropriate. During the school year things will change: student enrollment, student competency/skill levels, and so on. Ensuring flexibility of student modification options is necessary. Even the most familiar modifications should be examined occasionally to determine their purpose, effectiveness, and appropriateness.

### Case Studies: Adjusting to Individual Differences

Teaching and reaching all students in the inclusive classroom often requires altering the way one teaches. Useful modifications and adaptations already have been outlined in this chapter. These case studies offer a better understanding of how students with different disabilities can be reached in the same class.



**Ms. Holland's Fifth-Grade English Class**

Ms. Holland has twenty-five students in her fifth-grade classroom. Of these twenty-five students, four are special education students. Sarah is legally blind; she has enough vision to enable her to move around the school environment with minor assistance. Jose and Rhonda are severely hearing impaired. Jonathan has been diagnosed with a mental disability and reads at about a second-grade level. All four students are deficient in spelling skills. Mr. Mason, the special education teacher, consults and provides support to Ms. Holland.

Mr. Mason developed a program based on auditory sequencing for Sarah. He recorded the weekly spelling words one at a time on a cassette, emphasizing syllables and sequences of letters. For example: dis-cuss, Wed-nes-day, at-ten-dance. Pronouncing each syllable pronounced independently can assist in spelling troublesome words. Sarah used the cassettes at a listening center with earphones while the rest of the class had spelling activities. She would listen to each word being spelled, dictate into the recorder the spelling of the word, and replay her spelling for comparison to the model words. She was also expected to use the cassettes at home.

To support Jose's and Rhonda's learning needs, Mr. Mason used a computer spelling program that presented spelling words on the monitor, emphasizing the visual sequences and configurations of letters. On a computer located in the classroom the students took turns typing in their own words that matched those on the program. Jonathan was given a shortened list of spelling words. The teaching and learning strategy Mr. Mason used required a multisensory approach. The strategy was first practiced with the entire class, then with a "study buddy," and, finally, completed as a homework assignment. The spelling instructions were written as follows:

1. Read one word at a time.
2. Spell the word out loud.
3. Close your eyes and spell the word while writing it in the air.
4. Write the word on your paper and check it.
5. Right? Write the word nine more times and then go to the next word.
6. Wrong? Go back to number 2.

Memory techniques, or mnemonic devices, also were used with specific words. For example, with the word *Wed-nes-day*, each syllable is pronounced independently. Jonathan was told to remember that his attendance was expected at a dance that began at ten o'clock, thus becoming an *at-ten-dance*. In addition to these teaching techniques, his weekly spelling list was modified to reflect his reading grade level.



The class was also rehearsing for a holiday play that would be performed for the school. Jonathan really wanted to be in the play with his classmates. Ms. Holland was concerned that he would become frustrated reading his lines out loud due to his low reading level. Mr. Mason modified parts to reflect Jonathan's reading level, and they rehearsed the lines before reading them out loud in front of the class.

### ***Mr. Powell's Fourth-Grade Math Class***

Mr. Powell has five students with special needs in his fourth-grade class. Three students, Sammy, Lisa, and Noah, have learning disabilities. One student, Jessica, is visually impaired, and one other student, Angel, has been diagnosed with ADHD. All five students find mathematics a difficult subject.

Jessica uses enlarged textbooks and writes with a marker on paper with darkened lines. She is seated close to the chalkboard and is allowed to walk to the board to see at any time. She also has a learning partner who is given carbon to put under her paper. When copying off the board, she makes a copy for Jessica. When talking to the class, Mr. Powell is careful not to stand in front of the window, especially on sunny days. The glare makes it difficult for Jessica to focus on him. When students do boardwork, Mr. Powell has each student orally review the steps to the problem. This provides review for the students and allows Jessica to hear each problem.

Sammy, Lisa, and Noah are given modified tests with fewer problems and simplified versions of the math concept being taught. For example, when testing long division or multiplication problems that involve several digits and regrouping, the teacher gives them problems with numbers for which most students know the math facts (e.g.,  $453 \times 52 =$ ; most students know their times tables for 5 and 2). This way these students are tested on their understanding of the process and aren't penalized for poor memory skills.

Mr. Powell has incorporated cooperative learning strategies that foster positive interdependence among all the students. Students in a cooperative group succeed only if every member of the group succeeds. Sammy, Lisa, and Noah are in three different groups. Team members check their



material and answers. Information is shared, enabling them to review the concepts being taught. When Noah occasionally becomes extremely resistant to working with others, Mr. Powell offers a positive incentive or reward for cooperating.

Depending on the activity and his mood, Angel is allowed to work in a small group with other children or by himself. Mr. Powell makes a point of reviewing behavioral expectations with Angel prior to each activity. Angel uses a “Checking My Behavior” form (chapter 6) that helps him monitor his classroom behavior. He is given short assignments (half-page, evens only, odds only) that are checked by a peer helper as well as by the teacher. When introducing or reinforcing new concepts, Mr. Powell provides multisensory instructions that include many kinds of manipulatives that can help Angel as well as the other students visualize and work out problems.

Meeting the instructional needs of children with diverse learning styles and disabilities often requires the classroom teacher to employ a variety of instructional methods. The manner in which you interact with your students, the environment you create, and the methods and curriculum you use to teach greatly affect how confident and successful your children will be in the classroom.

The following case study shows another teacher whose approach toward teaching in an inclusive class reflects some of the qualities and strategies needed to be effective.

### ***Mrs. Flannnders’ Sixth-Grade Reading Class***

Mrs. Flannnders has four students with special needs in her sixth-grade reading class. Two students, Steve and Flora, have a reading disability. One student, Andrew, has been diagnosed with ADHD, and Cara, the fourth student, has a mental disability and reads at a first-grade level.

At the beginning of the class, Mrs. Flannnders asked the students to get their materials for the instructional period. Andrew was given a word maze with the week’s spelling words. This worksheet was on his desk before he was seated.

Mrs. Flannnders moved to the side board that listed the period’s activities, including a short vocabulary quiz. After identifying the period’s objectives, she directed the students’ attention to the board and briefly explained how the objectives were to be met. Her explanation reviewed what the class had done, how the day’s work fit in, and what the next step would be.

Mrs. Flannnders directed the group to get out their journals. The students were to write a short story, no longer than a few paragraphs, using the week’s vocabulary words. She questioned

different students and wrote their ideas for the story on the board. After checking for understanding of the assignment, she instructed the students to begin. As the group began writing, she gave Cara a sentence completion worksheet that included her modified vocabulary words. Cara, Steve, and Flora worked with learning partners who helped them with reading, spelling, and sentence structure. Andrew was working independently on finishing his word maze. Mrs. Flannnders walked about the room. She helped individuals read their story and correct spelling and grammatical errors. She took aside four students who completed their assignment and had them correct one another's work.

As the rest of the students completed their project, the teacher had them pair off and correct each other's journal entries. Then she announced that it was time to prepare for the vocabulary quiz. Students moved into their specific groups, and worked with each other reviewing their vocabulary words for the week. Mrs. Flannnders reviewed the modified words with Steve and Flora while checking on Andrew's and Cara's progress.

Mrs. Flannnders praised individuals and the group for their appropriate behavior and cooperation. She passed out the vocabulary quiz, which consisted of matching the words to their correct definitions. Steve and Flora had their learning partners read the definitions to them without disturbing others' concentration. Cara received the same test but was given the instructions to circle all the vowels in each word. Andrew's test was five words, and when he finished matching them to their definitions, he was instructed to draw a picture on the back of the paper illustrating the definition of one of the vocabulary words. He was also given colored markers to use as an additional incentive to complete the activity.

The students were instructed to pass in their papers at the end of the period. The transition between activities was smooth since the teacher gave cues to impending changes. She again praised individuals who completed their assignments and praised appropriate social behavior. As the period ended, the students were reminded of what they had done and what was coming up later that week.

Inclusive classroom teachers are open and willing to examine which factors need to be adjusted or modified in order for each student to achieve success. chapter 5, "How to Succeed in Eight Lessons," provides additional suggested modifications that will support the inclusive students' organization and self-esteem needs. chapter 6, "Managing Behaviors in an Inclusive Classroom," provides modifications that support responsive classroom environments as well as successful student/teacher interactions.

## Daily Student Report

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Regular Classroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Special Education Teacher/Personnel \_\_\_\_\_

Check whether the student's class/homework is complete or incomplete.

Student's Name	Complete	Incomplete	Comments/Modifications*

\*Comments/Modifications:

—Classroom behavior/attitude

—Attendance

—Test scores

—Peer interactions

—Additional information regarding modifications/adaptations

## Daily Student Report

Student John W. Subject Math Grade 7 Date 2/15/05

Regular Classroom Teacher Regular Education Teacher

Special Education Teacher/Personnel Special Education Teacher

Check whether the student's class/homework is complete or incomplete.

Student's Name	Complete	Incomplete	Comments/Modifications*
Javiar V.	✓		Worked well with Jimmy C.
Marija V.			
Mark S.		✓	Fifth day absent!
Jim C.	✓		
Shalanda C.	✓		Very cooperative today
Amanda K.	✓		Worked well with Shalanda
Richy N.		✓	Needs help with quiz
Don M.		✓	Talking a lot with Lisa
Jessica S.	✓		75%, 90%, 85%—last three quizzes
Mathew P.	✓		New seating arrangement has been helpful
Jose C.	✓		
Sue L.	✓		
Raja B.		✓	Does he wear glasses?
Lisa W.		✓	Third day no homework
Montina E.	✓		Study notes were helpful, 92% on quiz
Chris K.	✓		Asked a lot of relevant questions

\*Comments/Modifications:

- Classroom behavior/attitude
- Attendance
- Test scores
- Peer interactions
- Additional information regarding modifications/adaptations

## WORKSHEET

**Newton's Laws of Motion**

(Before Modification)

The first Law of Motion states that if an object is at rest, it tends to remain at rest; if it is moving, it tends to keep on moving at the same speed and in the same direction.

The second law states that the acceleration of a body is directly proportional to the net force acting on the body, and inversely proportional to its mass:

$$A = \frac{F}{M} \text{ or } F = M \times A$$

The third law states when one object exerts a force on a second object (action), the second object exerts an equal and opposite force upon the first (reaction).

## WORKSHEET

**Newton's Laws of Motion**

(After Modification)

**First Law:** If an object is not moving, it will probably not move; if the object is moving, it will probably keep on moving at the same speed and in the same direction.

**Second Law:** The more you push on something, the faster it goes, but the heavier it is, the slower it moves.

**Third Law:** When one object pushes or pulls on a second object (ACTION), the second object pushes or pulls back equally (REACTION).

## MODIFIED LESSON DESIGN

**Language Arts**

**Topic:** Spelling/Vocabulary

**Grades:** 3–6

**Objective:** Improve spelling and sight vocabulary in daily writing and reading, using personal word banks

**Activity:** Students use a personal word bank to assist with their spelling and sight vocabulary while writing reports, reading stories, and so on.

**Materials &** 1. Index cards

**Additional** 2. Small box for holding cards

**Resources**

- Instructions:**
1. Students are given index cards and a box to keep them in.
  2. Every time the student reads an unfamiliar word, it's to be written down on an index card. The definition also can be written on the card.
  3. The students can use, or “withdraw,” these words from their bank when writing sentences, essays, and so on.
  4. Spelling and vocabulary tests can be derived from words in the word bank.



## MODIFIED LESSON DESIGN

**Written Language**

**Topic:** Cursive Writing

**Grades:** 2–5

**Objective:** Introduce cursive writing to children who have mastered the formation of manuscript letters.

**Activity:** Students practice cursive strokes through various exercises.

**Materials &** 1. Felt-tip pen, colored pencil, or pencil

**Additional** 2. Paper with illustrations as shown below

**Resources**

- Instructions:**
1. Children can be shown the similarities between manuscript and cursive writing by writing heavy cursive letters over the corresponding manuscript letters. This technique may be varied by using a different colored pencil or a felt-tip pen for the cursive letter.
  2. Many of the cursive strokes can be practiced through games similar to those listed below. Have students practice by connecting the lines.

1.

a b c d

2. Stringing the beads



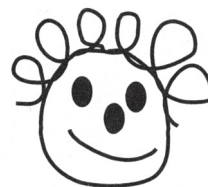
3. Making waves



4. Lassoing the dots



5. Making curly hair



## MODIFIED LESSON DESIGN

# Mathematics

**Topic:** Place Value

**Grades:** 3–6

**Objective:** Help teams of students understand place value.

**Activity:** Students practice a variety of numerical place values in a game format.

**Materials &** 1. Large index cards  
**Additional** 2. Large felt-tip marker  
**Resources**

- Instructions:**
1. Write numbers on large index cards with a large felt-tip marker. Start with zero and number consecutively, depending on the degree of difficulty.
  2. Divide the class into two teams and give each student a card.
  3. Each child holds a large number card as the teacher or an extra student calls out a number of two or more digits.
  4. The children on each team with the called number move to a designated place corresponding to its place value.
  5. The children stand in the correct order to form the number. Every time a team forms a correct number, they win a check or point that is tallied on the chalkboard. This activity should have a set time limit.

## MODIFIED LESSON DESIGN

# Mathematics

**Topic:** Basic Computation

**Grades:** 2–5

**Objective:** Practice basic computation skills and improve target accuracy.

**Activity:** Students practice a variety of computations in a game format.

**Materials &** 1. Three shoe boxes

**Additional** 2. Stapler

**Resources** 3. Flash cards  
4. Rubber ball or beanbag

- Instructions:**
1. Staple the ends of the three shoe boxes together so they are attached in a straight line.
  2. Label each box with a different process sign, (e.g., plus +, minus −, and multiplication ×).
  3. Place a group of flash cards in each box according to the process sign and degree of difficulty.
  4. Students take turns bouncing a small rubber ball on the floor directed at one of the boxes. If a beanbag is used, the child aims directly into one of the boxes.
  5. If the ball or beanbag lands in a box, the student takes a card from that box and answers the problem. If the answer is incorrect, the child can either choose another student to answer the problem or put the card back into the box and bounce the ball again.
  6. You can use this activity as an informal assessment tool as well.

## Popular Cooperative Learning Activities

*Cooperative learning is not so much learning to cooperate as it is cooperating to learn.*

Try these activities to increase learning in your class.

- ✓ **LEARNING BUDDIES**—Groups of two to four children meet together frequently to review for tests, ask questions, process material, or translate information for practical understanding.
- ✓ **THINK • PAIR • SHARE**—Pair off children so they can discuss answers to questions with a classmate and then share their answers with the class.
- ✓ **THINK • PAIR • SQUARE**—This is the same as Think-Pair-Share, except that student pairs share their answers with members of another pair.
- ✓ **JIGSAW**—Using reading, spelling, math facts, or parts of an article or story, the teacher cuts lists or information into equal parts, one for each group member. Each student learns their own piece of information and then teaches it to, or shares it with other group members.
- ✓ **TEAM CHECK**—Students on a team help each other understand answers to exercises, so that any member of the team can be called upon to answer any one of the questions.
- ✓ **BRING & BRAG**—This strategy can be used instead of having the whole class listen to everyone's report, current events, show and tell, and so on. Instead, each student shares in a small group of three to five students. After a few minutes of sharing time, students' names are randomly drawn from an envelope, and they tell the class about someone else's information.
- ✓ **ROVING REPORTER**—When a team gets stuck, one member roams the room looking for ideas and reports back to the group in a reasonable amount of time.

**Example of an Original Math Test**

(Before Modifications)

**Math 6—Chapter 3 Test****Estimate to the nearest dollar.**

$$\begin{array}{r} 1. \quad \$13.45 \\ 48.90 \\ +60.89 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2. \quad \$69.09 \\ -34.44 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3. \quad \$8.90 \\ \times 77 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_

**Add.**

$$\begin{array}{r} 4. \quad 45.667 \\ +.558 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$5. \quad 4.9 + 39.09 + 39.220 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

**Subtract.**

$$\begin{array}{r} 6. \quad 50.09 \\ -3.98 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$7. \quad 55.09 - 33.80 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

**Multiply.**

$$\begin{array}{r} 8. \quad 6.00 \\ \times 75 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$9. \quad 45.34 \times 89.00 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$10. \quad 68.09 \times 33.33 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

**Divide.**

$$11. \quad 5 \div 55.90 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$12. \quad 6.9 \div 89.00 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$13. \quad 0.3 \div 7.90 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

**Solve.**

14. A restaurant bought 6.8 kg of carrots at \$0.90 per kilogram.  
How much did the carrots cost?

## Example of a Modified Math Test

(After Modifications)

**COMMENTS:** When modifying a test, provide directions, examples, and necessary cues as reminders, as well as an ample amount of work space. Reduce the number of problems. Multiple-choice answers also are an option. Avoid having students transfer answers from one place to another.

### Math 6—Chapter 3 Test

**Directions:** Show all of your work in the space provided. Be sure to check your answers.

Estimate problems 1–3 to the nearest dollar.

Example:	\$12.89	Think:	\$13.00
	<u>+10.89</u>		<u>+11.00</u>
			\$24.00

**REMEMBER** to read each sign carefully. You need to do a different operation each time.

1.	13.45	2.	24.18	3.	3.23
	<u>+18.90</u>		<u>-12.78</u>		<u>× 5</u>

Add problems 4–5. Remember to **line up** the decimal points.

Example:	$2.3 + 4.9 = 2.3$	4.	6.0	5.	$3.0 + 2.9 + 1.8 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
	<u>+ 4.9</u>		<u>+ 4.8</u>		
	7.2				

Subtract problems 6–7. Remember to **line up** the decimal points.

6.	5.09	7.	$5.09 - 3.80 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
	<u>-0.98</u>		

## Grading Contract

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
TESTS	50%	40%	30%	25%
HOMEWORK	30%	30%	40%	40%
CLASSWORK	10%	20%	20%	25%
PERSONAL GOAL	10%	10%	10%	10%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
✓ MY CHOICE:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My personal goal for this class is: \_\_\_\_\_

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the grading option I have chosen, for this marking period. I will stay with the option I chose until the end of this marking period, unless my teachers and I decide differently.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

## Modification Checklist

*To ensure equal opportunities in the inclusive classroom,  
the following modifications are required:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Modification/Adaptation	Math	Reading	Science	Social Studies
1. Preferential Seating				
2. Visual Presentation				
3. Written and Verbal Presentation				
4. Extra Time for Completing Tasks				
5. Spelling Errors Not Graded				
6. Reduced Quantity of Homework				
7. Tests Modified				
8. Oral Tests				
9. Study Sheets/Guides				
10. Homework Club				
11. Learning Buddy				
12. Taped Texts				
13. Hands-on Presentation				
14. Assignment Book				
15. Reduced Copying from Chalkboard				
16. Computer-Assisted Instruction				
17. Encouragement of Participation				
18. Behavior Plan				
19. Other:				
20. Other:				



## A Helpful Hint for Teachers

### *Children Who Avoid Taking Tests—Causes and Interventions*

Many children with academic disabilities do not like taking tests and will do everything they can to avoid taking them. Due to their past failure and poor achievements, they develop “test-avoidance strategies,” which on the surface can be mistaken for non-compliance or misbehavior. For example: As the teacher passes out the test, the student might look at it and declare he or she is “not going to take this stupid test!” and crumple up the paper. Other things children might do to avoid taking tests might not be as apparent. These strategies include asking to go to the bathroom, getting a drink of water, sharpening one’s pencil, or talking to a classmate.

Awareness of the cause of these actions is the first step toward building the student’s self-confidence. Additional steps include:

1. Using test modifications to keep failure to a minimum (e.g., fewer problems)
2. Modifying assessment of tests
3. Adapting the learning environment (e.g., testing in another room)
4. Reading directions to the child as well as writing them clearly on the test
5. Preparing the student mentally and emotionally for the test by:
  - a) Discussing how to approach it the day before
  - b) Talking about its purpose versus grade importance

## CHAPTER 5

# HOW TO SUCCEED IN EIGHT LESSONS

Succeeding in school involves many skills that students with both special and general needs must acquire. These skills include organizing, following directions, dealing with stress, and being responsible for personal behavior. This section is designed to meet the needs of these students, whether taught individually, in a small group, or in a classroom situation. This curriculum is based on the understanding that children do not always know instinctively how to succeed in school. These awareness skills are learned and require direct instruction.

The curriculum in this chapter can be successfully used with upper elementary and middle-school aged children (grades 3–7). Each lesson takes approximately one 45-minute period. Corresponding reproducible activity sheets are provided.

After the curriculum is completed, “refresher classes” can be taught on an as needed basis. The teacher can follow the format suggested or change it according to students’ needs. These activities also promote the important personal quality of self-esteem. Although many authorities find that some children with learning disabilities have low self-esteem and interact inadequately with their teachers and classmates, all children regardless of their abilities and age need to internalize positive feelings about who they are. Developing positive self-esteem will enhance the student’s ability to manage life’s challenges. Children who feel good about themselves usually express their feelings through their behavior as well as in an openness to learning and growing.

***“Real education consists of drawing the best out of yourself.  
What better book can there be than the book of humanity.”***

—Mohandas K. Gandhi

Learning is an *active* process. This curriculum can be taught to inclusive classes that have students with a very wide range of learning styles and disabilities. It is essential to encourage students’ active involvement by using teaching strategies such as role-play, cooperative groups, and learning partners. Studies indicate that for lectures and reading, a child’s average retention rate is only 10 percent. When the teacher incorporates demonstration as well as group discussion into the lesson, the retention rate increases to 50 percent. When children practice by doing, their rate of retention reaches 75 percent and higher. At the end of this chapter are many worksheets and activities for the eight lessons within it.

## Lesson 1: Positive Role Models

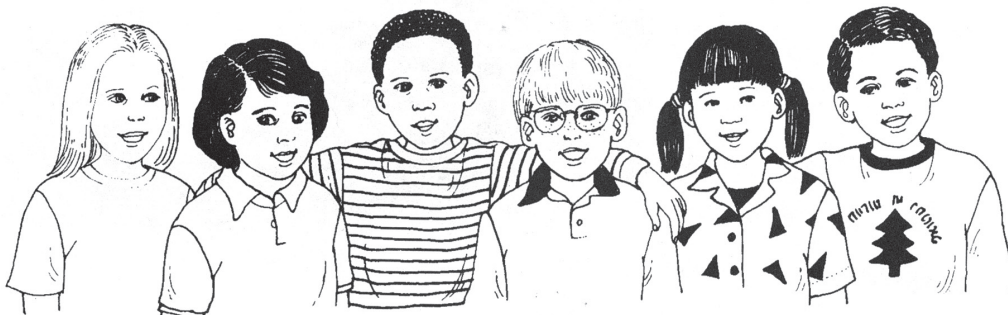
(Use Activity Sheets 1 and 2, pp. 83–84.) Before starting the first lesson, facilitate a class discussion of the purpose of this unit. The following are some ground rules for the class discussion:

- All students are encouraged to participate but have the freedom to respond or not respond, without the fear of judgment or pressure from others.
- Support and encouragement from teachers and classmates is expected.
- Respect and appreciation for diversity (ethnicity, culture, learning styles, etc.) are also expected.

This first lesson addresses the importance of children having positive role models. Children who lack role models tend to get confused easily. Having the correct books in class, or keeping track of their belongings, can often be challenging. These children tend to be quite disorganized and messy. When their desks become disaster areas or their lockers begin to resemble trash bins, they are required to straighten them, but usually take an exceedingly long time to do so and still have difficulty organizing them in a logical manner. These children also have a difficult time making decisions. When asked simple questions, they will often shrug and respond with “What do you mean?” or “I don’t know.” These children should not be labeled “of low intelligence” or learning disabled.

