



EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

TWELFTH
EDITION

AN INTRODUCTION TO
SPECIAL EDUCATION



WILLIAM L. HEWARD SHEILA R. ALBER-MORGAN MOIRA KONRAD

Exceptional Children

An Introduction to Special Education

Twelfth Edition

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and Moira Konrad**

The Ohio State University



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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Heward, William L., author. | Alber, Sheila René, author. | Konrad, Moira, author.

Title: Exceptional children : an introduction to special education / William L. Heward with Sheila

R. Alber-Morgan & Moira Konrad, The Ohio State University.

Description: Twelfth edition. | Hoboken : Pearson, [2022] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020044172 (print) | LCCN 2020044173 (ebook) | ISBN 9780135756621 (paperback) |

ISBN 9780135756096 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Special education—United States. | Exceptional children—United States.

Classification: LCC LC3981 .H49 2022 (print) | LCC LC3981 (ebook) | DDC 371.9—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020044172>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020044173>

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode



ISBN 10: 0-13-575662-6

ISBN 13: 978-0-13-575662-1

FOR SIEGFRIED ENGELMANN

Countless children and adults owe their literacy to Engelmann. He dedicated his life to developing and refining Direct Instruction (DI), a powerful teaching approach that combines logical analysis and sequencing of skills, clear communication, high rates of student engagement, and mastery learning.

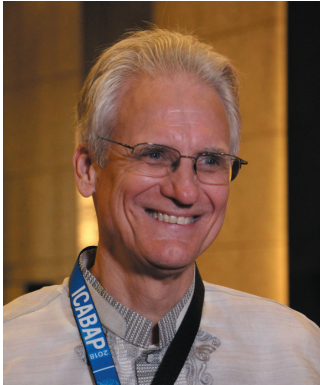


Photo courtesy National Institute for Direct Instruction.

Siegfried “Zig” Engelmann (1931–2019)

“If the student hasn’t learned, the teacher hasn’t taught—that’s not a slogan, it’s an operating principle.”

About the Authors



William L. Heward, Ed.D., BCBA-D, is Professor Emeritus in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University, where he helped train special education teachers for 30 years. Dr. Heward has been a Fulbright Scholar in Portugal and a Visiting Professor of Psychology at Keio University in Tokyo and at the University of São Paulo, and he has lectured and given workshops for teachers in 23 other countries. Among the honors Bill has received are The Ohio State University's Distinguished Teaching Award and the American Psychological Association's Division 25 Fred S. Keller Behavioral Education Award for lifetime achievements in education. His publications include co-authoring the books *Applied Behavior Analysis* and *Sign Here: Behavioral Contracting for Families*, each of which has been translated into numerous languages. Bill's research interests include "low-tech" methods for increasing the effectiveness of group instruction in inclusive classrooms.



Sheila R. Alber-Morgan, Ph.D., BCBA-D, is Professor of Special Education in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University. Dr. Alber-Morgan taught for seven years in inclusive K–8 classrooms in urban and rural South Carolina and for more than 20 years in higher education. She has authored more than 80 peer-reviewed research and practitioner articles, book chapters, textbook ancillaries, and the book *Using RTI to Teach Literacy to Diverse Learners, K–8: Strategies for the Inclusive Classroom* (Corwin Press, 2010). Sheila's research, most of which has been designed and implemented in collaboration with classroom teachers, has focused on behavioral interventions and strategies for promoting the generalization and maintenance of academic, functional, and social skills.



Moira Konrad, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Special Education in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University. Dr. Konrad has nine years of public school experience teaching students with a range of disabilities and has been involved in teacher preparation for more than 20 years. Moira's publications include more than 50 peer-reviewed publications on instructional efficiency, self-determination, and written expression. She currently serves as Associate Editor for *Intervention in School and Clinic* and on the Editorial Boards for *Remedial and Special Education* and the *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

Preface

About This Book

Special education is an ongoing story of people. It is the story of a preschool child with multiple disabilities who benefits from early intervention services. It is the story of a child with intellectual disabilities whose parents and teachers work together to ensure she participates in classroom and extracurricular activities with her peers. It is the story of a middle school student with learning disabilities who helps his parents and teachers plan an instructional program that builds on his strengths and addresses his weaknesses. It is the story of the gifted and talented child who brings new insights to old problems, the high school student with cerebral palsy who is learning English as his second language, and the young woman with visual impairments who has recently moved into her own apartment and rides a city bus to work. Special education is also the story of the parents and families of exceptional children and of the teachers and other professionals who work with them.