Establishing positive role models includes the following steps:

- **Helping children understand what they believe.** The values and beliefs that children have can act as guides for their personal behavior in school and at home.
- **Guiding children to set reasonable and achievable goals for themselves.** Children who have a lack of positive models are usually unsure of their goals. They need considerable help to clarify and work toward simple objectives such as hanging up their coats, taking out their books, determining how many math problems they will do for homework, and identifying what grades they want to get for the next marking period.



- **Expose students to successful role models.** Be careful not to fall into the trap of “Do as I say, not as I do.” Children benefit from seeing responsible behaviors in addition to discussing and practicing them through role-play activities. To facilitate awareness of positive role models, you can use Activity Sheet 1, “Characteristics of People I Like,” or invite into class other faculty members as guest speakers who will share the values and beliefs that guide them in life. You can also use videos such as Michael Jordan’s *Come Fly with Me*, to illustrate positive role models for many children. In the beginning of this video he shares how the values of working hard for what you want and having the determination to succeed and never give up have guided him toward his personal success as an athlete and businessman. If time allows, show the video in its entirety at the end of the lesson or the next day. Children never seem to get tired of watching him play basketball! Then do Activity Sheet #2, “Come Fly with Me.”

## Lesson 2: A Safe, Comfortable Learning Environment

(Use Activity Sheets 3 and 4, pp. 85–86.) Discuss the importance of being relaxed and comfortable at school. Children often need encouragement to discuss times they have felt stressed, relaxed, or comfortable at school. In order for students to take risks in class and fully participate in the learning process, they must feel safe and relaxed in their school environment. Students must be able to identify when they’re feeling stressed and learn ways to manage their stress during and after school. Both students and teachers can practice simple techniques to release their stress within a classroom setting. This is especially important for kinesthetic learners.

Help children fill out the “Ways to Manage My Stress” activity sheet, which encourages them to look at how they deal with daily stress. Also try the “Stress Away” activity, which encourages children to practice a relaxation method by using the stress control cards. This is a very enjoyable activity that also can be a great way to begin each school day.

## Lesson 3: Making Friends

(Use Activity Sheets 5, 6, and 7, pp. 87–89.) Developing and maintaining friendships is the foundation of an accepting, inclusive classroom. A major factor in being comfortable in school is feeling connected to others, or having friends. Teachers can help create a caring classroom that embraces the philosophy that all children are special and unique. These three activities (5, 6, 7) promote the understanding that one should not judge others by their outer appearance. Children

are encouraged to get to know each other in a fun and nonthreatening way. After the written responses are completed, it is important to generate a discussion about what children wrote.

## Lesson 4: Organization Skills

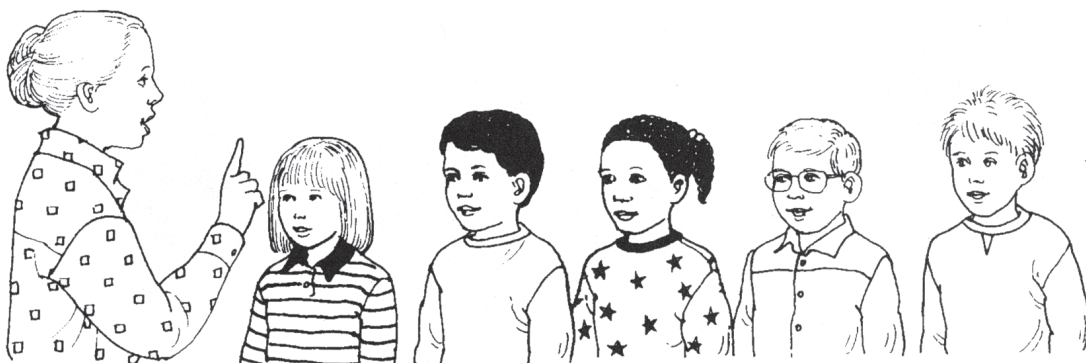
(*Use Activity Sheet 8, p. 90.*) Many children with learning disabilities could learn better if they were better organized. Learning would be easier as well as more enjoyable if students kept track of their materials and remembered the things they were supposed to do. Getting organized takes conscious planning as well as changing some poor habits. This lesson will first help increase students' awareness of their present organizing habits. These activities will then offer some effective strategies that can improve organization.

Begin this lesson by asking students what it means to organize themselves. Discuss their answers and make a list of their responses on the board. Point out the different and similar answers. Help generate a discussion regarding the importance of self-organization and the possible consequences of being and not being organized (e.g., being organized means getting work done on time, getting better grades, feeling better about oneself. Not being organized means more difficulty in learning, feeling frustrated, getting poor grades, etc.). Next, hand out the Activity Sheet 8, "Organizing Myself," and follow with more discussion.

## Lesson 5: Listening to Others

(*Use Activity Sheets 9, and 10, pp. 91–92.*) During this lesson, students discuss how listening to others may influence them to behave responsibly. Teachers can define a good listener as someone who

- pays attention;
- knows what is said by repeating it back; and
- does not interrupt or distract others when they are speaking.



After a short discussion of these definitions, students will then be ready for Activity Sheets 9 and 10, “Talk and Listen” and “Listening on Purpose.” Each activity will take forty-five minutes to complete. Additional role-play experiences can enhance students’ listening skills as well.

## Lesson 6: Following Oral Directions

(*Use Activity Sheets 11 and 12, pp. 93-94.*) Begin this lesson by reviewing the differences between listening and hearing. To demonstrate the differences use these fun activities.

1. “What is an aluminum can made out of?” Ask for a volunteer to help demonstrate the difference between hearing and listening. Let them know that you’re going to try to trick them by the questions you ask. “What is five plus five?” Ten. Nine plus one?” Ten. “Six plus four?” Ten. “What is an aluminum can made out of?” Most children will say, Tin. At this point we discuss why tin instead of aluminum was the response and that listening takes full concentration.
2. “Simon says put your hand on your head ...” You can use your first or last name or “Simon.” Children enjoy the challenge of this activity, and it gives students practice in listening and following oral directions. When doing this exercise, remember to point to a different part of your body after getting them used to touching the correct part of their body (e.g., saying “Simon says to touch your nose” while you touch your chin). Gradually increase the pace of directions so all children can feel challenged as they get the knack of it. Students who have coordination difficulties can be helpers by catching those who make a mistake.

The included student’s difficulties with organization and following oral directions are probably the behaviors teachers cite as most troublesome. The reason children have difficulty following directions is often poor listening skills, also defined as poor critical listening. It is not unusual for a teacher to give clear and simple directions and have one or more students raise their hands and ask, “What do we do?” Activity Sheets 11 and 12, “Following Directions” and “Listen Carefully—Then Draw,” address this problem. These lessons focus on teaching strategies that will improve listening and following oral directions.

## Lesson 7: Managing Classroom Attitude

(*Use Activity Sheets 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, pp. 95–99.*) It is important that children understand “classroom etiquette.” Understanding the consequences of classroom attitude will help children take responsibility for their behaviors. Begin this lesson with a discussion of the importance



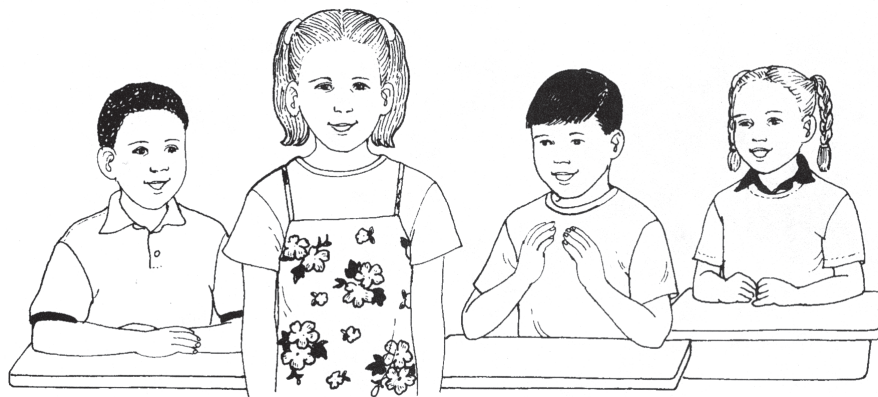
of students cooperating with their teachers. After this discussion students are asked to fill out Activity Sheet 13, “My Teacher and I.” This part of the lesson is concluded with students discussing in small then large groups ways that they have previously cooperated with their teachers.

Activity Sheet 14, “Ten Ways to Manage My Classroom Attitude,” gives students direct instructions on how to demonstrate a positive learning attitude in the classroom. After reading each statement to the class, students form small learning groups and read as well as role-play assigned statements. Activity Sheet 15, “A Better Way to Act,” encourages students to use the information they’ve learned to determine the responsible way to act in class. Through discussion and/or role-play, students should share answers when finished. Activity Sheet 16, “How Important Is My Attitude?” is a fun and intriguing mathematical exercise that can act as a catalyst for thought and discussion around the importance of one’s attitude in school, at home, and in the community.

Understanding consequences of one’s behavior is an essential part of succeeding in school. The “Flow Chart,” Activity Sheet 17, can give the visual learner an opportunity to gain an added awareness of how a responsible behavior, such as doing homework, or an irresponsible behavior, such as not listening in class, can affect their ability to succeed in school.

## Lesson 8: Review Progress

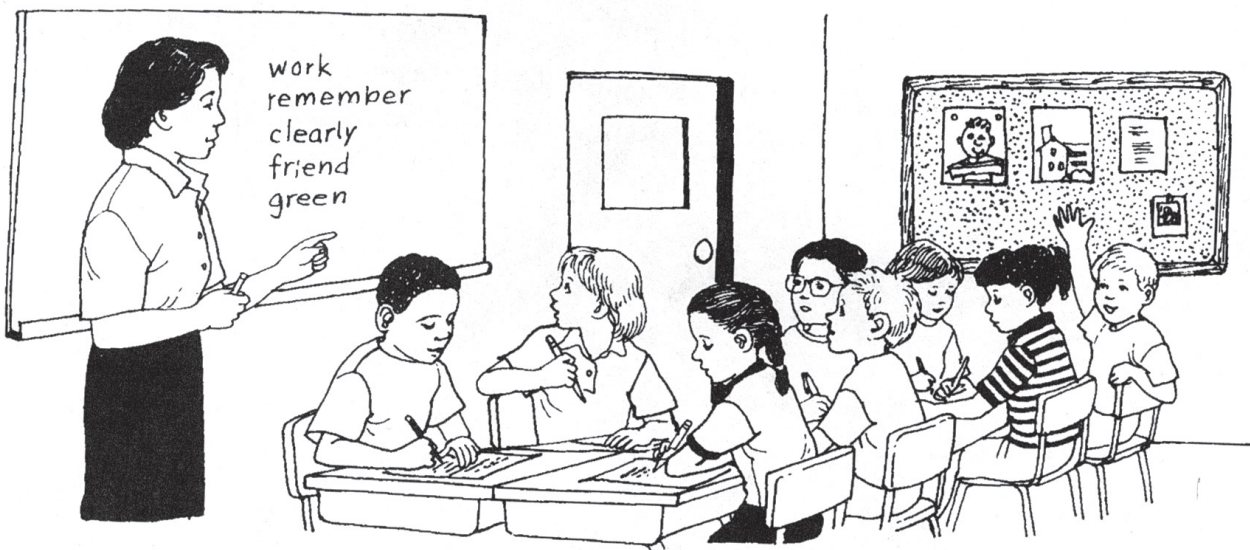
*(Use Activity Sheet 18, p. 100.)* Begin this final lesson by asking students to review some of the highlights of the previous seven lessons. Children describe what they have learned about themselves (e.g., “I learned that by organizing my things, I feel better about coming to school.”) This process is facilitated by completing “Looking at My Progress,” Activity Sheet 18. Teachers conclude the lesson by giving the students the opportunity to receive positive feedback from one another.



The teacher can begin by modeling a descriptive compliment to a student. For example, instead of saying “Amanda, you did a good job,” say “Amanda, you listened really well when I gave instructions.”

This curriculum can have a significant and positive effect on children’s awareness of how to succeed in school. In saying this, it should also be noted that not all special and general education students will show immediate improvement in the skills covered in these lessons. Awareness of how to reach a goal does not automatically result in the achievement of that goal. However, many students not only enjoy participating in these lessons, but also gain a greater understanding of themselves as well as their school community. When students realize that these lessons can help them be more successful in school, they’ll work harder to achieve that goal.

The importance of participating in this curriculum can be presented to students in this way: “If you’re having difficulties learning in class, you may not enjoy coming to school. You may not like school at all. Can anyone tell me what the word resist means? To avoid failure, you might become what is called a resistant learner. You can go through school avoiding full participation, consequently feeling angry, frustrated, or sad. Participating in these lessons can change the way you feel about your ability to succeed in school. It can also give you a better understanding of what your unsuccessful school habits are, as well as how to replace them with successful ones. If you feel pretty good about school and are not having trouble learning, then this information will help you understand how to continue being successful in class. Any questions?”





**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

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## POSITIVE ROLE MODELS: ACTIVITY SHEET 2

**Come Fly with Me**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**Define: *Attribute*

After watching the video of Michael Jordan, *Come Fly with Me*, answer the following questions.  
When you finish, put a check in the box at the bottom of the page.

Name three attributes of Michael Jordan that helped him to be successful.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Name three successes that you have experienced at school.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What successes do you expect to experience in the future?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I answered all of the questions.

## A SAFE, COMFORTABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ACTIVITY SHEET 3

**Ways to Manage My Stress\***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Please rate yourself on each statement with a **5** for “most of the time”; a **3** for “sometimes”; or a **1** for “hardly ever.” If your score is **37** or greater, you are doing great as far as finding ways of releasing stress in your life. If your score is below **25**, it’s important to look at changing some of your habits (especially the “hardly evers”).

After you rate yourself, total your score by adding up the numbers.

**I am succeeding at:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Scheduling time for fun activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Getting enough sleep at night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Exercising every day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Practicing relaxation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Eating balanced meals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Staying away from junk foods (candy, potato chips, soda).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Having a good laugh at least once a day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Talking to someone about things that bother me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Not letting things bother me so much.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Keeping up with my schoolwork.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total**

\* Used by permission of Professional Resource Press.

## A SAFE, COMFORTABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ACTIVITY SHEET 4

**Stress Away<sup>1</sup>**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

If possible, obtain a Stress Release Card<sup>2</sup> for this activity. Otherwise the following sequence of muscle relaxation instructions can be used as an alternative to the directions on the stress control card. Begin by telling children that it's important to keep their muscles tensed for five to ten seconds and then release their tension and allow their muscles to go completely limp (you can use an analogy such as "wet spaghetti"). Wait twenty to thirty seconds before shifting to the next muscle group. Say the following directions in a slow, soft, soothing, repetitive voice. Any additional environmental changes, such as soft background music or dimming the lights, can also be helpful.

1. Have all students sit comfortably in a chair or lie in a comfortable position on the floor.
2. As you read these instructions, wait twenty to thirty seconds before moving on to the next muscle group.
  - Wrinkle your forehead and brow. Now slowly relax them.
  - Tense your eyes and face, squeezing the eyes very tightly. Slowly release, and enjoy the relaxed feeling. Let your eyes stay closed.
  - Now tense your jaw and press your tongue to the roof of your mouth. Slowly relax.
  - Bring your chin to your chest. Hold, then relax.
  - Pull your shoulders up to your ears. Hold, then slowly let go.
  - Make a fist with both hands. Squeeze, then release and let your hands open up.
  - Take a deep breath, pushing your chest out. Hold, now s-l-o-w-l-y let your breath out and relax your chest.
  - Tighten your upper legs, or thighs. Let go of the tension.
  - Point your toes away from your head. Tense, then release and enjoy the relaxed feeling and go completely limp.
3. Now take a deep breath and hold it for a silent count of ten. When you let your breath out, or exhale, let it all out at once, letting your body go limp.

If you are using a Stress Release Card, conclude by checking to see what color your card turned while I mark it next to your name on the chart.

<sup>1</sup>Used by permission of Professional Resource Press.

<sup>2</sup>Stress Release Cards can be ordered from BMI, Inc., 2387 East 8 Mile Road, Warren, MI 48091-2403. (800) 521-4640.

## MAKING FRIENDS: ACTIVITY SHEET 5

### Can't Judge a Box by Its Cover\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** shoe box, wrapping paper, paper bag, dollar bill, undesirable object (e.g., old lemon, dried onion)

#### Directions

1. Prepare the shoe box by wrapping it as a present. Wrap it so the lid can come off and place the undesirable object inside. In the crumpled paper bag, place the dollar bill (or for younger children, use any age-appropriate gift).
2. Then place the box and the bag in the center of the group circle and ask students, "If you could have whatever is in either container, who would choose the box? Who would choose the paper bag?"
3. Two children are chosen to first open up the box and show everyone its contents, and then do the same with the paper bag.
4. Now, all the students are encouraged to discuss the significance of what just occurred. Questions asked can include:
  - What is the meaning of the saying "You can't judge a book by its cover"?
  - Who can explain what this activity has to do with really getting to know someone and making friends?
  - What are some ways you can get to know someone?
5. During the discussion, take an active role in helping students explore alternative ways of getting to know someone. Using the metaphor of the box, emphasize the importance of getting to know someone by looking beyond their physical appearance.
6. When the discussion is completed, have students form pairs and fill out the activity sheet, "Getting to Know Someone." After partners share information with each other, volunteers are asked to share with the class what they learned about their partners.

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## MAKING FRIENDS: ACTIVITY SHEET 6

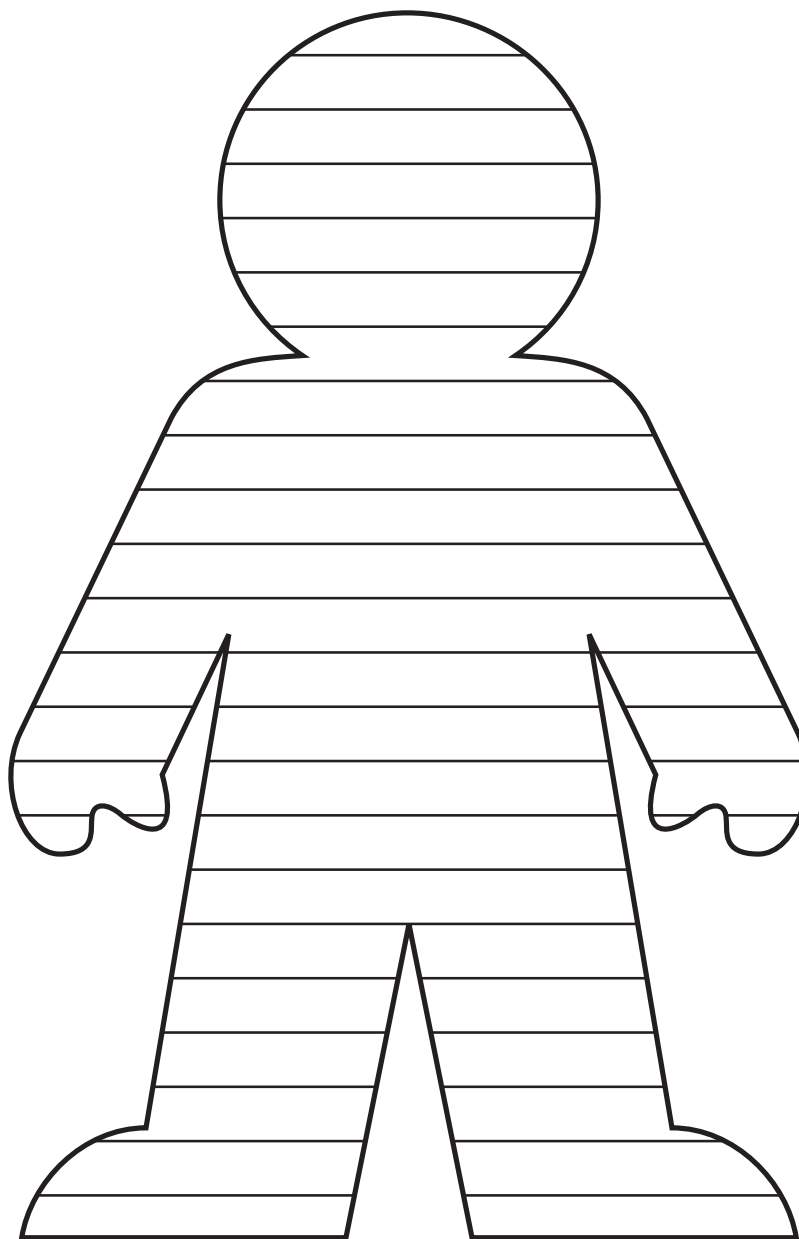
### Getting to Know Someone

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Directions

It often takes time to get to know more about someone than you might guess by the way he or she looks, talks, or acts. In this activity, pair off and then write on each line a personal statement about your partner. These things can include personal likes and dislikes, hobbies, etc.



## MAKING FRIENDS: ACTIVITY SHEET 7

**Guess Who...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Answer the questions below without showing anyone what you've written. When everyone is finished, your teacher will read the answers and everyone will try to guess who wrote them. After everyone takes a turn guessing, your teacher will say something such as, "Will the person whose favorite food is...and finds it easy to do...please stand up?" The student whose answers were just read will then stand up!

1. My favorite food is \_\_\_\_\_
2. My favorite TV show is \_\_\_\_\_
3. It is easy for me to \_\_\_\_\_
4. It is hard for me to \_\_\_\_\_
5. One of my friends is named \_\_\_\_\_
6. I really enjoy \_\_\_\_\_

## ORGANIZATION SKILLS: ACTIVITY SHEET 8

**Organizing Myself**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Getting organized for school is not always an easy task. If you need to get organized, try some of the ideas below.

**1. Getting Ready for School**

What is your daily routine? Maybe you get out of bed and take a shower before you get dressed. Or maybe you shower before going to bed and get dressed after you get up in the morning. Your regular way of doing things every day is called your “routine.” A routine can make it easier for you to get organized. Here are some tips on creating a routine that can help you get ready for school:

- ✓ Get your clothes ready for school the night before.
- ✓ Check to see if you have all the books and materials you need to bring to school before going to bed.
- ✓ Ask someone to help you write down a weekly schedule of important things that need to get done. For example: “Tuesday, I need to bring in a jar for my science project.”

You can ask a parent, older brother, sister, or teacher to help you with this.

**2. Using an Assignment Book**

Assignment books are a great way to keep yourself organized! They help you remember what homework to do and which books to bring home. Here are some tips about how to use your assignment book.

- ✓ There are several types of assignment books. Some have one day printed on each page, and others have a few days printed on each page. Ask someone to help you decide which one works best for you. An assignment book that has a place where your parent can sign after you’ve completed the work is especially good.
- ✓ Open your assignment book as soon as you get to class. As soon as your teacher says what you’ll need to do for the next day, write it down.
- ✓ Before going home, check your assignment book to see which books you’ll need to take home.



## LISTENING TO OTHERS: ACTIVITY SHEET 9

**Talk and Listen**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** Small bell or cooking timer**Directions**

1. Before beginning this activity, facilitate a class discussion about communication. Some points that should be covered include:
  - In communication there is always a speaker and a listener. What is the difference between speaking and listening?
  - When speaking, you should think about what you want to say and try to speak loudly enough (but without shouting) so the person can hear you.
  - When listening, try not to interrupt the person talking.
  - Try not to think about something else while listening.
2. After this discussion ask the students to sit in pairs, facing their partners. Each partner will take turns being a “listener” and then a “speaker.”
3. Explain that the listeners will report what the speakers were saying, so it’s important to really listen.
4. Each student will be given three minutes each to either listen or talk about the topic being discussed.
5. Ring the bell after three minutes, letting each pair finish their sentences or thoughts before changing roles to either a “listener” or “speaker.”
6. After partners have taken turns, have students form a large group and share what each other said one at a time.

List of possible topics:

- “What I did on my last birthday”
- “A problem I need to solve”
- “My favorite subjects in school and why”
- “Three things that really bother me”
- “What I would do with \$100”
- “My favorite dream”

**LISTENING TO OTHERS: ACTIVITY SHEET 10****Listening on Purpose**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: Audiocassette recorder (or a micro-recorder), chalkboard or newsprint

**Directions**

1. Ask students to sit in pairs and have a discussion about a favorite TV program.
2. While students are talking, inconspicuously move around the classroom and tape their conversations.
3. Then write "LISTEN" on the chalkboard and ask the class to stop talking and listen for a few moments to the tape recorder. Ask, "What is special about the way a tape recorder listens?" This helps the students understand that a recorder is very accurate and listens to every word just as it's said.
4. Have students sit in pairs and decide who will play the part of the tape recorder first. Have the "tape recorders" raise their hands. Announce that this is the topic to be discussed: "How would you spend \$10?" The speakers begin talking and the "tape recorders" begin listening without speaking.
5. After one minute of talking, instruct the students to stop and switch roles, while repeating the same process, using the same topic. Then both students will each have one minute to say what they heard, while the speakers listen.

**Follow-up Discussion:**

After the first minute of talking, ask the students these questions:

- What was it like to listen like a tape recorder?
- Speakers, how well did your "tape recorder" (listener) work?
- What was it like to be listened to so well?
- Why is it important to listen carefully when someone is talking?
- Why is it important to listen to your teacher? your parents? your friends?

## FOLLOWING ORAL DIRECTIONS: ACTIVITY SHEET 11

**Following Directions**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Learning to follow directions will help you to do your work correctly and on time. Read the ideas below on following directions. Check the box next to each idea after you **remember** and **understand** what you've read. (You can have a choice of working alone or with a learning partner.) Your teacher will then check and see how many ideas for following directions you have remembered.

- ☐ After listening to the directions the teacher gives you, repeat the directions to yourself a few times.
- ☐ Write down the directions; it will help you remember them.
- ☐ Picture the directions you hear in your mind. For example, suppose your teacher tells everyone to find and circle the nouns in each sentence. Stop for a moment and in your mind picture yourself finding the nouns in a sentence and drawing circles around them.
- ☐ When your teacher is talking, listen for words that he or she repeats or says LOUDER. These words may be important direction words.

Listen for these important direction words:

- **Listen**—"Listen to the sound this instrument makes."
- **Look**—"Before we begin, look at the picture on page six."
- **Write**—"I want you to write all the words on your paper."
- **Remember**—"Remember to study for the quiz tomorrow."
- **Circle**—"Circle all the nouns in each sentence."
- **Draw**—"After listening to the story, draw a picture of the house."
- **Do**—"Do all the problems on page twelve."

## FOLLOWING ORAL DIRECTIONS: ACTIVITY SHEET 12

**Listen Carefully—Then Draw**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

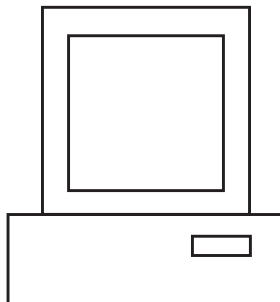
Materials: white unlined paper, pencil, ruler, cassette player optional

**Directions**

This is a fun activity that can help children (grades 3–7) follow directions. Students get an opportunity to follow oral directions and visually determine how well they did. Give the directions at a normal conversational rate of speaking. Use normal inflection and repeat each instruction once. You can also record each instruction and play it back as they draw. Give students enough time to complete each instruction.

*I am going to give you directions for drawing a simple picture. I will repeat the directions one time, so it's important to listen very carefully to my directions. Now get ready.*

1. In the middle of your paper, draw a square. It should be about 4 inches long and 4 inches high.
2. In the middle of your square, draw a smaller square. It should be about 3 inches long and 3 inches high.
3. Next draw a rectangle that is 6 inches long and 2 inches wide and touches the bottom of the larger square. The rectangle should be centered under the square.
4. Now in the upper right corner of the rectangle, draw a smaller rectangle about 1 inch long and 1/2 inch wide.
5. What did you draw? (answer: computer) Compare your picture with what the person next to you drew.



## MANAGING CLASSROOM ATTITUDE: ACTIVITY SHEET 13

**My Teacher and I**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Getting along with your teachers is very important. It's also important that you show your teacher you are interested in learning. Read these **5 Great Tips** on ways to show your teacher you're interested in learning as well as being positive in class. After reading each statement, write it down. It will help you remember what you've read. Then pair up with a classmate and take turns telling each other a great tip!

1. When your teacher offers you help, remember to say "thank you." Your teacher appreciates it when you're polite. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. If your teacher asks you a question and you're not sure of the answer, don't make negative comments, such as "I don't know" or "I can't." \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Instead of making negative comments, make a positive comment, such as "I have to think about it" or "I don't know, but I'll try." \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. If you don't understand a question, raise your hand and say, "Can you please repeat what you said? I don't understand it." \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Remember to say "good bye" to your teacher when you leave for the day.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MANAGING CLASSROOM ATTITUDE: ACTIVITY SHEET 14

### Ten Ways to Manage My Classroom Attitude

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Directions

After reading each statement, work with one or two partners and act out for the class a statement you've read. Take turns playing the roles of teacher and student.

1. Pay attention to your teacher's voice. Notice when your teacher is trying to get your attention by talking louder or softer, pausing for a long time, or calling your name.
2. If your teacher asks everyone to pay attention and stop talking, be the first one to stop and wait until everyone is quiet before you ask a question.
3. Show your teacher you're interested in learning by sitting up straight in your chair, looking at the teacher, and ignoring others who are not paying attention.
4. Sit toward the front of the class. Don't sit next to someone who bothers you.
5. If you didn't do your homework, be honest and accept the consequences.
6. If you don't understand what your teacher is saying or need something repeated, ask your teacher politely. Tell your teacher you are having trouble keeping up.
7. Do extra credit work if the teacher allows it.
8. If you think you're getting blamed for something you didn't do, wait until after class to discuss it with your teacher. Don't argue with your teacher during class!
9. If you feel embarrassed about something that happened in class, talk to your teacher or your parents about it after school or during free time.
10. Practice being assertive, which means "to state one's opinion confidently and positively." Say what you mean without being loud or angry. For example: "I don't want to get in trouble so please stop talking to me."

## MANAGING CLASSROOM ATTITUDE: ACTIVITY SHEET 15

**A Better Way to Act**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Taking responsibility for how we act in school is not always the easiest thing to do, but it is always the right way to act. After reading the situations below, write what you think would be the best way to act.

1. Your teacher is covering a lot of material and seems to be going too fast. How do you ask your teacher to slow down? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Your teacher pauses for a long time. What does this mean? What should you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. You don't understand something your teacher is explaining to the class. How do you let your teacher know? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Someone says something to you during class and you feel embarrassed. Who should you talk to about it and when? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. You lost your homework and told your teacher. Your teacher still punishes you by having you do extra work at recess. What is the best way for you to react? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Someone sitting next to you keeps talking to you when they shouldn't. What is the best way to tell them to stop? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MANAGING CLASSROOM ATTITUDE: ACTIVITY SHEET 16

**How Important Is My Attitude?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Your attitude, or the way you feel about something, is very important when it comes to being successful in school. But how important is it? In this activity assign a number to each letter in the word “attitude.” The number corresponds to the letter’s place in the alphabet. For example, the letter “A” is the first letter of the alphabet so it gets a #1 assigned to it, and so on. Then add up all the numbers and see **how important your attitude is**.

A \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_

U \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

E \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ %



## MANAGING CLASSROOM ATTITUDE: ACTIVITY SHEET 17

**The Flow Chart**

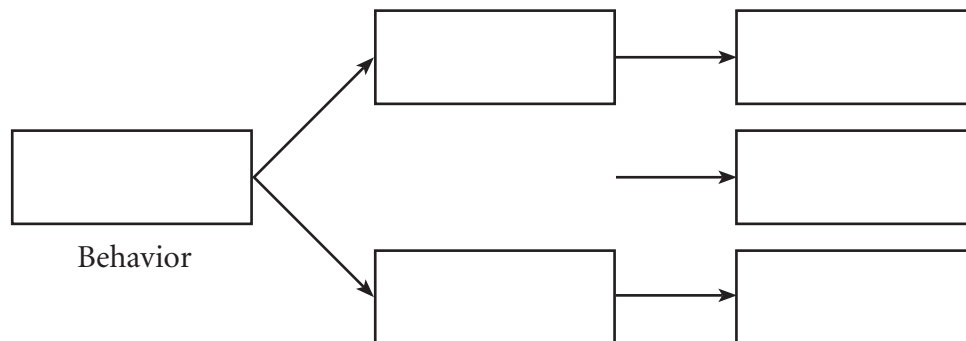
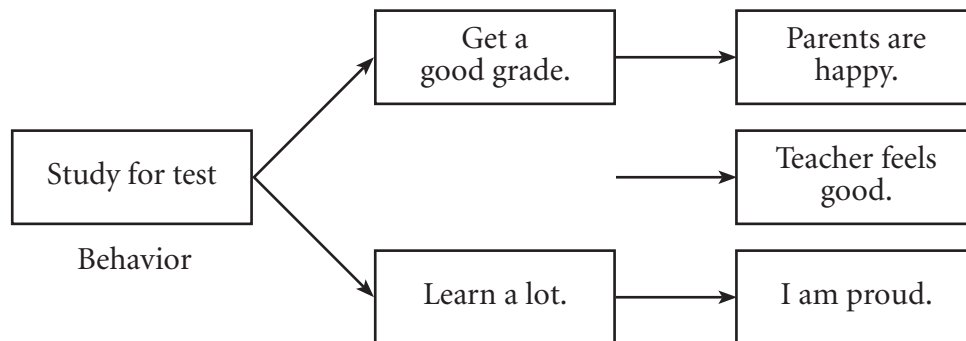
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Responsible☐ Not Responsible \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior

## Directions

On the line above write the behavior you are going to chart. Check either *Responsible* or *Not Responsible* to show what kind of behavior it is. Next, in each box below, write down the logical consequences to the behavior. For example:

**Example:**

## REVIEW PROGRESS: ACTIVITY SHEET 18

**Looking at My Progress**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions**

Congratulations! You have learned the important tips to help you succeed in school. Now let's look back and see what you've learned. What are your strengths as well as some things you might still need improvement in? It's also important to hear positive comments about yourself from your classmates and teacher. Answer the questions below and share them with your class.

**Write a few things you've learned in the following areas:**

- Having positive role models: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Being relaxed and comfortable in school: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Making friends: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Being organized: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Listening to and following directions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Managing my classroom attitude: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 6

**MANAGING BEHAVIORS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM**

Effective classroom discipline is both an art and a science. It is an art in that an effective disciplinarian must be flexible in response to changing human behavior while understanding the importance of limits and consistency. This amounts to creative thinking and awareness of the individual student's needs as well as the needs of the entire class. It is a science in that effective discipline incorporates knowledge that comes from observing a student's behaviors and experimenting with a variety of strategies and techniques to help the student adjust his or her behavior. The effective teacher is constantly evaluating how the teaching process can be improved.

In inclusive classrooms, as in most general education classes, students' behaviors can be managed through basic structuring of the classroom environment with fair rules, logical consequences, and consistent enforcement. The rules that support a well-managed inclusive classroom should not be exclusive of the rest of the school. It is many teachers' experience that the most effective discipline plans are applied consistently schoolwide, so that wherever the students go they encounter the same behavioral expectations and the same plan.

***CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELL-MANAGED CLASSROOM***

- ✓ All students are involved in the learning process.
- ✓ Students understand what is expected of them and are generally successful.
- ✓ There is relatively little disruption and off-task behavior.
- ✓ The climate of the classroom is work-oriented, but relaxed and enjoyable.



## Involving Students in the Learning Process

Learning is an active process. Helping the inclusive student participate in the learning process takes the same skills as those needed for the general-needs student, but they may need to be implemented at increased intervals.

To increase the amount of time the student is involved in the learning process:

- 1. Check for understanding of what is being taught by asking comprehension questions.**

Asking and responding to questions is one of the most important processes that takes place in a learning environment, although research has shown that in some classes it's possible for days and even weeks to go by with some students never sharing their thoughts and ideas verbally in class. These few guidelines can be helpful for increasing students' active participation and opportunity for high response:

- Call on low-achieving students with the same frequency as high-achievers.
- Ask more open-ended types of questions versus single-answer ones.
- Call on females with the same frequency as males.
- Give students time to process the question or to think before responding.
- Ask a high percentage of questions that require higher level, critical-thinking skills.
- Rephrase a question if it is not understood.
- Return to students who do not offer answers.

- 2. Stop after ten minutes of instruction to allow students to help each other clarify information being taught.**

- 3. Constantly monitor students so as to keep them involved and on task.**

- 4. Adapt or modify work so as to avoid frustration and/or passivity.**

## Developing Clear Student Expectations

Class assignments as well as expected classroom behaviors should be stated simply and clearly to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding among all students. Here are examples of typical class assignments or objectives stated in clear and easy-to-understand terms:

- ✓ Name the three primary colors.
- ✓ Write three things you learned about reptiles.
- ✓ Create a new ending for the story.
- ✓ Share one important study skill you learned today with your learning partner.
- ✓ Plan a popcorn party.

- ✓ Predict what will happen next.
- ✓ Write a paragraph describing what you just read.

Some students with special learning needs, as well as others who are not necessarily below average, may need additional directions in order to complete the task and stay actively involved. Accompanying the objectives can be specific questions that need answers. Next to each question a page number or location where the answer may be found can also be written.

Here are four examples of clearly stated general classroom behavioral rules that are positively stated, posted, and should be referred to frequently.

1. Do your best, don't settle for less.
2. Respect each other.
3. Work cooperatively with others.
4. Stay on task at your seat.

For some students needing very precise expectations as well as for the newer teacher, specific classroom rules might be more effective. Here are five examples of specific classroom rules that can be considered for creating a well-managed classroom:

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Keep all hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Change tasks quickly and quietly.
4. Raise your hand to ask a question.
5. No cursing or teasing.



## Keeping Students on Task with Little Disruption

Children want to know what is expected of them. High expectation is directly related to attitude and behavior. It is this behavior that supports high self-esteem, good grades, and, consequently, a successful school experience. The following procedures can help implement this aspect of a well-managed classroom.

1. The classroom rules and expectations are clearly posted and consistently followed. The rules can be given to the students in a handout as well or copied by students into their notebooks.
2. Fair consequences and rewards are established along with the rules.
3. Posted rules are limited to no more than five. People find it easier to remember numbers in groups of three to five.
4. When a rule is broken, consequences are given with little discussion and with as minimal class disruption as possible. It is unnecessary to explain to a student why he or she must stop talking when you're trying to teach, beyond saying "you are distracting others who are trying to listen."

Do not stop the lecture, discussion, or movie. At times it might be more effective to wait until a time when the student is better able to accept the consequence—as long as the rule is not being continuously broken. You can go to the chalkboard and write the student's name or put a check next to it. At the end of the period, the student might need a "reminder" as to what the consequence is.

## Establishing Consequences and Rewards

Rules, especially with children, must have consequences to enforce them and rewards to confirm them. Students will test rules to find the limits of their behavior and to find out whether the rule will be enforced or not. It is as important to post your expectations or rules as it is important to post your consequences.

Most teachers at all grade levels use some kind of gradual step system of consequences for classroom management. Although the specific steps and consequences vary, the consequences become stronger as the offense is repeated. Here are examples of consequences from typical elementary and middle-school classrooms.

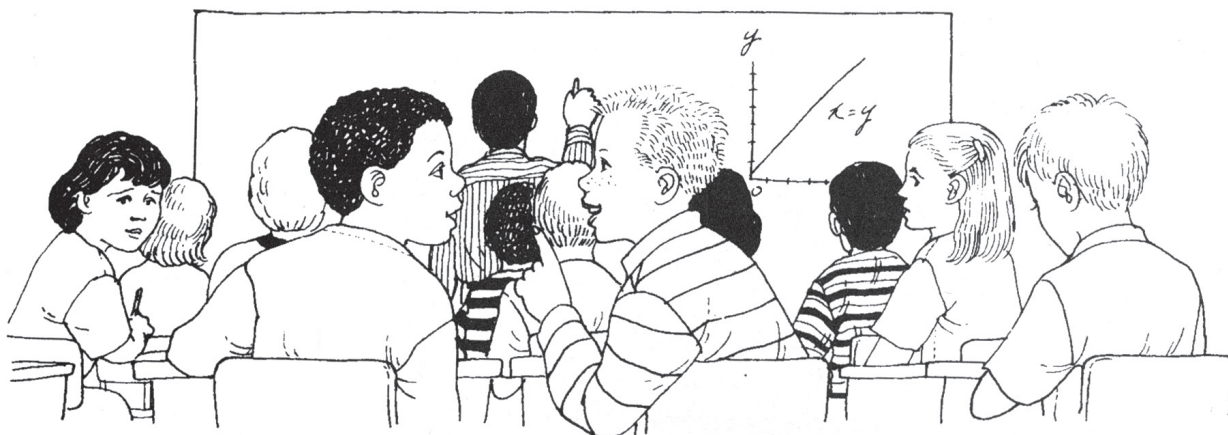
### Example 1

1. Verbal warning
2. Time-out (5 to 10 minutes at time-out desk)
3. Time away in another cooperating classroom (also at their time-out desk)
4. Detention/vice principal/home called

### Example 2

1. Verbal or nonverbal warning (pause, stare, pointed finger, etc.)
2. Student's name on board = 10 minutes of lunch detention
3. One check next to student's name = 20 minutes of lunch detention
4. Two checks = entire lunch detention, call home, and sent to the office

It is important to note that these are examples of consequences and are not to be used universally. Lunch hour detention may not work or be acceptable in your school. For some children, sitting with the teacher at lunch may actually be rewarding.



**Important Principle**

Acceptable classroom rules should tell the student clearly:

- a) what constitutes acceptable behavior; and
- b) what are the consequences or rewards for the unacceptable or acceptable behaviors.

**Using Logical Consequences**

When consequences are not logical and do not reflect reason, they tend to anger not educate children.

When children are angry they rebel. If a consequence does not follow logically from the behavior and instead is seen as arbitrarily imposed, the student will develop more resistance and ultimately defiance. The most well-intentioned teacher will become frustrated and likely lose objectivity when dealing with the student's misbehaviors.

The effective use of logical consequences teaches students to choose between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. They allow the student to experience the consequences of his or her misbehavior. Thinking of efficient logical consequences does not always come easily and can take some planning. Here are a few examples of logical and illogical consequences:

Student Behavior	Logical Consequence	Illogical Consequence
Passes paper in incorrectly	Passes the paper in again	Teacher throws paper away
Knocks over chair out of anger	Picks up chair and arranges all chairs at lunch time	Loses recess time
Walks in noisily	Walks in again	Teacher ignores noise
Does not write down assignment	Suffers consequences of not handing in assignment	Teacher deducts 10 points
Turns in sloppy paper	Does paper again	Teacher refuses paper
Throws food at lunch	Cleans floor in cafeteria or sits alone next lunch period	Loses recess time

Children learn better from what they tell themselves than from what we tell them. Using logical consequences takes the focus off the outside authority and puts it where it belongs, back on the student. Children may do what we order them to do, but their motivation to change a behavior must ultimately come from a voice other than ours—their own. They're more inclined to believe something that comes from inside their own heads. Logical consequences act as catalysts for thinking versus rebelling; "If I forget my textbook, the teacher will not give me another book, and I'll just sit there feeling bored," or "If I walk into class making a lot of noise, I'll just have to leave and walk in the right way." It might not always be possible or practical to enforce a logical consequence in the classroom, but any imposed consequences should always (1) be enforceable, (2) fit the behavior, and (3) be administered with *professional empathy*.



## Don't React—Respond

Often our solution to misbehavior in the classroom is to react to the behavior personally rather than respond to the problem professionally. *Professional empathy* is the ability to separate yourself from the student's problem. Controlling your emotional involvement will assist the power of the consequence to take its course. Here are examples of statements that can be used before getting angry or pulled into the student's problem:

- “Really? Well I know you, and I’m sure you’ll figure out how to get that assignment in.”
- “I know how much you wanted to go on that field trip. How are you going to handle it?”
- “I understand your concern, but as you know, the consequence is a call home to your parents. I hope we can all come up with something to help you.”

When we make these types of comments, we don't put ourselves up against our students. We instead give them the message that we are on their side, and that side is learning from their mistakes.

## Rewards and Positive Incentives: Catch Them Being Good

In addition to enforcing consequences for misbehavior, teachers must give positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. Many teachers have come to the realization that catching students doing what they should be doing and providing positive incentives, also referred to as positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors, is the most effective approach in managing the classroom. All students like and expect special recognition, rewards, or incentives when good work is being done or completed. This *proactive* approach towards classroom management is much more effective than being *reactive*.

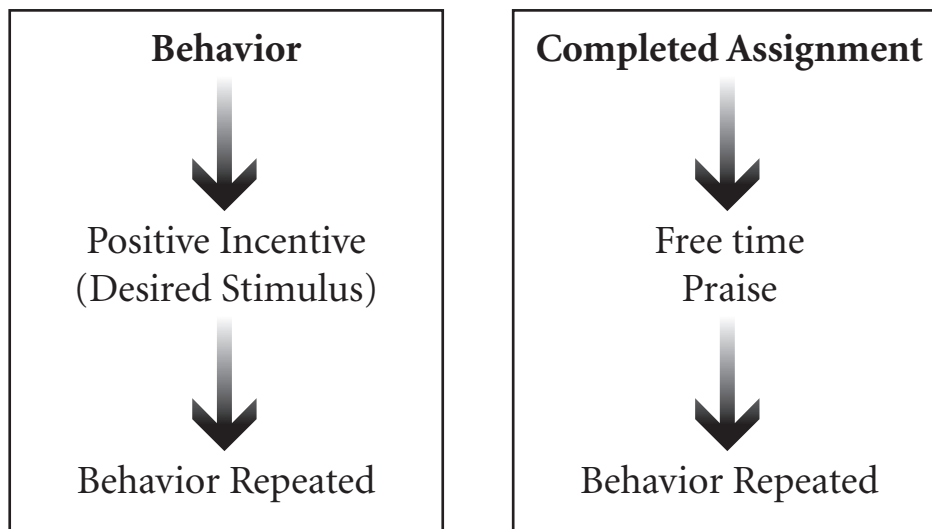
***“A positive incentive or reinforcer is something that follows a behavior, strengthening that behavior and making it more likely to occur again.”***



Effective teachers in inclusive classrooms spend time proactively, creating a responsive classroom environment that prevents misbehaviors from arising rather than reactively dealing with problems after they arise. They do this by using positive incentives or positively reinforcing students who are acting appropriately *and* by making a conscious effort to catch children being good.

Studies have shown us that for every positive interaction in the classroom, there are four negative ones! That ratio at the least must be reversed. Taking this proactive approach can eliminate most of the discipline problems that occur in the average classroom.

When a positive incentive is used properly, it can increase students' desired classroom behavior. For example, a teacher gives an assignment and the students complete it quickly, quietly, and correctly. The teacher comments on how well they worked and gives them ten minutes of free time at the end of the period or day. The following period or day the teacher gives them another assignment; they again complete the assignment quickly, quietly, and correctly. The behavior was correctly completing the assignment. It was followed by a desired stimulus or positive incentive, which was praise and free time. The result was that the behavior was repeated the following period or day. By catching the students doing the right thing with the addition of a positive incentive, the chances of them repeating the desired behavior were increased.



This approach has again and again been proven to be more effective in keeping students on task than the “traditional” lecturing and punishing those who are off-task. If you find it difficult to find positive behaviors to catch, the student(s) is probably in need of modeling and direct teaching of what behaviors are acceptable. Expected classroom behaviors such as following directions and managing classroom attitude are directly taught in chapter 5. There is an old adage, “Children learn what they’re taught.” This, of course, applies to appropriate social behaviors and social skills in a classroom environment.

## Different Strokes for Different Folks

Not all positive incentives or reinforcers work the same for all students. It is important to know your students—their personalities, learning styles, and likes and dislikes or reinforcers. For example, reading one student’s report aloud in front of the class would be very gratifying and, consequently, act as a positive incentive, but for another student it might be very embarrassing and could cause a negative reaction. Matching appropriate incentives to your students will take time and should be done with objectivity. A simple way of doing this is by watching students during their free time or asking them what they like.



### *A Lesson for Planning Positive Incentives*

- **Activity**—Establishing Positive Incentives
- **Setting the stage**—Ask students what positive incentives or rewards mean to them. What are their favorite incentives? When should they be given? Why?
- **Objectives**—The students will be able to:
  1. Identify personal positive incentives.
  2. Discuss when incentives should be given.
  3. Choose three to six incentives to be used in the class or personally.
- **Instruction**—Explain why this topic is important to you and that you feel it should be discussed in class so all students can participate in their own success in the classroom. Discuss the possible positive incentives for appropriate class behavior. Brainstorm and list on the chalkboard ideas for individual and group rewards. You can add your own ideas to the list. Have the students then choose three to six incentives for the classroom and/or for themselves. Post the classroom list and file the individual lists.
- **Guided practice**—Present possible situations and ask students to discuss in pairs whether an incentive or reward is given. Return to the established reason for incentives and see if it supports their answers. Review your expectations with the class.
- **Independent practice**—Ask the students to review what was discussed by discussing it in pairs and then sharing it with the class. Give the appropriate reward for participating students (i.e., stickers, certificate, note home).

There are three categories of positive incentives: *social*, *privileges*, and *tangible incentives*, or reinforcers. Social incentives are more readily available and usually reflect “real life.” Examples of social incentives are the use of praise, encouragement, and smiles. Privileges can be a variety of potential positive incentives tailored to students’ individual preferences. These would include free time, working with a friend, or having lunch with the teacher. Tangible incentives can be effective in some situations but should be the least used incentive and usually given intermittently or as a last resort when the others are not effective. They would include stickers, treats, toys, and tokens.

Research has shown that average to advanced students seem to value privileges and nontangible incentives more than those students with learning difficulties. For the student with learning difficulties, tangible rewards can be effectively used in the initial learning stages but should be gradually phased out. Tangible incentives can also be traded in at the end of the day or week for privileges. For example, a fourth-grade teacher would give out apple stickers and post them on

the bulletin board, and at the end of the week would ask students to trade them in for a privilege such as extra computer time or no homework for a night. Tangible incentives should also always be coupled with a social incentive.

Positive Incentives	
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbally praise specific behaviors</li> <li>• A smile</li> <li>• A word of encouragement</li> <li>• A pat, handshake, or high five</li> <li>• Thumb up</li> <li>• A note home, “Catch Them Being Good” notes</li> <li>• A phone call home</li> <li>• Honor roll</li> </ul>
<b>Privileges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free time, center time</li> <li>• Extra recess</li> <li>• Field trip, class party</li> <li>• Extended lunch time</li> <li>• Extra computer time, music, art, or physical education</li> <li>• Choosing class activity, being a captain of a team</li> <li>• Passing out papers, stapling papers together</li> <li>• Erasing chalkboard, feeding the fish or animals, watering plants</li> <li>• Playing a game with a friend or teacher</li> <li>• Tutoring a younger child, giving a spelling test</li> <li>• Delivering papers to the office</li> <li>• “No homework pass” for the evening, or good for one assignment</li> <li>• Taking one problem off a test</li> <li>• Assisting the custodian</li> </ul>
<b>Tangibles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stickers, badges, ribbons</li> <li>• Treats (preferably healthful snacks such as popcorn, pretzels, etc.)</li> <li>• Raffle prizes, pizza party</li> <li>• Certificate</li> <li>• Grab bag (small toys, trinkets, pencils, erasers, etc.)</li> <li>• Badges, buttons, trophies</li> <li>• Coupon for class or school store</li> </ul>

## The Effective Use of Social Praise

Many students who are underachieving due to a learning disability or some other cause often have difficulty accepting direct praise. Their self-concept, or how they perceive themselves, can be as one who cannot succeed. For example, when praised for doing “good work,” they often think, “The teacher must not be telling the truth,” or “What am I doing that is so good?” Students who are exhibiting negative self-images and poor self-concept often have low expectations of success. For this reason it is important to use *descriptive praise*, or to describe what the “good

***“The effective teacher is constantly evaluating how the teaching process can be improved.”***

work” is. Descriptive praise is being more specific and naming the appropriate behavior. For example, instead of saying “Nice work” you would say, “You’re taking your time to look up the answers. Keep it up!” or “You’ve been working for ten minutes without getting out of your seat. Great!” or “You’re all doing a great job of reading quietly. Keep up the good work.” Praise the behavior and then encourage the student. They will consequently be more likely to repeat the good behavior.

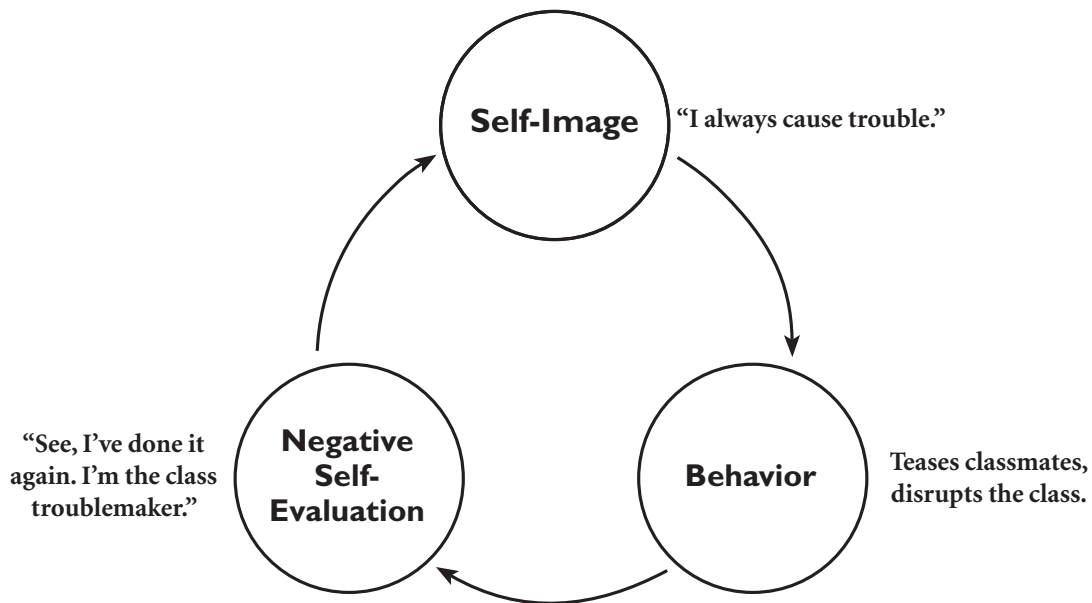
## Changing Behavior Cycles

A study of middle-school children indicated that 3 to 4 percent of the children who were underachievers could be labeled as “lazy” and needed some firm consequences or reminders to motivate them. But what about the other 96 percent of the children who were underachieving? Their issue was not one of motivation but of self-image and self-esteem. Behavior is greatly affected by self-image—how one sees oneself, and self-esteem—how one feels about oneself. Children tend to behave in class according to how they see themselves and how they feel about who they are in relationship to others. The behavior in turn will usually validate the child’s self-view that they already have. This creates cycles of “reinforcing attitudes and behaviors.” Depending on the self-view that the child already has, the cycles can be either negative or positive. Understanding the reasons for misbehavior and catching students achieving the smallest success in their behavior and attitude is often the strategy that can begin to change a negative cycle into a positive one. (See “How to Change Ten Negative Behavior Cycles,” chapter 7.) Following are examples of what these cycles can look like.



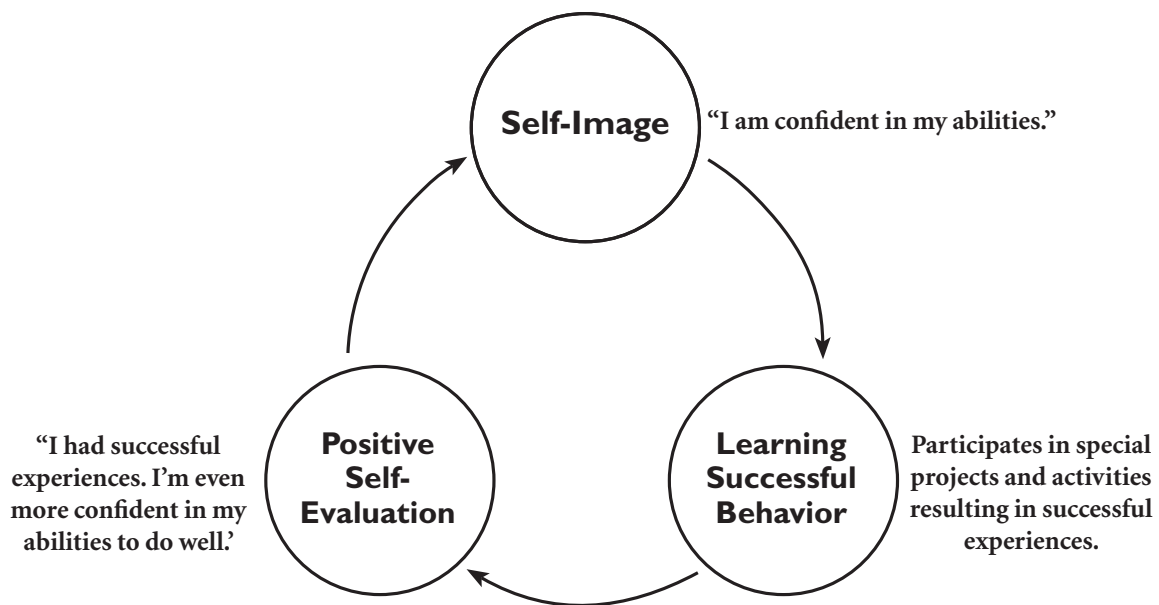
## Negative Behavior Cycle

Chris was in a self-contained classroom for behavioral problems. By the time he was put into an inclusive class, he had been told many times that he was disruptive to the class and disagreeable with his peers and teachers. He thought of himself as the child who always caused trouble. He thought of a lot of ways he could disrupt the class; after all, that was his distinction. He teased the girls, he hid other students' book bags, he poured plaster of Paris in the art room sink. Each of these mischievous acts and others like them brought Chris the desired result—he preserved his self-image as the “class troublemaker.” Chris was so desperate for attention that he was also willing to receive the inevitable painful consequences. He acted in ways to confirm his negative self-image. This negative behavior cycle would likely continue for the rest of the school year unless someone could help change it.



## Positive Behavior Cycle

*Sholanda saw herself as popular, pretty, and capable. When given an assignment she approached it with enthusiasm, confident in her abilities. Her teachers and peers often expressed how responsible and well-liked she was. Because of her capabilities and dependability, she was often asked to participate in special projects and activities that increased her opportunities to learn and experience success. She acted in ways to confirm her positive self-image and, consequently, strengthened a positive behavior cycle.*



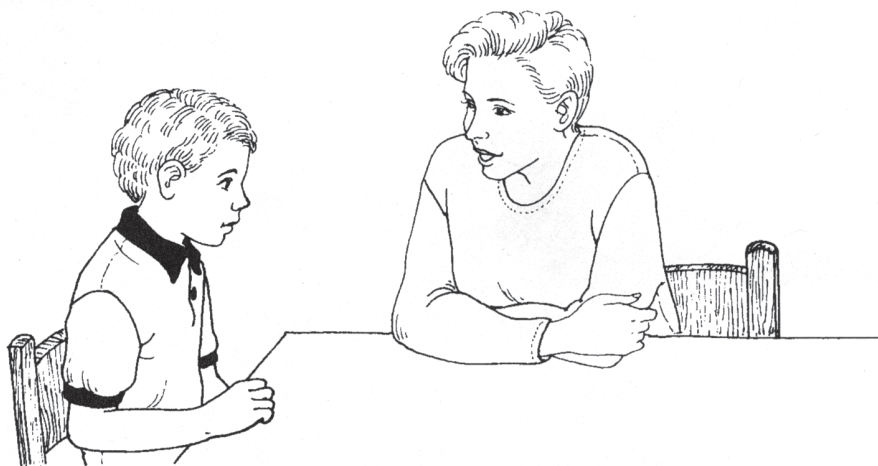


## How Does Self-Esteem Affect Learning?

Research about self-esteem and academic performance shows a strong reciprocal relationship between self-esteem and the ability to learn. High self-esteem promotes confidence and responsible behavior, as well as learning. In the inclusive classroom, teachers can be a significant link in helping all students develop high self-esteem by understanding the importance of noticing patterns or cycles that undermine or enhance the students' positive feelings.

Students with an academic learning disability or physical or mental disability need to acquire something equally as important as the skills of reading, writing, and learning. They need to gain *self-knowledge*—knowledge that lets them understand why they behave in certain ways and what choices they have in changing their behaviors. Helping children change their negative behavior and attitude cycles as well as continue positive ones is the first step in assisting them in gaining self-knowledge.

Changing old patterns, as in breaking old familiar habits, is not always easy. It is not uncommon for underachieving students to seem to have no real motivation, no drive, or no ambition to succeed. Instead they stick to the familiar, or that which they are comfortable with, which often includes being “learning avoidant.” But remember the other 96 percent of underachievers. A teacher deals with a motivation problem differently than a self-image problem. Students will sometimes give excuses for why they can't do something. Whether it's “School is stupid,” or “Someone might make fun of me,” or “Why try? I can't do it right,” these students have a number of reasons for their reluctance to break old negative patterns. Children benefit greatly from understanding that obstacles can be opportunities. Helping them recognize opportunities in their lives can begin in the classroom. “Steven, what did you learn from this uncomfortable experience?” or “I realize this was a big challenge for you. Was it worth it? Why?”



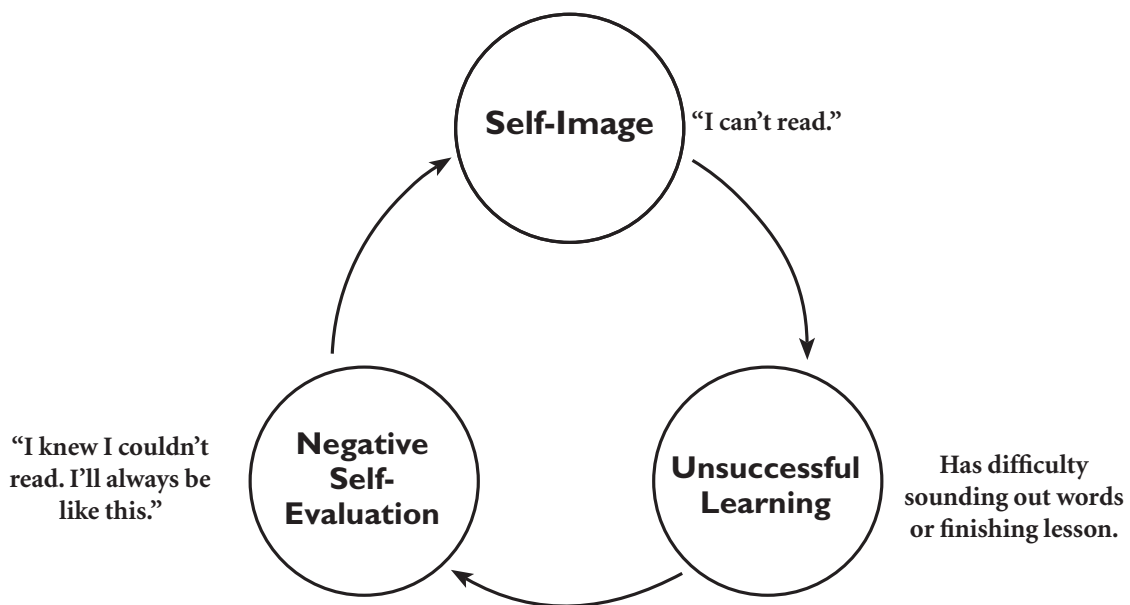
Effective teachers will have high expectations for all their students and strive to help them fulfill their potential. The student who enjoys high self-esteem learns more happily and easily than one who feels inadequate. Students with high self-esteem, regardless of their disabilities, tend to be more successful, since thought and feeling *precede* action, and therefore the student is already “set” with positive expectations. Successful performance then reinforces their good feelings; the cycle continues to support successful achievement.

The child who believes that he or she is inadequate and unable to learn will avoid challenging tasks and approach new learning with a sense of hopelessness. Their attitude is “So why try?” This failure cycle is well known in education and with the arrival of inclusion is becoming increasingly prevalent: The child who has had early failures in school will develop attitudes of “I can’t do it, so why keep trying?” Consequently, the student will almost inevitably fail at whatever task he or she tries halfheartedly, unless and until the cycle can be broken with a renewed sense of self-worth and ability. Following are examples of how self-esteem can affect a student’s ability to learn.



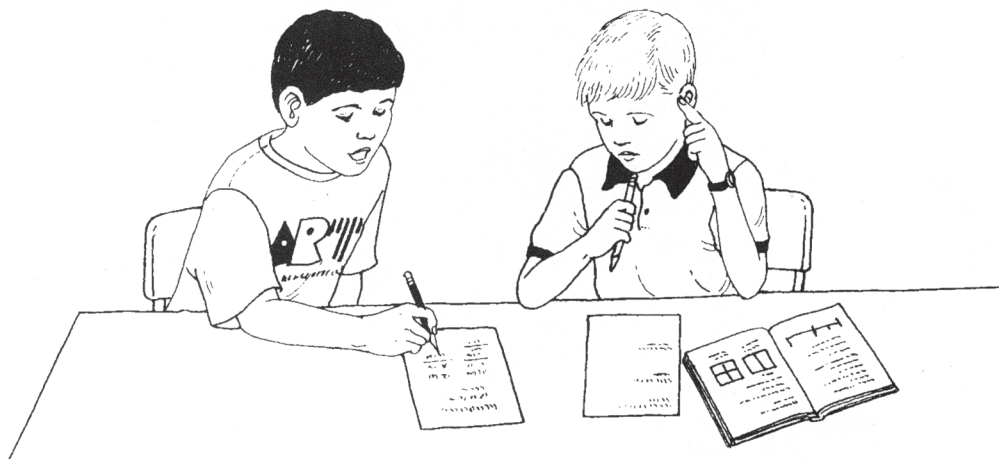
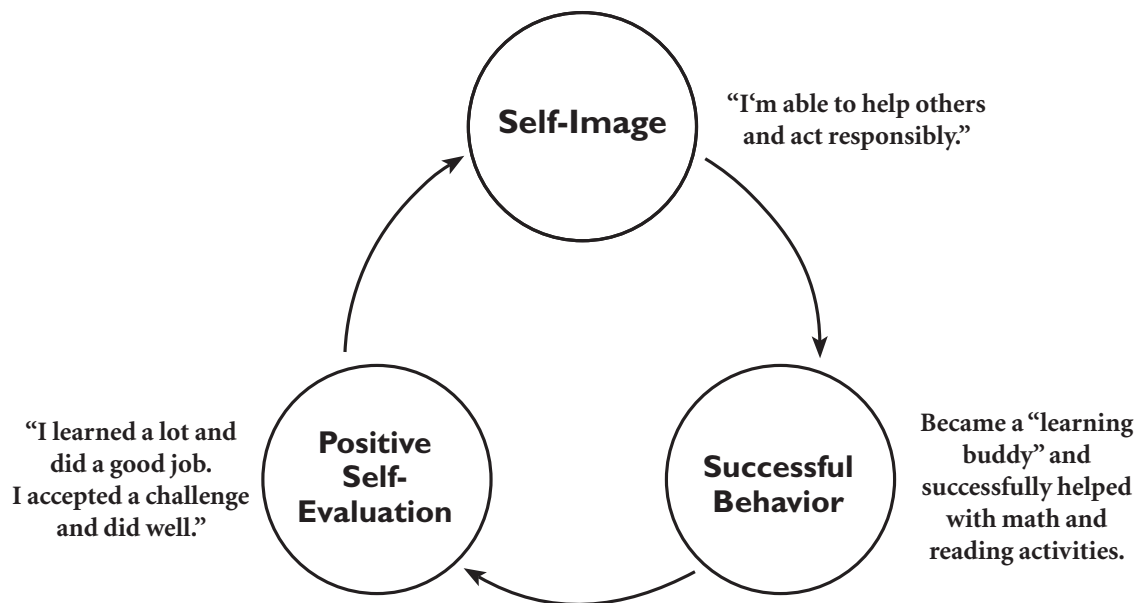
## Negative Attitude Cycle

Sarah had difficult early years in school; her family moved four times between second and fourth grades. At the end of fourth grade, her classmates were easily reading grade-level books, but Sarah had trouble reading at all. It was decided that she would benefit most from repeating fourth grade because of the inconsistency in her academic instruction. In the fourth grade she was put into the “low” reading group. She began to feel inadequate and helpless as a reader as she watched her peers progress. When it was her turn to read, she became very anxious and frustrated as she stumbled over words others seemed to have little or no problem with. Reading period became a very unpleasant experience as well as an embarrassing time for Sarah. Anxiety alone made it difficult for her to listen and follow along as well as to really try the various techniques her teacher proposed to her. By the fifth grade, Sarah saw herself as a “bad reader” and thought it was hopeless to try to catch up to her classmates.



## Positive Attitude Cycle

*Luis was beginning fifth grade and was enthusiastically awaiting the first task the teacher would give. He was asked to be a “learning buddy” to a new student who needed help in math and reading. The role of a “learning buddy” required sensitivity to the problems and feelings of another classmate with learning differences, and the ability to help his buddy think through a problem and not give up so quickly. These are mature qualities that are not always demonstrated, even by adults. But his teacher believed Luis was capable of this task. He accepted the challenge, learned a great deal about others and their learning differences, and helped his learning buddy succeed with some otherwise difficult activities.*



### *Self-Esteem Builders\**

Students know what makes them feel successful or good about themselves.

Here's what they say:

- Smile when you see me.
- Call me by name.
- Listen to me when I talk.
- Let me know you missed me when I was absent.
- Recognize my own special talents, even if they do not show up on my report card.
- Give me a chance to succeed in at least one small way each day.
- Praise me when I do something right.
- If you do not like something I do, help me understand that you still like me as a person.
- Show me that I have a lot of options for the future, and that I can set my own goals.
- Encourage me to aim high.

*Try to reach each student with at least one of these self-esteem builders every day.*

*They build stronger people and inclusive communities.*

\*Used by permission of The National Association for Self-Esteem—Winter 1992.



## Creating a Work-Oriented and Relaxed Classroom

A work-oriented and relaxed environment is an important characteristic of a well-managed classroom. The majority of behavior problems can be avoided by establishing and then teaching students how to follow classroom procedures and routines. Children want to feel safe and secure in a predictable work environment. When asked, “Why was Ms. Johnson a good teacher?” one answer would always be, “Ms. Johnson made sure everyone worked together and she was fun!” Use the guidelines below to create a positive climate or “feeling tone” that will help students relax and enjoy the learning process.

### Teach Classroom Procedures and Routines

Helping students understand how to stop talking or stop working and listen for instructions does not always happen when the teacher only tells students what to do. The students, especially those who are kinesthetic learners, need to experience an example of what should be done. This is why many teachers in an inclusive program fail when they want students to follow directions. The following three steps can act as guidelines for teaching classroom procedures and routines.

<b>Step 1</b> Explain the Procedure	First clearly explain the classroom procedure. Next model or demonstrate it. If the procedure has a few steps, demonstrate each one. For example, show how to put books away before lining up for lunch.
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<b>Step 2</b> Rehearse the Procedure	After explaining and demonstrating the procedure, it is important to rehearse it until it becomes a routine. Children with emotional disabilities feel secure with clear and consistent routines. Having the students practice the procedure under the teacher’s supervision, also referred to as “guided practice,” gives them an opportunity to do it correctly. The procedure becomes a routine when performed automatically without teacher supervision.
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<b>Step 3</b> Reinforce and Re-teach	After rehearsing the procedure, determine if all the students (or the individual learner you are teaching) have learned the procedure. If not, you may need to further explain, demonstrate, or practice what you are teaching. This process is called “re-teaching.” When the students demonstrate that they can perform the new procedure, reinforce the learning with praise or a privilege.
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Following is an example of how a procedure can be taught. The important part of this lesson is the process of using the three steps—*explain*, *rehearse*, and *reinforce*—to teach the new procedure of how to quiet the class and have their attention.

### *A Lesson for Quieting the Class*

- **Activity**—Procedure for Quieting the Class
- **Setting the stage**—Ask students why it is important to be able to pay attention without a lot of noise and wasted time. Write the reasons on the chalkboard, adding some of your own.
- **Objectives**—The students will be able to:
  1. Identify reasons for quietly paying attention without wasted time.
  2. Follow a visual or auditory signal to pay attention.
  3. Rehearse the procedure until practice is not necessary.
- **Instruction**—Explain to the students that you have a procedure for when you want their full attention. Demonstrate how you will stand in front of the class with your hand raised. Demonstrate how you might also hit a bell because some of the students may not be able to see your hand or hear a bell. Explain what you will expect the students to do after seeing and/or hearing the signal.
  1. Finish sentence then STOP talking and raise hand.
  2. Turn and face the teacher.
  3. Pay attention and wait for instructions.
  4. Repeat instructions and check for class understanding.
- **Guided practice**—Rehearse the procedure by asking students to talk to a peer sitting next to them. After two minutes hold up your hand and/or hit the bell. Give instructions to have three students stand and share one part of their conversation. Repeat procedure.
- **Independent practice**—When students can perform the procedure independently, then praise the correct behavior and encourage the students.



## Teacher Alternatives

### Behavioral Improvement Forms

At many schools, a variety of behavioral forms are being used to help describe the problem or situation the student is in trouble for and identify the appropriate way to deal with the problem if it reoccurs. Depending on the age and comprehension level of the student, these behavioral forms vary. The main purpose of using one of these problem identification and behavioral improvement forms is to assist the student in gaining ownership and awareness of the inappropriate behavior and then to begin finding a solution to the problem. Some forms simply have the child write what happened, who it happened with, and an alternative way of dealing with the situation if it occurs again (“My Behavior Improvement Plan,” p. 133). There is a saying, “In order to change, you first must know where you are.” Counselors understand that having children identify the problem from their perspective is helpful in taking the next step, which is looking at alternative ways to behave. (See the end of this chapter for other sample forms students can fill out.)

Using forms can act as a springboard for further discussion or create “cooling-off periods” before discussion. Younger children or those who have difficulty reading and writing could have the directions read to them and/or draw rather than write about a situation. A child that chooses to draw can be asked, “Now tell me about the picture you drew.” The child responds, “This is Jessica. She is drawing on my paper. I grabbed her pen and threw it. I was really mad at her!” At this point it’s important to teach the child that the behavior wasn’t appropriate, but that he or she also didn’t make a fatal mistake. Giving the child an opportunity to talk with someone not directly involved with the situation that got him or her into trouble and then discussing with the child alternative behaviors can be very helpful and uplifting. It gives the child a way to start again and possibly see the opportunity in the mistake. It allows an objective person to listen without anger and judgment, and credits the child with personal responsibility for dealing with the problem.

The “Behavior Plan Form” and “Weekly Progress Report,” pp. 134 and 135, are useful for communicating a student’s academic and behavioral objectives and interventions with team members (teachers and parents).

### Self-Monitoring Forms

The “Checking My Behavior” forms A (Middle School), p. 136, and B (Elementary School), p. 137, have been successfully used as a strategy for improving behavior in which the student controls his or her own planned intervention. The “How Do I Feel Chart,” p. 138, is especially effective with helping younger children to chart their feelings and moods.



Self-monitoring strategies enable the students to reward themselves for a specific act. It is a method of shaping a student's behavior by gradually reinforcing the behaviors you want to see. It gives the student an opportunity to identify his or her *negative behavior cycles* and then begin to create new ones. By participating in their own behavior change program, children are more likely to understand their behaviors and the need to change. Self-monitoring empowers students. It also enables teachers to focus their attention in other areas.

Additional self-monitoring forms that can provide a nonpunitive method of assisting a student's personal behavioral management are the following: "My Classroom Rules," "My Classroom Consequences," "My Rewards and Consequences," and "How I Stayed Out of Trouble," pp. 139–142.

Researchers have reported high reliability for self-monitoring strategies. A general trend is that students are harder on themselves when judging their own behavior (Alberto and Troutman, 1986).



### *Self-Monitoring Guidelines*

- The self-monitoring forms in this book can be used as they are or as examples the teacher can adapt. (See the end of this chapter for sample forms students can fill out.)
- It's best to keep the list of behaviors to five or six.
- Be certain of the behaviors needing to be changed by observing the student for a few days.
- Include one or two behaviors that the student has or is close to performing. This will increase motivation and decrease fear of failure.
- Develop positive incentives; for example, "Three completed forms with four out of five behaviors performed correctly will get you..."
- Since you are shaping behaviors, change behaviors to ensure success.

### **Alternatives to Suspension**

In 1988 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students cannot be expelled from schools for behaviors that are directly related to their disabilities. For this reason special educators and administrators must set up alternative interventions for students who have persistent behavior problems. Proactive behavior management can prevent most disciplinary problems from escalating, but suspension has also been a tool available to the administrator for behaviors such as fighting or destroying school property. Administrators who have students with significant problem behaviors can consider these alternatives to school suspension:

- **Time-out:** Using extended time-out in another classroom, counseling office, or principal's office.
- **Loss of privileges:** Put on a "frozen list," which means loss of privileges for an extended period of time.
- **Detention:** Saturday detention (used at some schools with high success).
- **Parent/pupil day:** This is when a parent spends the day or part of the day with the student. This works especially well with children in upper elementary and middle schools. While the parent is in school, it is helpful to meet and formulate a behavior plan at that time.
- **In-school suspension:** The advantage of this intervention is that it keeps the student in school and supervised, and still sends home the message of a formal suspension. For this intervention to be successful, the student needs to be given work to do independently during the day. Some schools add an additional day of suspension if the student does not complete the assignments.

- **Modified days:** This can be especially successful with younger children who find it very difficult to maintain a full day in school without getting into trouble. It is a temporary intervention that should be gradually increased to full-day participation.
- **Separate seating:** The student sits at a desk separate from the class, ideally with a partition between them. The student earns time back into the mainstream of the class as he or she earns points for completing work and following classroom rules. It is important that the special education teacher or instructional aide monitor the student's daily behavior. Check marks could be awarded after every ten, twenty, or thirty minutes of on-task behavior. Some teachers have found using a self-monitoring form effective for this purpose.
- **School/community service:** It is not unusual in some schools to see a student picking up trash around the school building and doing certain reasonable jobs assigned by the custodian either during noninstructional time or after school. Other kinds of school service may include cleaning up the cafeteria after lunch, washing the hallway walls, or putting away books in the library. (Remember that a consequence for one student can easily be a positive incentive for another.)
- **Becoming a giver rather than a receiver:** Putting a student in a situation where he or she is expected to give assistance rather than receive it can be a catalyst for changing behavior. The student can be brought to a lower-grade classroom to help tutor younger children or children who are severely disabled. We have seen this intervention change students' negative behavior cycles into ones that result in rewarding mature behavior. This approach has proven to be more beneficial than punishments and negative attention.



## Problem Solving

Problem solving is another alternative that makes the child responsible for finding an appropriate solution. A system in which students write problems and place them in a container such as a box can be used to facilitate discussion promoting problem solving. This gives the student a place to “temporarily put their problem” until it can be addressed. When time permits, the situation is either talked about with the children involved or with the class, and the class can decide on a consequence. In addition, the class can share suggestions for avoiding or dealing with such situations in the future. The teacher becomes a facilitator of respectful discussion and communication and the one responsible for handling those situations inappropriate for a class discussion format.

### *Steps for Problem Solving*

1. Define the problem.
2. Make a list of possible solutions.
3. Look at the pros and cons of each solution.
4. Decide which solution is best.
5. Decide what has to happen for the solution to work.
6. Evaluate how well the solution solved the problem.

In the first step a clear and simple definition of the problem is decided upon and, if necessary, written on the chalkboard as a reminder. In the second step all possible solutions are offered. Then the solutions are considered, and one is selected. The problem-solving process ends with implementation and evaluation of the chosen alternative. This process can be used as a general classroom strategy for attacking any problem situation.

Introduce this method of problem solving by practicing on a problem that is not personal to any of the children. For example, start the discussion by saying, “Today I was almost late for school because I forgot where I had put my car keys. I’d like your help with finding a way to avoid this problem in the future. To help us work together, we’ll use this problem-solving method (steps are written on the chalkboard and/or handed out to individual students). We then can have this method available to us for problems that arise in school...” The “Steps Toward Solving a Problem” Activity Sheet, p. 143, can be a useful guide.

## Conflict Mediators

The Springfield School District implemented a peer mediation program that begins at the middle-school level. Teachers and counselors identify a number of students (both general and special education), who are then trained as student mediators. After they receive the training, the peer mediators are called on to handle some of the problems in peer relationships that occur among students at the school. Most of these conflicts revolve around such things as name calling, spreading rumors, and making threats, as well as general misunderstandings that lead to hurt feelings. In some schools, the mediation counselor coordinates the program and is also available throughout the day for conflict resolution issues.

Peer mediators are trained to ask questions such as, “How did that make you feel?” and encourage students to express to each other the effect the problem is having on them personally. Because students “speak” each other’s language, it’s often the case that they will more readily open up and express themselves candidly. The peer mediators help guide the process for reaching an agreement on the resolution, as well as putting the agreement in writing for the conflicting students to sign. Many have found that the mediation process has had a positive effect on solving discipline problems while encouraging students to be responsible.

## School Counselors

Children with special needs can often benefit from developing a rapport with someone who can speak with and listen to them on a regular basis. School counselors are proactive in providing support to students and staff, and can offer various types of services and strategies that are very helpful in inclusive schools. They can help problem solve, resolve conflicts, and act as an objective listener for students and staff. They also can teach lessons in self-esteem, social skills, and so on. The school counselor can be a support to parents and, when needed, act as a liaison between parents and school. In addition to these support services, the school counselor can



assist classroom teachers in setting up individualized behavior contracts, charting and monitoring classroom behaviors, and helping the team with other effective strategies and methods for improving behavior.

## **Instructional Aides**

Often in the inclusive classroom the team includes a paraprofessional, or instructional aide. The special education teacher is usually the supervisor and direct supporter of the instructional aide. This additional adult is of great assistance not only with a student's instructional needs but behavioral needs as well. It is for this reason that students must be made aware of the paraprofessional's status, especially regarding discipline and classroom management. Instructional aides can work with both the regular and special education teachers. By law they cannot have sole responsibility for a student(s) with special needs or implement original instruction.

It is often the case that all that is needed to divert a behavior problem from escalating is another adult's support and attention. The paraprofessional can act as an extension of the teacher and be an invaluable resource for assisting with behavior management.

## **Helping Children with ADHD**

### **What Is ADHD?**

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), also referred to as attention deficit disorder (ADD), is a complex and puzzling neurobiological disorder affecting many children in our schools, including many who also have learning disabilities. With increasing frequency, physicians and psychologists are labeling children as having ADHD. These children have difficulty staying on task, focusing attention, and completing their work. As one psychologist described this disorder, "For some children with ADHD it's not that they can't focus, but that they're focusing on too many stimuli at once." They are easily distracted, moving quickly from one idea or interest to another, and they may produce sloppy work that reflects their impulsive learning style. For these reasons, ADHD often interferes with a child's ability to function with success academically, behaviorally, and socially. Studies indicate that although ADHD, which affects approximately 3 to 6 percent of the population, is not synonymous with learning disabilities, up to 40 percent of children with learning disabilities display symptoms of ADHD.

According to researchers, in ADHD there is a chemical imbalance in the part of the brain that controls impulses, aids in screening sensory input, and focuses attention. The causes of ADHD are not fully understood but are most frequently attributed to heredity, as it is found to run in families.



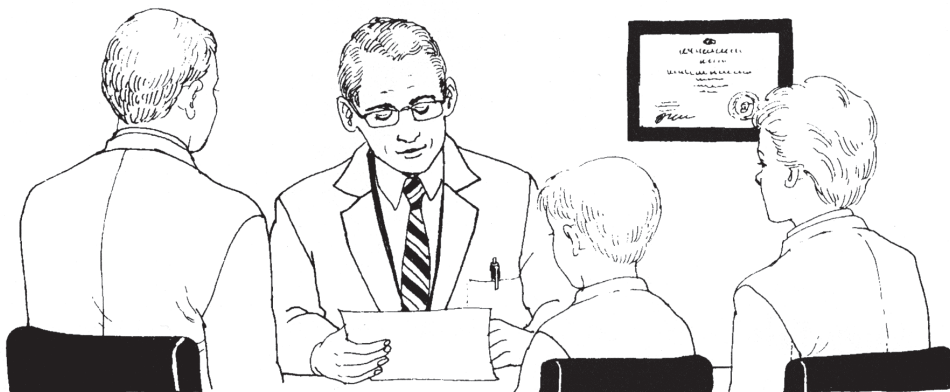
As with learning disabilities, children with ADHD usually grow up to be adults with ADHD. Various prenatal factors, lead poisoning, and trauma at birth have also been identified as possible causes. There has been research that suggests diet, and more specifically the over-consumption of sugar and food additives, may be a factor associated with ADHD.

A very informative and well-written book on attention deficit disorder is authored by two physicians who treat children and adults with ADHD. The authors of *Driven to Distraction*, Dr. Ned Hallowell and Dr. John Ratey, have ADHD themselves and share some of their personal experiences of living with ADHD. One description they use is as follows: “People living with ADHD live in distraction and chaos all the time— bombarded by stimuli from every direction and unable to screen it out.” According to these authors, medication that sometimes can be used in the treatment of ADHD “helps take the static out of the broadcast. It works like a pair of eyeglasses, helping the individual to focus.”

### Is There a Test for ADHD?

There are no objective and/or definitive tests (e.g., urine analyses, blood tests) to identify children with ADHD. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV; American Psychiatric Association 1994) gives diagnostic criteria for ADHD. Aside from this, a diagnosis is based on the following:

- Interviews with the parent and child by a physician or psychiatrist
- Questionnaires and rating scales filled out by the teachers, parents, and others working closely with the child
- Detailed health and developmental histories
- A thorough medical examination
- Work samples and any other testing results that may be appropriate



This information is then interpreted by professionals, who determine to what extent the symptoms prevail in different situations and evaluate other possible causes. Other possible causes that produce similar symptoms to ADHD include stress and anxiety in school and/or at home, learning problems, depression, and substance abuse.

## What Is the Teacher's Role?

Classroom teachers must be careful in “identifying” students who are suspected of having ADHD. The teacher’s role is not one of diagnosing ADHD or telling parents, “You should see a doctor because your child probably has ADHD.” The role of the teacher is to share objective information gathered through observations and personal concerns about their students with parents. Behavior management strategies, classroom modifications, and any other interventions should be documented as to their effectiveness. Other team members, including the school nurse and psychologist, should be included in the communication process.

When a medical referral is made, the teacher(s) will be asked to fill out an ADHD Rating Scale. Sample questions on a rating scale can include the following:

### *Circle the number that best describes the child:*

(0) Not at all, (1) Just a little, (2) Pretty much, (3) Very much

#### **General Behavior**

- 0 1 2 3 Often fidgets or squirms in seat.
- 0 1 2 3 Is easily distracted.
- 0 1 2 3 Has difficulty playing quietly.
- 0 1 2 3 Often does not seem to listen.
- 0 1 2 3 Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering consequences.

#### **Inattention**

- 0 1 2 3 Often fails to give close attention to detail.
- 0 1 2 3 Often does not follow through on instruction.
- 0 1 2 3 Often loses things necessary for tasks.
- 0 1 2 3 Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- 0 1 2 3 Is often forgetful of daily activities.

#### **Hyperactivity-Impulsivity**

- 0 1 2 3 Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
- 0 1 2 3 Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate.
- 0 1 2 3 Often talks excessively.
- 0 1 2 3 Is often “on the go” or often acts as if “driven by a motor.”
- 0 1 2 3 Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed.



Hyperactivity/impulsivity can sometimes be a component of attention deficit disorders. Young children at the elementary level with hyperactivity exhibit excessive gross motor activity, such as constantly running around or climbing. They are described as always on the go, “running like a motor,” and having difficulty slowing down. They may not be able to sit for more than a few minutes at a time before beginning to wriggle around without stopping.

Older children at the middle-school level who are hyperactive may be extremely restless and fidgety. They are likely to talk excessively and may always be getting into arguments and fights with peers and siblings. It’s difficult for them to keep their hands still while sitting at a desk; they may be tapping with a pencil, drawing, and so on. Giving these children something to hold and squeeze, such as a sponge ball, can be helpful and proactive in directing some of this hyperenergy.

## Social Behaviors That Often Interfere with Positive Peer and Adult Interactions

Children with attention problems are more likely to suddenly change topics during conversations, fail to listen consistently when other children and/or adults are talking, and continuously look about the room rather than look directly at a peer or teacher. While these may seem like “innocent” behaviors, they often lead to other children or adults losing tolerance and avoiding interacting with the child.

Simply giving the student advice about more desirable social behavior (e.g., “You should look at people when they are talking to you, otherwise they won’t want to be with you”) seldom leads to changes of any significance. It is more effective for teachers to take an active role in designing opportunities in the classroom for the student to experience more successful peer/adult interactions. The following are examples of various classroom interventions for increasing positive peer/adult interactions:

1. Catching them doing the right thing and immediately using praise, a privilege, or a reward to increase their awareness of changing the negative behavior cycle.
2. Role-playing behaviors that need improving (e.g., taking turns, sharing).



3. Using peer models for the student to observe and learn from. It's important to point out the positive social behaviors of the model to the child with ADHD in order to make them more notable.
4. Designing special responsibilities for the student to carry out in the presence of his or her peer group. This gives classmates the opportunity to observe the student in a positive light. For example, picking the student to be captain of a spelling bee team or erase the chalkboard can enhance positive feelings between classmates.
5. The use of medication therapy to help some children with ADHD develop better peer/adult interactions by reducing aggressive, highly impulsive behaviors that interfere with successful classroom interactions.

Parents can also take a more active role, if they haven't already, in designing opportunities for their children with ADHD to experience more successful peer interactions. (See chapter 8, "Teamwork with Parents.")

## Children with ADHD and Their Positive Characteristics

Focusing on the desirable characteristics associated with children having ADHD will be helpful when directing the child toward successful learning in the inclusive classroom. Some of these characteristics include being imaginative, innovative, interesting, accepting, and willing to take risks; having a boundless amount of energy; and being sensitive, observant, inquisitive, and good-natured.

## How to Support Positive Characteristics

Supporting positive characteristics entails giving children with ADHD and learning disabilities what they need to be successful in the inclusive classroom. These needs are as follows:

- ✓ Extra space
- ✓ Clear and predictable guidelines, expectations, and consequences
- ✓ Positive incentives
- ✓ Choices
- ✓ Adaptations and modifications of the environment and curriculum
- ✓ Multisensory instruction
- ✓ Ability to move around the classroom without disturbing others
- ✓ Extra time to process information and to perform tasks
- ✓ Modeling and teacher-guided instruction
- ✓ Reminders and prompting
- ✓ Help with coping skills and personal frustration
- ✓ An understanding and supportive classroom

## My Behavior Improvement Plan

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Put a check in the box after you answer the question.

☐ (1) What rule(s) did you break? \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ (2) How do you feel about what happened? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ (3) If something like this were to happen again, what would you do differently?

“I would...” \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewed by (Teacher)

## Behavior Plan Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Room: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

To be monitored by \_\_\_\_\_

Behaviors that \_\_\_\_\_ needs to work on:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What does the student need to achieve to receive a reward? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What will the reward(s) be? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This Behavior Plan was given to:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

## Weekly Progress Report

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher/Room: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please review this progress report and any attached work with your child. After reviewing,  
please sign this report and have your child return it to school on Monday morning.  
Thank you for your support.*

### Behavior

- ☐ Good (G)  
☐ Satisfactory (S)  
☐ Unacceptable (U)

### Work Habits

- ☐ Independent (I)  
☐ Distracted (D)  
☐ Unacceptable (U)

Is there work to be completed at home?      Yes (attached)      No

Comments from school: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Record	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Homework					
Work Habits					
Behavior					

Comments from home: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Form A

## Checking My Behavior

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle *Yes* or *No* at the end of your class.

TODAY I...

Quietly walked into the classroom	Yes	No
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Stayed in my seat during class	Yes	No
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Participated in class activities	Yes	No
----------------------------------	-----	----

Followed the teacher's directions	Yes	No
-----------------------------------	-----	----

Didn't distract anyone else	Yes	No
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Filled out this sheet and got it signed	Yes	No
---	-----	----

My ratio today is \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_.

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Form B

**Checking My Behavior**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of class read the sentences and then put a circle around *Yes* or *No*.

TODAY I...

Quietly walked into the classroom	Yes	No
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Stayed in my seat	Yes	No
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Did my work in class	Yes	No
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Listened to my teacher	Yes	No
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Did not fool around	Yes	No
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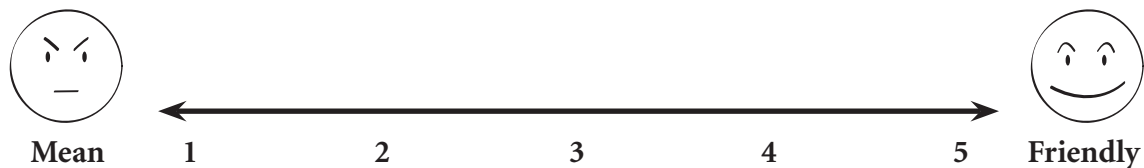
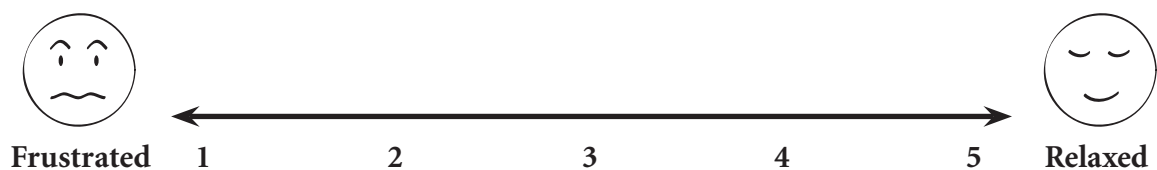
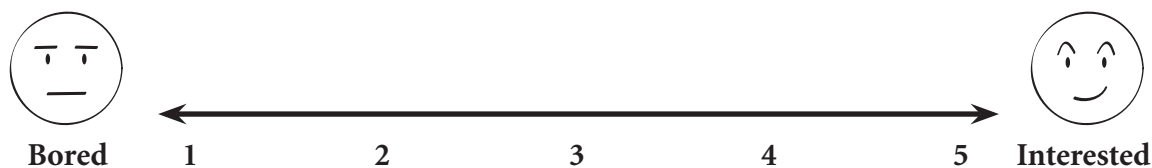
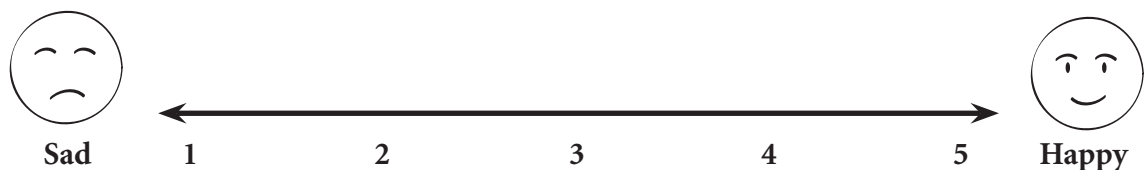
How many times did you circle *Yes*? \_\_\_\_\_How many times did you circle *No*? \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## How Do I Feel Chart

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Circle the number that shows how you feel. Then discuss with your teacher or a classmate: (1) Why you're feeling that way, and (2) What you can do to change that feeling, if you want to.



*(REMEMBER TO TALK ABOUT THIS WITH SOMEONE.)*



## My Classroom Rules

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Write down the classroom rules that all students are expected to follow. After your teacher signs this paper, keep these rules in your notebook so you can read them during the year.

RULE #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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RULE #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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RULE #3 \_\_\_\_\_

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RULE #4 \_\_\_\_\_

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RULE #5 \_\_\_\_\_

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Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## My Classroom Consequences

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Write down the classroom consequences for rules that have been broken. After your teacher signs this paper, keep these consequences in your notebook so you can read them during the year.

If I break Rule #1, the consequence will be \_\_\_\_\_

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If I break Rule #2, the consequence will be \_\_\_\_\_

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If I break Rule #3, the consequence will be \_\_\_\_\_

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If I break Rule #4, the consequence will be \_\_\_\_\_

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If I break Rule #5, the consequence will be \_\_\_\_\_

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Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## My Rewards and Consequences

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make a list of the rewards and consequences of the class.

If I follow the rules of the class, I will earn:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

If I break the rules of the class, my consequences will include:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's or Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## How I Stayed Out of Trouble

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Write a short story or draw a picture describing a situation in which you used something you learned in class to keep you out of trouble with others.

## Steps Toward Solving a Problem

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Fill in answers to the following questions. Continue on another sheet of paper if necessary.

1. What is the problem? (Pick a problem large or small that needs to be solved.)

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2. What are the alternatives? (List them.)

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3. Analyze the alternatives. (List best alternatives and tell why they are the best ones.)

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4. Decide. (Pick the best choice.)

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5. Evaluate the decision. (Did it work? Why? Why not?)

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## CHAPTER 7

**HOW TO CHANGE TEN NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR CYCLES**

Negative behavior or attitude cycles tend to reinforce themselves, as shown in chapter 6. For this reason when a student misbehaves, quick and immediate actions using correct discipline interventions are needed to interrupt the cycle. Unfortunately, what to do is not always so apparent. Studies have found that children with learning disabilities tend to attribute their failure to succeed academically and/or socially to reasons beyond their control. Therefore, they feel this failure cannot be changed.

Chris, for example, who was placed in an inclusive classroom, believed that he did not have the emotional ability to control himself and therefore was the “disruptive child.” Sarah, the fifth grader, believed her mental ability would never improve and, therefore, she would always be a “bad reader.” In both cases, continued failure and helplessness tended to lower their self-esteem and reinforce the negative cycles.

To interrupt and change these negative cycles of reinforcing attitudes and behaviors, teachers are realizing the importance of individualizing behavior interventions, especially for the students exhibiting chronic and repetitive misbehaviors. The following examples can be used as a quick reference to ten negative attitude/behavior cycles that can be most often found in an inclusive classroom. Each intervention is divided into three reference sections.

***Section 1. What Is the Behavior cycle?***

This section describes a list of the specific attitudes and actions of the student. It is important not to fall into the trap of generalizing behaviors: “Oh, he’s just being a pain in the neck” or “She just wants to cause problems.” Effective interventions begin with identifying the behavior. This will make it easier to describe the behavior to the student, team members, and parents, as well as identify the possible “self-message.”

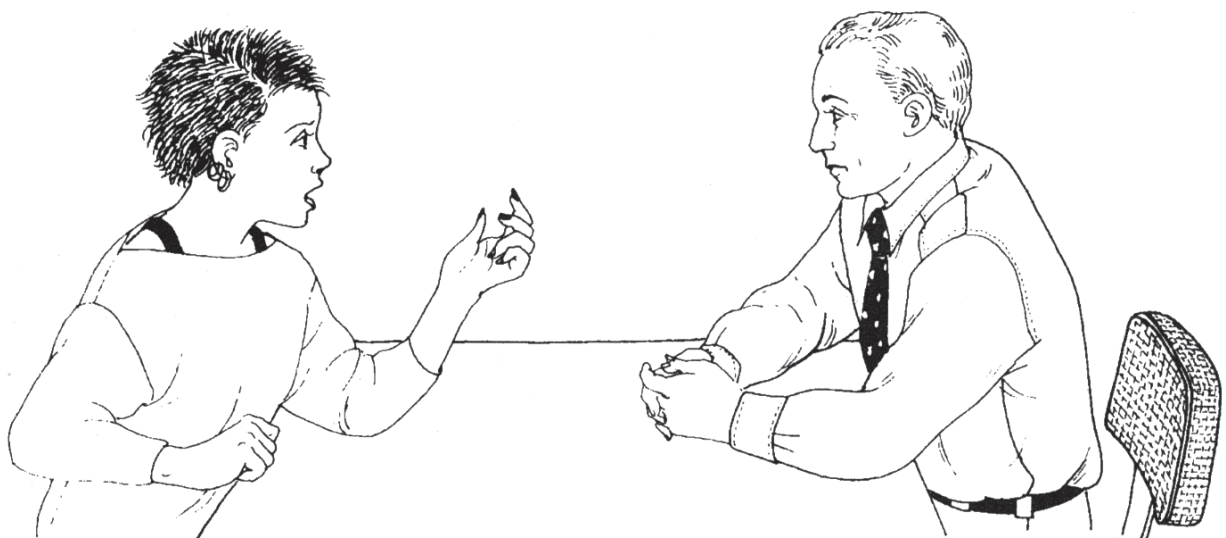
***Section 2. What Causes the Misbehavior?***

This section defines the possible primary causes of the misbehavior. Often we get overly involved with the student’s actions and lose our professional objectivity and empathy when dealing with the problem. This section helps the teacher maintain a professional approach to changing negative behavior cycles to positive ones. This approach begins with discovering and then

understanding the purpose of the misbehavior. Knowing the reasons why children act the way they do is the first step toward effective interventions.

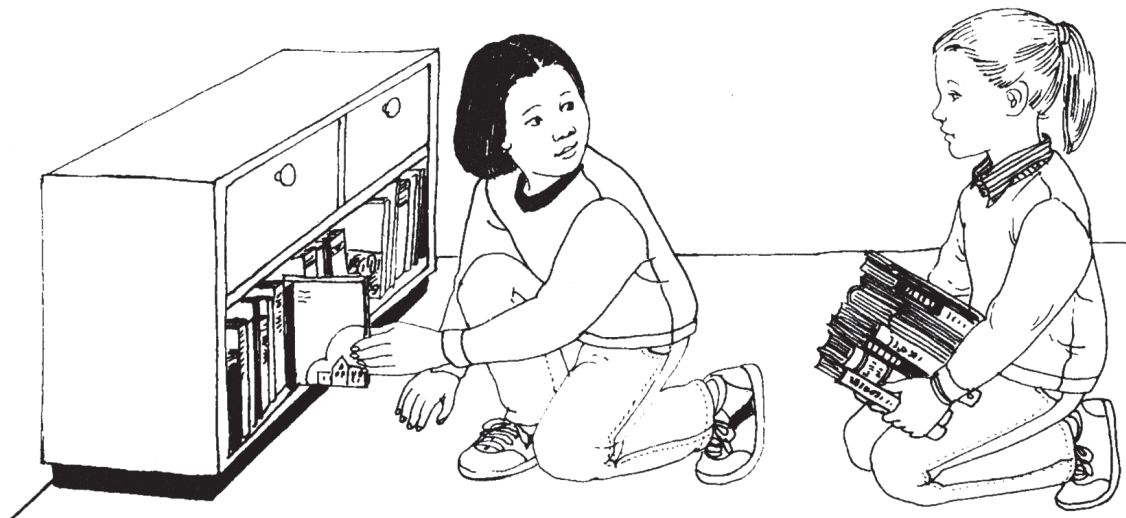
### ***Section 3. Interventions***

This section suggests possible interventions to help the student change his or her behavior cycle. There may be several possible interventions or methods, and it is the teacher's responsibility to select the appropriate action that best fits the student's needs.



## I. The Angry Student

- **What Is the Behavior Cycle?** This student is always angry at something himself, herself, peers, teachers, or parents. The student will become verbally and physically aggressive toward others even toward adults he/she doesn't know. *Self-message:* "I cannot control my aggression when I'm angry."
- **What Causes the Misbehavior?** This student has low-self-esteem and is trying to cover it up with angry-aggressive behavior. Low self-esteem can come from experiences in school and at home with failed academics and interpersonal relationships.
- **Interventions**
  1. It is important to respond and not react. Staying calm and not being aggressive in return gives the student little to fight against.
  2. Listen to the student (when rational) and wait until he or she is finished talking. Ask if the student has anything further to say before you begin speaking. When you begin, speak slowly and quietly, modeling the correct behavior.
  3. Communication is essential in creating a relationship with this student so increase it. Arrange private conferences to avoid disruption and embarrassment. Do not lecture, but instead share your point of view on what has happened.
  4. Explain clearly what sort of things need to be done to break the negative behavior cycle and make his or her behavior acceptable. Draw a picture of the negative and positive behavior cycles to demonstrate how they affect the student and others.





## 2. The Attention Seeker

- **What Is the Behavior Cycle?** This student will usually be loud, speak out without permission, and act compulsively. He or she doesn't like being told what to do, but will do just about anything unusual to gain attention. Self-message: "I need to disrupt the class to be noticed."
- **What Causes the Misbehavior?** The student who is always looking for attention wants his peers, teachers, and parents to know he or she exists. At the elementary level the goal is usually getting the attention of his or her teachers and peers. At the middle-school level, the focus may be one of trying to establish a relationship with the opposite sex.
- **Interventions**
  1. Meet privately with the student to give him or her an opportunity to discuss what might be the real problems the student is trying to solve by getting attention in inappropriate ways.
  2. Discuss possible strategies you can use to help the student break this negative behavior cycle. These strategies can include completing a daily "Checking My Behavior" form, pp. 136–137, that can result in positive incentives and acknowledgment.
  3. When speaking, model the correct behavior by not interrupting and by speaking softly.
  4. Don't wait for this student to misbehave to get attention. Catch the student doing the right thing and use social praise as well as privileges. For example, a period with no inappropriate attention-getting behavior can be rewarded with extra free time with the teacher or classmates.



### 3. The Class Bully

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student intimidates other students by verbally and/or physically pushing them around. He or she is always threatening to hurt someone and continually brags about his or her physical strength. The student avoids taking responsibility. *Self-message:* “I only get attention by pushing others around.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** This student has learned that he or she can get the much desired attention of others by being a bully. He or she believes that being powerful or strong means pushing people around. This student might actually be fearful of others so instead will “beat them to the punch.” Due to a lack of self-confidence, the student will usually avoid taking responsibility, such as accepting challenging tasks.
- ***Interventions***
  1. Bullies need to develop a rapport with a mature, successful adult. This can be started by having short private talks or engaging in an appropriate activity together, such as playing basketball.
  2. Speak and act gently but assertively to create a healthy comparison for him or her to observe. The bully has the tough image perfected, but can’t fight the gentleness, and that is what he or she really wants.
  3. Discuss the issue of needing to scare others to feel powerful and how it may act as a “disguise” for insecurity. One teacher’s method of pointing this out would be to make the analogy of the small caterpillar that has frightening- looking, hornlike hairs coming out from its body. The teacher asks the bully, “Why do you think they have them? Right, to scare other creatures away. Do you think that’s what you do when you make yourself big and scary to others? Well, I know why you do that. Like the caterpillar, you’re actually feeling unsure of yourself and maybe a little scared inside. Do you want me to discuss this in front of other students, or would you rather we keep this between us?” Of course, the answer will be to keep it private, but the important message is that the teacher now understands what is really going on and has shared this insight with the student. Change can now begin to take place.
  4. Emphasize the need to respect class rules and reiterate that disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. State the consequences but always avoid putting down the bully in public.
  5. Consistently praise appropriate behavior and label the new behavior as being “strong” and “powerful.”
  6. A parent conference may increase your understanding of the possible causes for the child’s bullying behavior. Ask other team members to participate in parent meetings.

## 4. The Swearer

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student tries to impress classmates with offensive words. He or she has an appearance of being “streetwise” and a “know-it-all.” The student tries to disturb others by cursing. *Self-message*: “If I stop using foul language, I’ll stop getting attention.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** This student is seeking attention and finds it by using profane language in school. When a student swears in front of the teacher, it can be disorienting as well as overwhelming for peers. It creates an image of toughness that can feel powerful to a child. But in some cases it is a mere rite of passage, a phase children go through on their journey to maturity.
- ***Interventions***
  1. When the child uses a curse word, pull the child aside and say, “I understand you like using those words, they do get people’s attention but they are not to be used in school.” By saying this, you are taking the “air out of the balloon,” which is the big scene that cursing may cause.
  2. Ask if the student will follow the rule. If the student responds with an “Okay,” express your appreciation for the cooperation and that you’ll give feedback at the end of the day as to how he or she did. If the student says “No” to your request, respond with “Are you sure?” and wait for a change in his or her response.
  3. To help change the negative behavior cycle, offer a few guidelines. If students respect someone they should always use respectful language when speaking to that person. Inform them that in most places, including school, swearing is not an acceptable form of communication. Teachers find that these types of suggestions are nonthreatening and will be readily accepted by students.
  4. Offer substitute words such as “shoot” or “dang it” as replacements.
  5. When foul language is used, never ignore it. Always interrupt and say something like, “Those words are unacceptable. I’m sure you can think of a more mature way to say that.” It’s important to increase students’ awareness and self-control by insisting they “think” before they speak.
  6. Reinforce the positive behavior with positive attention.

## 5. The Avoider

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student does everything he or she can to avoid working, such as sharpening pencils, needing to go to the bathroom, walking around the classroom, daydreaming, and so on. He or she can be disorganized and is usually unprepared. The student seems uncaring and apathetic, and avoids all challenges. *Self-message:* “I may not do as well as others, so I don’t try.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** This problem is not a lack of motivation but rather poor self-concept. Somewhere along the line this child was given the message that he or she was not measuring up to an adult’s expectation, and consequently is filled with questions, misgivings, and lack of confidence.
- ***Interventions***
  1. Helping children see themselves differently by improving their self-concept will take time, but this is time well spent. Begin with acknowledging the student’s feeling has of “I can’t do it.”
  2. Send messages that tell the student he or she has the skills needed to be successful in school. Each child must feel that he or she can keep up with other children in the classroom, on the ball field—anywhere children interact. You can’t make a child successful. The child alone has the abilities to succeed. These skills are learned from modeling. Demonstrate how to begin a task. Pair the student up with a positive peer model or learning buddy. Good teacher models help students develop good attitudes and feelings about themselves.
  3. Create a written success plan for daily work goals. Give this student positive incentives for small successes and gradually expect more output. For example, after the student finishes one math problem say, “I can see that you are working hard to learn to do long division. Let me know if you would like some help, and keep up the good work.”
  4. Confer with parents and team members. This helps the student to see the effort adults are making on his or her behalf.
  5. Develop modified classwork that matches the learning style and achievement level of the student.

## 6. The Excuse Maker

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student often has a reason or alibi for not doing what he or she is supposed to do. The child can be very argumentative and often insists that he or she is right by rationalizing the inability to meet classroom expectations. Self-message: “I always have trouble getting my work done.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** Using excuses and alibis to avoid work gives this student a reason for not attempting the work and risking failure. Discussion can revolve around the excuse rather than the cause of not making an effort. Poor self-concept creates avoidance responses that keep the child from dealing with the fear of failure.
- ***Interventions***
  1. Students who are constantly offering excuses or alibis may have lost interest in work needing to be done and/or feel it is too difficult to complete. Ask yourself if the work is too difficult for the student and whether a different or modified assignment would be a better match for this student’s ability and interest. A sixth-grade science teacher trying to help a student who always had an excuse for not turning in his work noticed him looking at the eel in the classroom fish tank. The teacher asked the student if he was interested in doing a short report on freshwater eels for extra credit. When the student expressed interest in this project, the teacher worked with the special education teacher to help the child complete this report. When finished, the report was posted next to the fish tank with a large “A” at the top. This experience began a positive behavior cycle that continued as the teachers built on other small academic successes.
  2. Encourage personal responsibility. One teacher posted a sign in his classroom that read, “No Lies or Alibis.” When a student wants to make an excuse for not doing something, direct awareness back to his or her own choices and options in the situation. When a student says, “I lost my pencil,” reply with “You can use this one, just sign out for it.” If a student gives the excuse, “I lost my paper,” respond with, “Do you want more time?” In private, ask the student to discuss what might be the real cause behind the excuse.
  3. Avoid talking to the student only when he or she has a problem.

## 7. The Fidgeter

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student is always on the move and cannot sit still for any length of time. He or she has a short attention span and usually needs directions repeated. He or she will ask to leave the room and is usually bothering other students. Self-message: “I can’t sit still. I’m always disrupting the class because I move around a lot.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** Do not assume this child can always control himself or herself. The causes might include hyperactivity, a symptom associated with ADHD. If it is determined that the cause is a physical problem, the student might already be on medication. (See “Helping Children with ADHD,” p. 128.) If not, then the cause probably revolves around the need for attention.
- ***Interventions***
  1. After discovering the cause for the student’s inability to sit still, begin to create a structured behavior plan that assists the student’s in-seat behavior. Have the student keep a chart of how many times he or she is instructed to sit down. Just bringing an awareness to this behavior will often decrease it by at least 50 percent.
  2. Create short-term goals for the student so that he or she can experience small successes.
  3. Do not force the student to sit for long periods of time. Set a kitchen timer for successive ten-minute periods. Praise the student for each ten-minute period he or she remains seated. Gradually increase the time from ten to thirty minutes.
  4. Give this student opportunities to move about the room in acceptable ways. For example, have him or her put away supplies, erase the chalkboard, or deliver messages to other teachers. Establish a nonverbal cue that will signal when the child can get up and move without disturbing classmates. Arrange class time for student movement into small and large groups.
  5. Develop lessons that include activities for tactile-kinesthetic learners (e.g., role-play, performing, crafts, drawing).
  6. Allow *any* child who has remained in his/her seat during a work period to play musical chairs, eraser tag, or some activity involving movement.

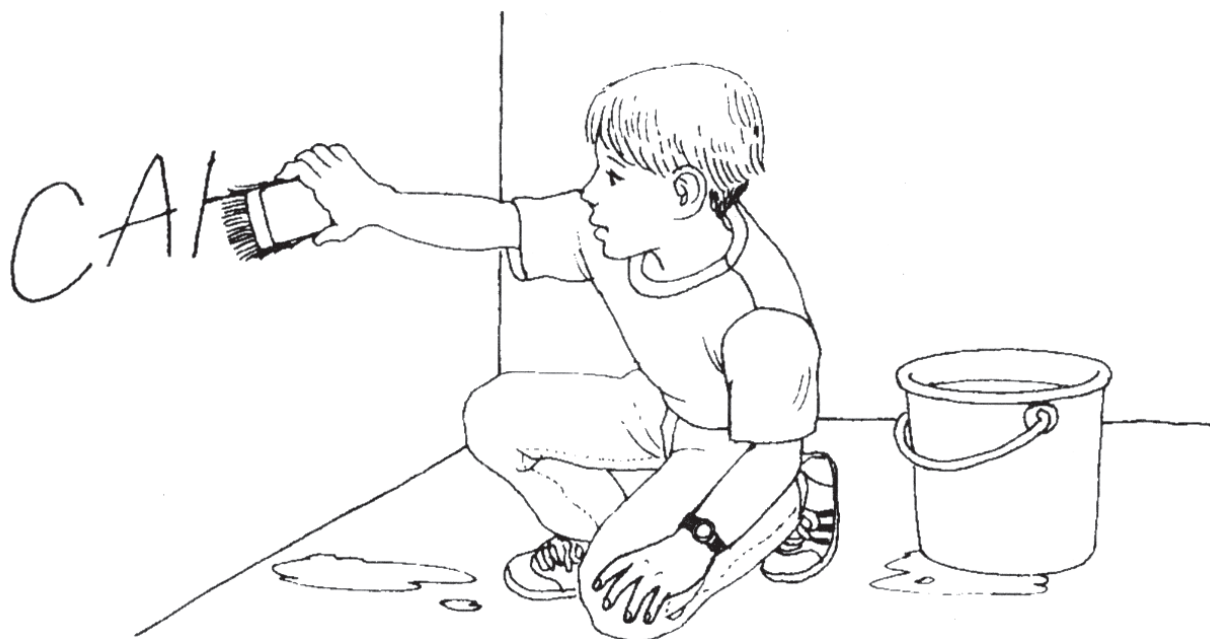
## 8. The Teaser

- ***What Is the Behavior Cycle?*** This student frequently teases other children. He or she makes comments at the expense of others, usually laughing at the cleverness of his or her remarks. Self-message: “I’m the class teaser and get attention for it.” The attention is negative, “but at least it’s attention.”
- ***What Causes the Misbehavior?*** In order to have high self-esteem, children must have positive role models that teach them how they should act, whom to respect, and personal responsibility. If a child is treated with ridicule, he or she will in turn tease others. This student is also seeking attention in a very negative way. After the negative cycle has been established, the teasing can become a form of defense against others “really getting to know who I am.”
- ***Interventions***
  1. Hold a private conference with this student and discuss the ramifications of teasing and why it needs to stop. Discuss respect and how such values result in behaviors that lead to success and reward. Develop an agreement that will give this child positive incentives for stopping his or her teasing of others. A “Checking My Behavior” form, pp. 136–137, can be used for self-monitoring.
  2. Have the victims of the teasing tell the teaser how the teasing makes them feel and that they want it to stop. Pause, then have the victim say to the teaser, “Will you stop?” Wait for a clear response from the teaser. Let the student know that you will meet with him or her again in a few days to see if the teasing has stopped.
  3. Do not reprimand the teased child for reacting. Instead, arrange with the child who is being teased that he or she will earn the privilege of helping you for a few minutes after school each time he or she is teased but does not react. The child can receive a certificate or “Medal of Bravery” for not reacting.
  4. Avoid getting into the trap of teasing back. Remember the cause of the behavior and that ridiculing rather than counseling the teaser will only support the cycle of negative reinforcing behaviors.



## 9. The Property Destroyer

- **What Is the Behavior Cycle?** The student destroys school and classmates' property. This student defaces walls and desks, marks pages in books, and repeatedly breaks things. Self-message: "I have to destroy things to get back at..."
- **What Causes the Behavior?** The student who repeatedly destroys property is acting out of anger and a need for revenge. Due to failure experiences, he or she feels the need to express himself or herself by acting out hostility toward people and property.
- **Interventions**
  1. Be certain the student who is suspected of destroying property admits to the incident. Otherwise, it's important to just discuss the situation without determining any consequence. Never ignore the situation; it will not just "go away."
  2. Desks and walls that are defaced by pen or marker should be washed by the child to the satisfaction of the teacher.
  3. Responsibility for destructive behavior must be taught to the student. With parental consent, if a student destroys another student's property, require him or her to replace it with an equivalent item.





## 10. The Chronic Absentee

- **What Is the Behavior Cycle?** This child misses school or classes for countless unacceptable reasons. Excuses that involve illness rarely are accompanied by a doctor's or parent's note. This child falls hopelessly behind in work and resists making up missed assignments. *Self-message:* "I can't deal with the discomfort of school."
- **What Causes the Misbehavior?** This student avoids coming to school because of a feeling that he or she cannot succeed. There may be an unresolved problem concerning a teacher or classmate(s) that is causing the chronic absenteeism and need to escape.
- **Interventions**
  1. This negative attitude cycle is difficult to change unless the "past is dropped." When the student returns to school, the focus should be on the daily assignment and creating some successful feelings around being in school.
  2. Failing to recognize and welcome the student in a genuine manner will only validate the child's negative image of school.
  3. Communicate through daily interactions that you care about the student and aren't going to give up on him or her.
  4. Arrange for a parent conference to discuss possible causes and to develop an action plan that will include daily communication until the child's attendance improves. If the parents are uncooperative, it may be necessary to contact an outside social services agency that can provide supportive services for the child and family.
  5. Watch for warning signs of potential problems (*proactive anticipation*) and *intervene* early. Award every child a star for each day's attendance at school. Have a perfect attendance party (include other classes) at the end of the week.



## CHAPTER 8

# TEAMWORK WITH PARENTS

Recent studies validate the importance of a parent's interest and involvement in his or her child's education. The research shows that schools where parents are involved had:

- **Increased positive behavior;**
- **Higher test scores;**
- **Increased positive attitudes;**
- **More effective programs; and**
- **More effective schools.**

Children of all ages and abilities need their parents to take an active interest and place in the school community. For children who are experiencing difficulty academically and/or behaviorally, the first step in effectively addressing this issue is to increase communication between home and school and establish a *partnership* for the benefit of the child. Students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD need increased supervision, monitoring, and reporting as compared to the average student. Input, involvement, and cooperation from parents will increase the successful placement of any child in an inclusive classroom.

## Challenges and Concerns

The benefits are evident; therefore, what are the reasons that often impede the development of an effective partnership between parents and teachers? Some of the expressed concerns teachers have about parents and parents have about teachers include the following:

### Teacher Concerns

1. A parent may criticize unjustly a teacher's ability to handle the class.
2. A parent may not trust the teacher's point of view and side with his or her child.
3. The parent's approach to handling discipline problems may be incongruent with the teacher's.
4. A parent may be a poor role model.
5. A parent may disrupt the classroom by being overly harsh with a child.
6. A parent may break confidentiality of the classroom by talking to other parents about another child's behavior.

7. A child may be embarrassed about having his or her parent in the classroom.
8. A parent may express interest in participating but not follow through.
9. The teacher may have little support from the administration for parent involvement.
10. A parent may become “overly involved” and not respect the teacher’s position and responsibilities.

## Parent Concerns

1. Parents may feel uncomfortable talking with teachers, let alone spending time in the classroom.
2. Parents may feel undermined by the teacher’s authority.
3. Parents may feel intimidated by “jargon” and terminology the teacher uses.
4. Parents may feel inferior to the teacher because of his or her education.
5. Parents may not want to share too much of their home situation with the teacher and therefore the school.
6. Parents may feel the teacher is not sensitive to their child’s needs.
7. Parents may fear the teacher is not really interested in their ideas.
8. Single parents may feel embarrassed if the other parent of the child is not involved.
9. There may be a language barrier.
10. Parents may fear that the teacher will blame them for their child’s misbehavior in school.



## How to Increase Communication between Home and School

Parents and teachers have their concerns and fears that go along with creating a closer partnership, but without parents' support and involvement, we as educators are very limited in how effectively we are able to teach our students. Therefore, we must open the door and greet each other in the spirit of facilitating an inclusive school.

The key to connecting school and home is *effective* communication. Effective communication can begin with a "Parent Welcome Letter" and/or "Parent Survey" (pp. 165–166). Establishing a positive dialogue with parents is the first step in effective communication. This dialogue can begin with a letter that welcomes the parents to the inclusive classroom. It can include some of your high expectations for the year and a request for parents' help in reaching and teaching their children. Helping parents support their children in the areas of doing homework, dealing with poor grades, and increasing self-esteem can be started by using the forms entitled "How to Help Children with Homework," "Talking to Your Child about Poor Grades," and "Five Steps Toward Improving a Child's Self-Esteem," at the end of this chapter.

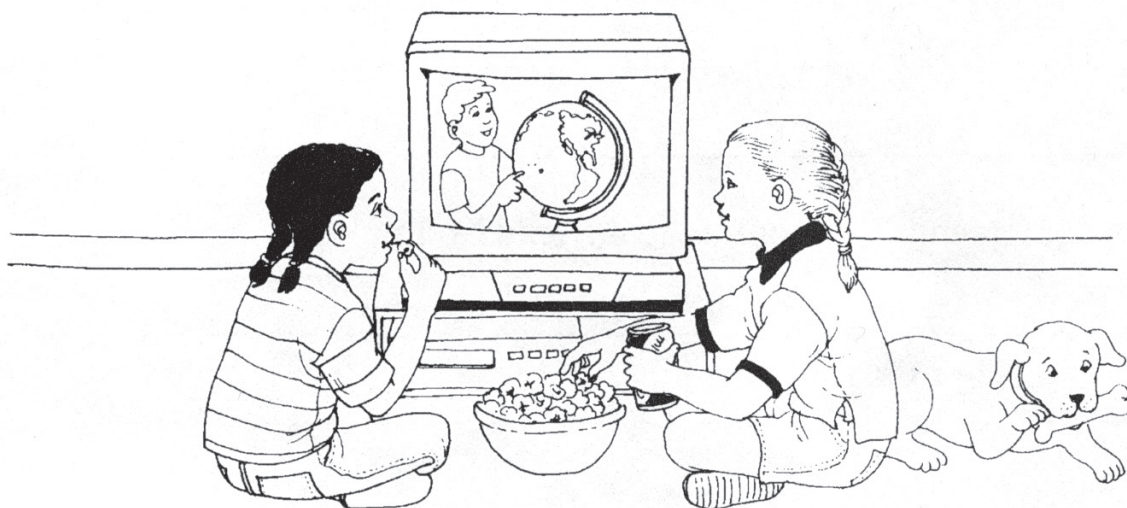
### What Else Can Teachers Do to Increase Parent Involvement?

Creating an atmosphere of acceptance in an inclusive classroom is also important for sustaining ongoing communication with parents. The following list of ideas that experienced teachers have used successfully are only useful if they are implemented. The time and energy involved in organizing parent conferences and school visits, sending home letters, and so on, will not happen without determination and effective planning. Organizing and letter writing are areas that a paraprofessional, as well as other team members, can assist with.

- ✓ Schedule a weekly "Parent Guest Day" by inviting parents into the classroom to share their hobbies with the class (e.g., stamp or coin collecting, painting, sewing, etc.).
- ✓ Schedule days when parents can spend a day at school by going to all their child's classes. Plan this for one parent at a time. "V.P.P."—Very Proud Parent buttons—can also be given.
- ✓ Invite parents into the classroom to share information about their cultural customs, ethnic background, and/or religious holidays.
- ✓ Invite an interested parent to give you help writing a class newsletter. Information can include parent tips on helping with homework, responsibility, family fun, and so on.
- ✓ Invite parents to come into class and talk about their school experiences and what they would do the same as well as differently.

## Teamwork with Parents

- ✓ Invite parents to assist one group of students with their assignment after you have worked with the students (e.g., the parents can reinforce a reading skill you've taught).
- ✓ Invite parents to work with a small group of children during a reading class. They can ask comprehension questions and help to keep them on task.
- ✓ Ask parents to be a one-to-one math, reading, or writing tutor.
- ✓ Have parents in the classroom as you teach a new skill. During guided and independent practice, ask the parent to monitor the work being done by students.
- ✓ Invite parents to chaperone on field trips.
- ✓ Invite the parent of the student who is being given an award, such as "Student of the Week," to share a few positive stories about the student to his or her classmates.
- ✓ Have a parent take pictures of the students and help create a display.
- ✓ Ask a parent to watch a particular television show with his or her child and discuss the show afterwards by filling out the "TV Questionnaire" form, p. 160.
- ✓ Send home weekly progress reports. Make a point of also calling and writing parents to share good information about their child's progress in school.
- ✓ Give parents small incentives for every participation effort, such as award certificates, Participating Parent—"PP" badges, and so on.



## TV Questionnaire

**Directions:** After watching a television show, answer the questions below.

Names of people filling out this questionnaire: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ TV program: \_\_\_\_\_

What type of program did you watch (e.g., comedy, drama, documentary)? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the TV show about? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was your favorite part? (Put initials next to your comment if more than one person is filling out this questionnaire.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you learn anything new watching this show? If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this program to a friend? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## How Parents Can Help Their Child with ADHD

### Teaching Children Social Skills

Parents can work on developing better social skills in their children. It's important to understand that social skill development can be a complex undertaking and that simply increasing positive social behaviors at home may not directly lead to significant improvements at school or in other settings. Nonetheless, it can only be helpful to make clear the social behaviors that are important for the child's successful peer relationships. The following are guidelines parents can follow at home to bring congruency with what the teacher is implementing at school.

1. Set up a home reward or positive incentive program that focuses on one or two social behaviors that need improving. These behaviors can include taking turns, sharing, starting and maintaining a conversation (which includes listening), and resolving conflicts. *Catch the child doing the right thing*, and reward him or her with a token. When the child has earned a specific number of points/tokens (for example, five), allow him or her to select a special privilege or tangible reward. Remember to praise the child immediately after the appropriate social behavior or interaction.
2. After observing the child's peer interactions, make a list of social skills missing from his or her repertoire. Use the following teaching strategies to work on developing positive social skills:
  - **Model**—Model the appropriate social behaviors by demonstrating the correct way to perform them. For example: Sit down on the floor with a partner and share a box of crayons while drawing together.
  - **Rehearse**—Have the child practice the behaviors.
  - **Role-play**—Role-play the correct behavior with the child. Then arrange opportunities for the child to practice the desired behaviors with one of his or her peers.
  - **Prompting**—Prompt the appropriate behaviors in social situations, either verbally (“Remember to share”) or with some special signal.
  - **Reward**—Use praise. For example, “You’re doing a great job of waiting until it’s your turn to go.” Include a tangible reward, such as a treat or grab bag, to reinforce the new behavior. Think of yourself as a “social skills coach” teaching new skills.

3. Videotaping can be a very powerful tool for change as well as fun to use together. While the child is engaging in an appropriate social behavior with a peer or sibling, videotape him or her. Then have the child watch himself or herself performing the correct behaviors. The child should watch the video at least once per day and before interacting with peers. This visual, concrete feedback can be especially useful for children with ADHD who lack self-awareness of their behaviors. It's important to note that videotaping inappropriate behaviors for the purpose of showing the child what he or she is doing wrong *is not* advisable. Children who lack self-control and awareness need to see themselves doing the correct thing.

### Arranging Positive Peer Connections

The child with ADHD does not need to become popular in order to have satisfying peer relationships. The distinction between popularity and friendship is as follows: Popularity refers to how well someone is liked by the peer group as a whole. Friendship, on the other hand, is when someone has a special peer to share positive interactions with. Many children with ADHD are not that popular with their peer group, and it's difficult to change their social status. A more reasonable goal for social interventions with children with attention deficit disorders is to establish regular positive contact with at least one other child after school and/or on the weekend. Positive connection with at least one other child can serve to buffer the child with ADHD from feeling isolated and rejected by the larger peer group. The following suggestions can be helpful for parents in their effort to arrange positive peer connections for their child with ADHD:

1. Encourage the child to invite a peer over to the house, and help arrange activities that are not highly interactive if the child has significant social skills problems. Activities can include watching a video and having a snack (e.g., popcorn) that both children enjoy. When renting a video, rent two and have the children come to a consensus as to which one they will watch. This sort of interaction is not highly interactive but can “build in” a positive and successful connection with another child.
2. Consider using short breaks from peer interactions, especially when things become excitable, or emotional. This would be time to “slow down” and reestablish better control.
3. Any signs of aggressive behavior should be redirected, because aggression is one of the strongest predictors of peer rejection with younger children.



4. It is often the case that children with ADHD gravitate toward younger and older children. Younger children's social behaviors may be more compatible with their social skills, and older children may simply be more understanding and/or tolerant of any social immaturities. There is no need for the parent to be overly concerned as long as they find these children to be appropriate companions.

## How Can the School Help?

Peer interactions at home and at school can be quite different. School settings include:

- a) larger groups of children;
- b) different expectations for social behaviors; and
- c) a more stressful environment for a child with ADHD.

Taking these factors into account, it's important that we consider the school setting when arranging for more successful interpersonal relationships for children with ADHD. Here are a few considerations the parent and school can consider:

1. Highly disruptive and inappropriate classroom behavior is strongly associated with peer rejection. It is important that parents and teachers work together to develop better classroom behaviors in the child. Home/school reports and behavior plans can be arranged for increased continuity and consistency.
2. Parents should not be overly concerned about peer rejection if their child is receiving special classroom attention that results in other children disliking their child. Efforts should be made to change classmates' negative attitudes toward the child with ADHD by using a highly positive behavioral approach. Corrective disciplining measures should be carried out in as sensitive and private a manner as possible.
3. Ask the teacher to assign special responsibilities to the child with ADHD in the presence of his or her peers. This allows classmates the opportunity to observe the child in a positive light. The classroom teacher has the power and influence to change the atmosphere in the classroom from rejection to acceptance.

In summary, when parents are actively involved in helping their child with peer relationship problems, their understanding of the feelings and possible rejection associated with being a child with ADHD increases. The task is very difficult, and the parents should have realistic expectations of what they can and cannot accomplish. The parents' efforts in providing their child with opportunities for positive peer interactions and avoiding situations that can result in frequent social failure may help create positive behavior cycles.

## Community Involvement

Across the country many schools are creating a truly inclusive education system that involves shared decision-making among various individuals of the school community. These individuals include teachers, administrators (school principal), and parents. In some school districts, elections are held every two years to elect representatives who are responsible for making recommendations and decisions regarding curriculum, staffing, scheduling, community/parent involvement, and so on. Decisions are made on a consensual basis. This challenge creates a need for listening, respecting, and acknowledging all points of view. Schools that have empowered school-centered decision-making teams find that often faculty and community feel they have a voice in the important process of creating an inclusive school environment.



## Parent Welcome Letter

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the beginning of a new year at \_\_\_\_\_.

This letter is written to let you know that your son/ daughter is about to begin a school year that will be filled with exciting challenges and experiences. We are dedicated to creating a classroom environment that meets the learning needs of all students.

We know our teaching must begin with making your child feel at home in school and helping all the children come together in a learning community. Please help us get to know your child better by answering the following questions. Thank you for your time in sharing your thoughts about your child. We look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely,

Your child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your child's strengths? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does your child need help with? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent Survey

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We would like your help in assisting us to become more familiar with your child. We are dedicated to meeting his/her academic, social, and behavioral needs. Please complete this survey about your child and his/her interests.

Sincerely,

Your child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child's favorite things to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

His/her least favorite things to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are some ways you'd like to contribute to our class or school this year (for example, tutoring in class and/or on the computer, reading books, sharing cultural ideas, discussing your job and personal interests, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tips for Parents: How to Help Children with Homework

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Here are some tips for helping your children with their homework.

1. **Create a game plan.** Make sure your child writes down all assignments in an assignment book. It's equally important that they write down a word such as "name" if no assignment was given. Many children with learning disabilities could do better in school if they just got organized. They would get better grades if they did their homework on time. Classes would be more enjoyable if they brought in the right materials and completed special projects. Parents should plan to check assignments after completed. This will reduce missed assignments as well as offer children a feeling of accomplishment, a source of positive attention, and a connection between school and home.
2. **Set up and stick to a homework schedule.** Deciding when to sit down to do homework can be a difficult decision for many children. Once the time is determined, it's important to stick to it as closely as possible. Supportive routines cultivate successful work habits that in turn help the child feel more confident in his or ability to succeed.
3. **Have a two-minute homework discussion before starting.** Discuss the different aspects of the homework assignment, such as what questions need to be answered before reading a chapter or how to study for a test. In this way he or she will have a clearer understanding of how to proceed with the work ahead.
4. **Act as a resource not a helper.** If you act as a helper by sitting next to your child and making sure he or she understands the work being presented and completes it, the child will not likely learn to problem-solve independently. This strategy can create *learned helplessness*. Instead, parents serve their children better by being available for problem solving and clarification on aspects of the assignment given or by acting as a resource.
5. **Avoid completing assignments for your child.** If your child has difficulty completing the assignment and after honestly trying to do so, encourage the child to discuss it with the teacher. If you feel it is necessary, write a note asking the teacher to contact you for more information. This approach avoids the feelings of inadequacy that can occur if homework is completed for the child.

6. ***Look for signs of learning problems.*** Many symptoms of a more serious learning problem may show up during homework. Such symptoms may include taking hours to complete the homework; low frustration level; consistent complaining; and labored reading, writing, and spelling. If these symptoms present an ongoing pattern, a parent-teacher conference should be scheduled. One of two things will usually result from the conference, which the school psychologist and/or special education teacher should also attend. Your child is either having academic problems or is having difficulty with taking responsibility for his work, and the homework problems signal a need for better study and organizational skills. Neither problem means your child is a failure. However, by recognizing these homework problems and identifying their causes, you can work as a team with your child to solve them.
7. ***Encourage good work habits.*** Many children who have learning problems are not distinguished by their good work habits, cooperativeness, and productivity. To break this cycle of negative reinforcing behaviors, it is necessary to establish good work habits at home as well as in school. A simple method to support this goal is to use a lot of encouraging words when your child is demonstrating good work habits. For example, when your child sits and takes out homework, make sure you let him or her know you notice this positive behavior by saying something like: “Well, look at you, ready to go!” or “I’m happy you’ve started on your own.” Continue catching the child doing the right thing with comments such as, “I’m proud of the way you are working” or “You’re really improving.”

Simply put, to change poor work habits to good ones, give your child positive attention for showing you positive work habits.

Sincerely,

## Tips for Parents: Talking to Your Child about Poor Grades

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We understand no parent is very pleased to have his or her child bring home a report card with poor grades. However, the first thing a parent as well as a teacher should do is try to get to the bottom of why the grades are poor. Behavior problems that are caused by academic failure will usually disappear once the student gets additional help with academics. Academic failure caused by behavior problems, however, will not be solved by getting more academic help; in fact the behavior can get worse and the grades will continue to stay poor.

Here are several suggestions for talking to your child about poor grades.

### ***Don't***

- Scream at your child and ground him or her for the next month. This will not be helpful in getting to know why your child got those poor grades.
- Lecture about how important school is and that the child better “get your act together.” This will usually put a child on the defensive and cause an argument or lack of communication altogether.
- Blame someone else for your child's poor grades (e.g., school, teachers, peers).

### ***Do***

- Talk and listen to your child. Let him or her know that you are quite concerned, but don't dwell on the report card grades (they can't be changed).
- Tell your child you want to work with him or her and the teacher to make school more successful. Let the child know you're on his or her side, and things will get better.
- Work out a definite plan for improving grades and write it out.
- Make an appointment to talk to your child's teacher(s). Bring in assignments that your child is having difficulty with. Work together to figure out why your child is getting poor grades, and then what can be done to help him/her succeed in school.
- If your child has special needs, make sure his or her special education teacher is at the meeting.

Sincerely,

## Tips for Parents: Five Steps Toward Improving a Child's Self-Esteem

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Below are five steps you can take to help improve your child's self-esteem.

1. ***Support decision making and problem solving.*** Allowing children to make decisions and teaching them effective ways to solve problem enhances their feelings of independence and personal control. Decisions about which clothing to wear, what friends to invite to a party, or what recreational sport they should participate in can give children a sense of control over what is happening to them. Children's natural tendency to exercise such controls can be supported or undermined by parents. As a child gets older, he or she should be given more opportunities to make decisions relating to his or her life. This preparation for adulthood will be invaluable.
2. ***Focus on solutions.*** Someone once said, "There are no problems, only solutions." An important step in building self-esteem is to teach solutions rather than focusing on the problem or who's to blame. Children need to feel that they can influence what happens in their lives. To have such influence, they need to learn many skills. Teaching children the skill of finding solutions to problems or frustrating situations begins with statements such as, "Who's to blame is not important. The important question is, 'what can you do so this doesn't happen again?'"
3. ***Offer ways to solve problems.*** Giving children options that they can use when difficult situations arise can enhance their sense of personal power. Offering alternative ways of handling an obstacle after asking children what they have tried enlarges their repertoire of possible responses.



4. **Support responsibility.** Setting limits and rules adequately, such as requiring children to share in chores and duties in the home, are important factors in helping children learn to take responsibility. Learning to take responsibility is probably the most important ingredient in school success. Responsible children feel good about themselves, and they will want to repeat responsible behaviors.
5. **Teach children proper labels for different feelings.** Help children identify their true feelings, “While the feeling you’re expressing sounds like anger, it’s really frustration, and frustration is .... Now that you know this, what do you think is causing...?”

Sincerely,



## CHAPTER 9

# DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION— HOW TO MAKE IT WORK

### What Is Differentiated Instruction?

This is a very exciting time to be a teacher in an inclusive classroom because we are faced with a generation of mixed-ability learners who are challenging us to think about how to deliver instruction effectively. The inclusive classroom greatly benefits from a teacher who utilizes differentiating instruction strategies because these strategies address the academic, social, and behavioral needs of the struggling as well as advanced learners. The struggling learner may need a different approach or pace toward learning the material, while the advanced learner, like all learners, may need help in developing their abilities by being appropriately challenged to achieve his or her potential. Teachers in inclusive settings are realizing the importance of being flexible and open to change for the purpose of responding to the needs of all learners. Being flexible involves altering perspective to see all children as individual learners who are part of a whole classroom community.

Differentiated instruction is about using teaching strategies that connect with an individual student's ways of learning material. The inclusive classroom teacher's goal for using differentiated instruction is *to provide an environment that will maximize the learning potential for student success*. Maximizing student learning potential involves ongoing analysis, risk-taking while trying teaching and learning strategies that a teacher might have otherwise ignored or not been aware of. An effective educator uses strategies that lead students to positive learning outcomes, holding on to them and repeating them as often as necessary. Conversely, common sense tells us that when teaching strategies are having little or no effect on a student's ability to learn, adjustments are necessary. Differentiation is about managing instructional time in a way that meets the established learning standards. It provides an alternative approach toward creating motivating, challenging, and meaningful experiences for struggling students, or students who need a variety of approaches to maintain active participation in the learning process. Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary, requiring the teacher to make necessary adjustments to curriculum and presentation of information to learners, rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum.

Differentiated instruction differs from individualized instruction in that it provides students with more options for taking in information and making sense of ideas while making sure that the classroom workload remains manageable. This can be accomplished by grouping students and then dealing with the unique instructional needs of that group, therefore striking a balance between meeting the needs of a variety of learners with different abilities and experiences. Differentiated instruction mixes whole-class, small-group, and one-on-one instruction. *Flexible grouping* is used for the purpose of managing behavior and helping students interact and work together as they develop knowledge of new content.

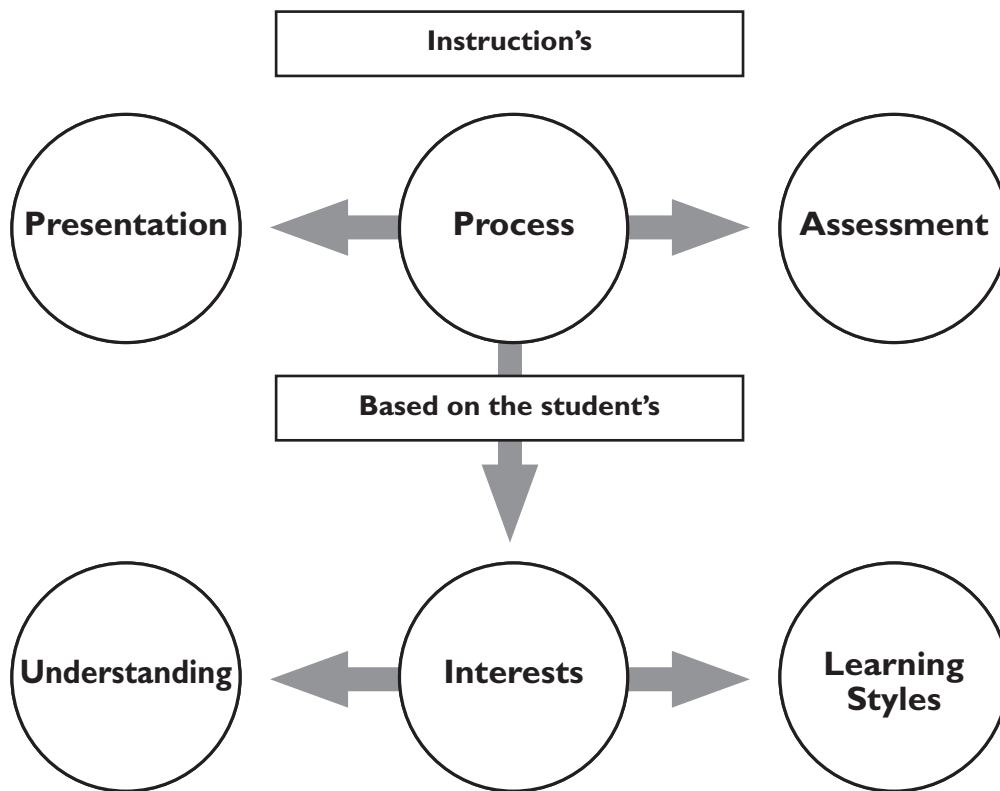
## How to Differentiate Instruction

*Instruction* is the term used to describe how students are taught in school. Instruction can be broken down in many different ways, such as according to the content, process, and so on. When altering or differentiating instruction, it may be most helpful to think in terms of how teachers first introduce the curriculum (*presentation*), how the students work with the information presented (*practice*), and how students demonstrate what they've learned (*assessment*).

We want information presented, practiced, and assessed in such a way that all students are able to gain varying degrees of knowledge based on their level of *understanding*, *interests*, and *learning styles*. In a differentiated classroom, a variety of instructional arrangements are used. Through a range of the instructional and management strategies that are offered in this and other chapters, teachers and students have the opportunity to achieve learning goals that include:

- Use of multiple forms of intelligence
- Defining excellence by the measure of individual growth from a starting point
- Focusing on a variety of ongoing assessment and diagnostic tools to understand how to make instruction more responsive to the learner
- Using multi-option assignments and avenues toward learning
- Becoming more self-reliant learners
- Helping each other to solve problems and succeed in the inclusive classroom

## Teachers can differentiate



## Understanding

For students to reach established new learning, having a degree of prior knowledge and understanding of the curriculum being presented is important. We must first establish what they know and supply connections for the students in our adapted or modified presentation. Studies indicate that when the student relates new information to old information already stored in memory, he or she is more likely to learn and remember the newly presented information.

When differentiating instruction, we diagnose the current knowledge and skill levels of our students before we begin instructing. Looking at previous records, including IEPs, is a direct and relatively easy approach. In an inclusive classroom, careful diagnosis of what the student knows and doesn't know is far more precise than having such general information as "this student has passed the fourth grade" or "this student needs help with problem-solving skills."

Secondary-level teachers often use informal diagnosis by selecting an objective close to the correct level of difficulty. For example, the math teacher, knowing that many of his or her students are taking their first pre-algebra class, will probably begin instruction with basic objectives.

If a teacher does not have past student profiles available and isn't teaching a content-specific course, he or she can do a *task analysis* of the sub-skills necessary for the student to accomplish a given objective. Here are some examples of sub-skills questions that the teacher can ask regarding small-and large-group discussion before instruction begins:

- ✓ Can the student speak at appropriate times?
- ✓ Can the student speak clearly with proper volume and articulation?
- ✓ Can the student contribute relevant comments?
- ✓ Can the student listen to others without interrupting or becoming distracted?
- ✓ Can the student paraphrase comments of other speakers?
- ✓ Can the student follow directions of the teacher or group leader?

After asking questions like these, the teacher will have a clearer understanding of where to start instruction and what adaptations or additional instruction may be necessary for the presentation of the lesson and the successful participation of the student. Many teachers keep copies of simple checklist grids that have student names and areas of instruction and the sub-skills needed to succeed in the unit's lesson. The goal is to keep it simple so there is more time for instruction versus diagnosis of the students' capabilities. The long-term goal is for all students to do a task analysis independently, which will eventually become a life skill.

## Interest

After diagnosis of the students' sub-skills through task analysis and other assessments, the teacher's instruction may often be met with statements such as:

- "I don't want to do this..."
- "Why should I have to learn this...?"
- "This is so boring..."

Experienced teachers understand that successful students are not passive learners and receivers of information—learning is something they choose to do and is not done to them. What are some of the reasons for students' lack of motivation and resistance to learning? How do we get their attention in order to get them engaged in the lesson being presented? Many teachers need help in increasing interventions used to address this problem. Raising the anxiety of the student with comments such as "If you don't do this, you'll fail," is one way to motivate students, but it's not the only way.

To *motivate with interest*, teachers can make the material being presented more focused and engaging to the students. For example, to motivate with interest, one teacher often will use the name of a student in her class as she's instructing, "Let's see how many centimeters David's right arm is" or "Let's imagine that next week this class is given permission to take a field trip to a wonderful beach in Mexico, but we first need to calculate the amount of. . . ." These sorts of interest-provoking novelties can often be enough to pull reluctant learners into a lesson.

If a student is given options for incorporating interesting subtopics, his or her engagement in the task will most likely increase. Creative use of a student's interests can also be helpful with resistant learners as well.

## Learning Styles

Even though we have dominant modalities of learning, no one uses one learning style exclusively, and there is usually significant overlap in learning styles. It is also clear that motivation must be present for a student to actively engage in the learning process. The effective inclusion teacher will incorporate a variety of learning styles when presenting a lesson to enhance students' intrinsic motivation (see chapter 2). For example, to accommodate the various learning styles and multiple intelligences in his classroom, Mr. Shaw, a sixth-grade English teacher, decided to present homophones in a way that matched his students' preferred way of learning. He gave each student an index card with letters on them and read two words such as *steel* and *steal*. Students with a letter in the word were asked to come to the front of the class and huddle to discuss the word's definitions and correct spelling. Lining up with the index cards held at chest level, one student defined each word and then each student called out his or her letter in the correct order, ending by saying *steel* in unison. They then repeated the process for the second (word) homophone. The visual learners saw the word being spelled, the auditory learners heard and discussed the word, and the kinesthetic learners had an opportunity to use concrete examples and move around while learning. This example of differentiation according to students' learning styles is one of many creative ideas teachers come up with every day.

## Strategies for Differentiating: Presentation, Practice, and Assessment

Differentiating the *presentation* can be understood as adapting *what we plan (content) and how we teach* for the purpose of helping students learn. Differentiating the presentation takes into account the student's readiness levels and an understanding of the link between how we deliver a lesson and its effect on how students will receive and take in the information.

*Practice* means *how the students work to develop mastery* of the information that has been presented. Students in an inclusive classroom are expected to interact and work together whenever possible to develop knowledge of new content, but this model of teaming may at times have to be modified to meet individual student needs. Regardless of the process by which students choose to work, it's important that the teacher is aware of and becomes comfortable with a wide range of instructional strategies that support flexible teaching. It's equally important to remember that the focus on the quality of how students work is more important than the quantity of their product or speed in which they get the work completed. There are numerous strategies educators have developed that welcome creative decision making and support engagement in quality work. I've listed additional differentiated strategies that support the practice, or work, that makes the learning a meaningful and engaging experience.

Critics of standardized testing have claimed that many summative tests do not reflect accurate information about learning and can be biased against students who have disabilities or limited proficiency in English. Assessment in an inclusive classroom is an ongoing diagnostic tool used to determine student understanding and adjust instruction. Many schools, districts, and states have begun to develop different forms of assessment that require students to demonstrate their proficiency as they would in real-life performance situations. Differentiated assessment will draw on a variety of meaningful ways students can demonstrate their mastery of the learning objectives. When differentiating the assessment of the product or assignments produced by students, a teacher should also consider the readiness levels and appropriate matching of the student's learning styles.

The following examples of differentiated instructional strategies are in addition to the modifications and adaptations offered in chapter 4, such as co-teaching, using mnemonic devices, oral testing, and study buddies.



## Strategies for Differentiating Presentation

- **Focus on what all students should learn.** Imagine a pyramid where the bottom quarter and largest section is dedicated to the information essential for all students to learn. The next sections of the pyramid include what many students should learn, what some should learn, and what a few should learn. When differentiating instruction, the content of instruction should address the same learning standard that all students need to reach but be adjusted by degree of complexity for the diversity of students in the classroom. When planning a lesson, the teacher individualizes academic expectations according to a student's abilities and skills.
- **Scaffolding** is a teaching strategy that aids the student in his or her growth of independence by incorporating prior knowledge and skill level into decisions that would assist him or her in moving to the next level of challenging work. Scaffolded instruction is thought-out interventions that guide the student through academic rigor, making it synonymous with the instructional technique called *guided practice*. These guides, which support success in often challenging work are offered in many ways, including use of modeling, graphic organizers, and rubrics; teaching through a variety of learning modalities; offering material at students instructional reading level; introducing content in less complex ways and gradually increasing difficulty; using learning buddies and study guides; and re-teaching material. Individualizing steps taken to reach a standard involves the teacher determining the level and degree of scaffolding necessary for the students to stay challenged and motivated.
- **Compacting the curriculum** is a strategy that increases the quality and quantity of each student's time-on-learning. *Content* is the knowledge, skills, and attitudes we want students to learn. When compacting the curriculum, a teacher gives each student a pre-test to determine if he or she has mastered the content of the lesson and therefore does not require direct instruction. When students have demonstrated their competency in the subject area, they have the option of "compacting out" and moving on to work on another project. This assures that advanced learners will be engaged in challenging and content appropriate learning experiences.
- **Establishing a rationale** for learning involves exploring the real-life applications of the skills taught. This helps students see the connection between their learning and their lives outside of school.
- **Checking for prior knowledge** can create a pathway to the student's long-term memory. For example, before beginning a chapter on Japan, a social studies teacher may ask her



students to generate a list of words that come to mind when they think of the country of Japan. This short activity can help the teacher assess students' prior knowledge, increase their interest and engagement in the lesson, and determine what needs to be taught. Before presenting a lesson, determining prior knowledge will also help the teacher determine what information is essential to know to start the lesson. If the student does not have that knowledge, the teacher can provide it to the student.

- **Guided imagery** is a process in which students create mental pictures in response to an oral description given by the teacher. The teacher asks students to close their eyes and picture something related to the subject about to be taught. Students can then describe these images aloud or write them down for future discussion. Visualization allows students to connect personally but vicariously to a setting. This is helpful before reading a text as well.
- **Providing a functional link** involves relating the lesson to the student's interests and life experiences. For example, as an introduction to a literary work, the teacher can help students make a functional link by identifying a theme or another aspect of the literature being studied. Students are then asked to do a quick written assignment that makes a connection between a personal experience and the selected theme. This encourages that necessary connection between their lives and a character's experiences.
- **Wait Time** is a strategy that is beneficial for students who need additional time to process a question and retrieve the answer. Unfortunately, the use of Wait Time is often misunderstood and used incorrectly. The incorrect way of using this strategy is to first call on a student, ask a question, and wait for a response. Wait Time involves first *asking* a question, *pausing* for five to ten seconds, and *then calling* on a student to answer the question.
- **Asking frequent questions** checks for student understanding. For students with a learning disability, it may be helpful to change the question level.
- **Chunking information**, or grouping information, is a strategy that assists memory. An example of this strategy is chunking a grocery list into three groups, dairy, fruit and vegetables. Using this strategy when presenting lists of information or aspects of a theme can help learners store and retrieve the information at a later date.
- **Tape recording** instructions using a micro tape player is another excellent strategy. A teacher can record himself or herself while giving instructions to the class and then play back the instructions. This simple strategy can increase students' focus and listening skills. Similarly, recording the students while they repeat instructions and playing the tape

back can increase engagement as well. Even though only approximately 30 percent of the students are primarily auditory learners, the novelty of using a micro tape player captures the attention of all learners, regardless of their preferred learning styles.

- **Using a relic box** involves filling a box or bag with items related to a specific character, setting, event, topic, or process that the teacher is about to present. The teacher pulls the items from the box one at a time and asks students to predict what each tells them about what they will read or study. Taking a few minutes using this presentation strategy will pull students into the lesson by engaging them in predicting and questioning.
- **Multisensory delivery of information** during the presentation increases the chances of engaging all students in the learning. See pages 19–21 for examples.
- **Adapt level of questioning** to the students' ability or readiness level. Instruction and questioning can be based on Bloom's 1976 Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain. The teacher can post levels of thinking on the wall under each critical thinking skill and refer to it during the lesson. Following are examples of key words that can be used in each level of critical thinking:

Knowledge	Understanding	Application
Why, What, When, How, Where, Match, Spell, List, Name	Explain, Interpret, Show, Demonstrate, Relate, Summarize, Compare	Solve, Apply, Plan, Utilize, Model, Build, Organize, Develop
Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Classify, Discover, Examine, Test for, Motive, Conclusion, Analyze, Take part in	Combine, Test, Change, Improve, Plan, Discuss, Make up, Construct, Adapt	Prove, Assess, Select, Estimate, Conclude, Defend, Interpret

## Strategies for Differentiating Practice

- **Assistive/adaptive technologies** include any devices that students with disabilities might use to help them learn and function in the regular education setting. These devices include everything from wheelchairs to calculators and the wide assortment of high-tech tools available to schools. When using computer-assisted instruction, voice-recognition software turns the spoken word into type on the screen for students with physical impairments. Glare-reduction screens and Braille note-taking devices can enable visually impaired students to fully participate in the learning process. See the reference section of

this book for additional resources to help those teachers who want to increase the use of computerized-assistive technology devices in their classroom.

- **Flexible groupings** allow students to work with a wide variety of peers. Students are part of a variety of groups and also may work alone based on the match between the lesson and the student's readiness, learning style, and skill level. After establishing groups, the teacher can allow students to coach each other to complete assignments or intervene from time to time. All students should have opportunities to work with others who are like themselves and those who are dissimilar in readiness and interest.
- **Peer tutors** benefit learners by answering questions about the subject area or give them access to advanced research skills. A third-grade student who requires one-on-one instruction that goes beyond the needs of his or her peers can be matched with a fifth grader. You can create extensive support systems within your school community by inviting volunteer Peer Tutors to come and work with other students who need a chance to reach higher achievement.
- **Study-buddies** involve two or three students in working together on a project. This strategy can benefit students who may be passive learners and need support to start the assignment. Advanced learners can benefit from an opportunity to deepen their analysis, learn more, and contribute to one another's learning.
- **Think Aloud** is a strategy which models effective thinking skills. The teacher stops throughout a reading selection to demonstrate self-reflection and prediction questioning. Questions may include "Why did the main character act this way?" "What might happen next?" "What did I just read?" and "How do I know?"
- **Word Aloud** encourages students to read along as the teacher reads aloud. Before reading the story or passage, the teacher instructs students to follow along by silently reading until he or she pauses. At that time, the students read the next word aloud in unison. The teacher can pause before words that are significant to the understanding of the passage and need to be emphasized. Pausing before every last word of a sentence can also help students engage in the reading and actively participate in the group activity. An adaptation of this strategy is assigning a student to read aloud and use Word Aloud until they decide to pass on the responsibility to another student, who then reads while the whole class participates in Word Aloud.
- **Study guides** support student understanding of difficult textbook passages by making the essential information more accessible. For example, a study guide may take the important main ideas from the chapter or may include a list of questions with the page numbers next

to each question, or it may highlight the main concepts and vocabulary terms for the unit. Students using a teacher-directed study guide, as opposed to self-study methods, perform better on assessments.

- **Graphic organizers** are visual displays teachers and students use to organize information in a manner that makes the information easier to understand and learn. There are numerous graphic organizers (GOs) that have been used to promote the learning process. Among the many terms used to describe GOs are webs, semantic maps, Venn diagrams, and flow charts. Students both with and without learning disabilities scored significantly higher on quizzes following the use of a teacher-guided graphic organizer as opposed to self-study methods.
- **Tiered assignments** use a variety of levels in activities to ensure that students explore ideas at a level that builds on their background knowledge and prompts continued growth. The goal of the assignment is focused on the essential concepts.
- **Error-free drills** are short tasks or questions that students have a high probability of answering correctly. They support a struggling student's ability to engage in the practice with confidence.

## Strategies for Differentiating Assessment

Effective assessments are a balance between formative and summative and are equitable and fair, with the goal of increasing teaching and learning tools for teacher and students. The following questions can help when deciding which assessment tool may be most effective:

1. How will my students demonstrate what they know and can do with their acquired knowledge?
2. How can I best match the assessment tool and the student(s)?
3. To what degree does my instruction need to be adapted after reviewing the assessments?
4. How will I encourage all students to demonstrate mastery in varied ways?
5. What options do I have for adaptive grading?

In addition, there are a number of assessment strategies available to teachers in inclusive classrooms. Following are discussions of portfolios and other alternatives for grading students' progress.

**Portfolios: An Alternative Assessment Tool**—The grading system used in an undifferentiated classroom is usually not equipped for individualization. Alternative grading systems that are based on alternative assessment tools can improve the accuracy, fairness, and meaning of grading, especially for students with disabilities. The challenge is to achieve this goal without adding excessive responsibilities for the classroom teachers.

There are a variety of ways to approach the use of grades and evaluation in an inclusive learning environment. Some teachers choose to bring students into the grading process by having them look at how they are progressing as an individual versus being graded against their peers. A portfolio is a useful tool for reporting ongoing progress. Portfolios contain examples of a student's work over time and in a variety of modes to demonstrate development of the student's ability and progress. Following are examples of what a portfolio can include to indicate the student's learning and progress:

#### ***Generic Portfolio***

- Report cards and progress reports
- Tests
- Work samples
- Awards
- Personal goals
- Significant daily assignments
- Photographs
- Anecdotal observations
- Audio and video tapes

**Alternative Grading Procedures**—In addition to the portfolio, the teacher can use other methods for grading a student. Here are just a few:

- ***Give bonus points*** for correct work beyond the required part of the adapted assignment. For example, if the student earned 65 points on the assignment but wrote additional information, add 10 points to raise the score to 75 points.
- ***Base part of the grade on the effort the student put forth*** in organizing and editing his or her work or on how many problems the student attempted to complete.
- ***Prioritize the points assigned to each content area on assessments.*** For example, give

the majority of possible points to the section on the math test that covers the essential information all students need to learn.

- **Color-grade tests:** **Blue**= “You Got It,” **Green**= “You’re Getting There,” and **Brown**= “Needs Improvement.”
- **Prepare students** mentally and emotionally for a test by discussing it informally the day before, emphasizing the importance of getting information from them versus grade importance. Tests should be designed not to “catch the student” in not knowing an answer but to help students demonstrate their acquired learning.
- **Extended time** for completion of tests, classwork, and homework assignments can be a determining factor for learners who work at a slower pace.
- **Academic choice** is an approach to an assignment or project that allows a teacher to offer a choice in learning through a structured contract between student and teacher in any content area. Students learn to plan for work, to be responsible, and to evaluate their efforts. The teacher chooses the topic of study within the content area, such as insects. After instruction and discussion, students choose their area of investigation and the method for presenting to the class what they have learned.
- **Open-book tests** allow students to use textbooks, notes, study guides, and webs to refer to as reference for answering questions. Short-answer and essay responses are most appropriate with this format.
- **Taped tests** require students to listen to a pre-recorded tape of the test and respond on answer sheets or orally on tape. For certain students, listening to questions is more relaxing, which consequently facilitates recall.
- **Student-designed tests** support the understanding that students learn best when engaged in the teaching of what has been taught. Students create a test, complete with answers, for the unit of study. Tests can then be reviewed and shared with different learning groups and individual students.
- **KWL** is an assessment tool in which the students write what they **Know**, and what they **Want to Know** at the beginning of the assignment, and what they **Learned** at the end of the assignment.
- **Matching questions** offer flexibility when assessing students at different comprehension levels. The teacher circles or highlights particular questions on a written test for individual learners to answer. For example, when Cynthia receives the option of trying other questions after completing the highlighted questions.
- **Summarizers** offer students a chance to express their understanding of the assignment

and report it to the teacher for quick evaluation. Summarizers such as a “Ticket to Leave” are questions asked of students before they leave for recess or transition to another activity. When they demonstrate their understanding by correctly answering the question, they can line up for the next class or go onto the next activity.

- **Coordinated testing** involves students working out answers individually and then coming together in teams to compare answers by coordinating efforts and reaching a consensus. This differentiated approach toward assessment allows students to refine their answers and experience real-life problem solving.

## A Few Final Thoughts

Teaching in an inclusive classroom may be the greatest challenge as well as the most growth-producing professional experience that a classroom teacher may face. We now know from years of research that when inclusion works well, students receive a much more effective instructional program while being with nondisabled peers during the regular school day. Thanks to federal and state legislation, parental and professional advocacy, and more effectively trained teachers, students with disabilities are more likely to realize a free appropriate education in a less restrictive environment. Still, there is room for improvement. The challenges and implications for regular classroom teachers are significant, because they must have a flexible classroom in which different students and multiple adults will at times be working on multiple ways to reach similar learning standards. It is my hope that this text has helped prepare special and regular education teachers for the noble profession of teaching in a mixed-ability classroom. Differentiated instruction can help both special and regular educators meet these challenges and at the same time provide a quality and meaningful educational experience for every student.

While you may or may not use differentiated instruction as the core model from which you derive all your instruction, you can use many of these strategies in individual learning stations that can be delivered to different students on an as-needed basis. As you become more comfortable and confident in the use of alternative strategies, I believe you will naturally increase your use of the differentiating practices that support your students’ ability to achieve and succeed.



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### Organizations

- C.H.A.D.D.—Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders  
8181 Professional Place, Suite 150  
Landover, MD 20785  
[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)
- Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201-5704  
[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)
- The National Association for Self-Esteem  
P.O. Box 597  
Fulton, MD 20759-0597  
<http://www.self-esteem-nase.org>
- National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)  
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1401  
New York, NY 10016  
<http://www.nclld.org>
- Inclusion Times  
Published by: AssistiveTek, L.L.C.  
174 Stephensburg Road  
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<http://www.assistivetek.com>