The most important of these professionals is the teacher. And so, special education is the story of the preschool teacher who embeds culturally relevant learning opportunities into his art and music lessons. It is the story of the fourth-grade resource room teacher who carefully designs reading instruction for her students with learning disabilities. It is the story of the middle school teacher who breaks down complex independent living skills into their smallest steps so he can teach them to his students with intellectual disabilities. It is the teacher who coaches young adult students with autism as they complete their high school experiences at a local college.

We hope you will find the Twelfth Edition of *Exceptional Children* an informative, accessible, and interesting introduction to the ongoing story of special education. Whether you are an undergraduate in a preservice teacher training program, a student enrolled in a related human services program, or a general education teacher with years of experience, we encourage you to continue your study and involvement with children and adults with exceptionalities.

New to This Edition

Our primary goals for this edition remain the same as for previous editions: to present an informative and responsible introduction to the professional practices, trends, and research that define contemporary special education—an exciting, ever-evolving field. Significant among the many changes we made to the Twelfth Edition are these additions:

- Successful transition into adulthood is the ultimate goal of special education. Every student with disabilities deserves a transition-focused education, and it must begin

early. As such, we have added a “**Transition: Next Year Is Now**” feature to every chapter.

- **Videos filmed expressly for this edition** highlight special education teachers and their colleagues providing evidence-based instruction and related services to students with disabilities in various settings.
- Special education’s leading professional organization, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center identified 22 **High-Leverage Practices (HLPs)**. Research shows these practices and priorities have significant potential for improving academic or behavior outcomes for students with disabilities. To help readers learn about these HLPs we highlight them throughout the text.
- Five fantastic teachers join a returning all-star cast of **Featured Teachers** (one of whom is about to become CEC president!). Aspiring teachers will find no better models than these 15 special educators.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

- **Chapter 1:** Updated sections on special education legislation and recent court cases; discussion of 2017 U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on *Andrew F. v. Douglas*, which set new standards for FAPE; introduction of Tyler Lewis, a young man with autism whose retrospective video clips illustrate how special education contributed to his success.
- **Chapter 2:** Updated discussion of IEPs to reflect the recent *Andrew* Supreme Court case; improved examples of IEP content (e.g., goals, objectives, services); updated section on response to intervention (RTI) and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) to situate these ideas within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework.
- **Chapter 3:** Greater emphasis on collaborating with families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including a section on culturally responsive transition planning; greater focus on technology (e.g., high-tech tools for family engagement); discussion of supporting families engaged in virtual learning activities (specifically in the context of a global pandemic).
- **Chapter 4:** New Featured Teacher (Madonna Wilburn, Buffalo, New York); new *Teaching & Learning* box on cooperative learning; specific mention of teaching personal hygiene and safety skills during a global pandemic (e.g., handwashing, mask wearing, social distancing); greater emphasis on teaching “soft skills.”

- **Chapter 5:** New Featured Teacher (Amaris Johnson, New York, New York); new *Teaching & Learning* box on Direct Instruction for reading; addition of multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS); increased emphasis on learning strategies.
- **Chapter 6:** New video of an inspiring young woman with a behavior disorder; increased emphasis on self-advocacy and self-determination; greater emphasis on dropout prevention.
- **Chapter 7:** New Featured Teacher (Katelyn Johnson, Salt Lake City, Utah); new feature on behavioral skills training for job/employment skills; enhanced discussion of the importance of distinguishing evidence-based practices for children with autism from fads and unproven treatments.
- **Chapter 8:** New Featured Teacher (Emily Pickard, Lewes, Delaware); new content on self-advocacy; increased emphasis on visual supports.
- **Chapter 9:** New *Teaching & Learning* box on supporting children with cochlear implants in inclusive classrooms; featured teacher recommendations for transitioning elementary students to middle school.
- **Chapter 10:** Greater emphasis on assistive technology, including new feature box for promoting students' independence with high-tech tools.
- **Chapter 11:** More emphasis on assistive technology, including high-tech tools for time, productivity, and medication self-management; reordered ADHD treatment section to focus on behavioral interventions before pharmacological interventions; added specific mention of children with health impairments (i.e., those with compromised immune systems) needing special attention in times of pandemic.
- **Chapter 12:** New video and content from Featured Teacher (Carey Creech-Galloway, Clark County, Kentucky); updated *Teaching & Learning* box on peer helpers with video and suggestions from Featured Teacher Carey; additional discussion of community-based instruction (featuring video and suggestions from Featured Teacher).
- **Chapter 13:** Expanded section on mentoring programs for gifted students; expanded discussion of the challenges gifted girls face; increased emphasis on differentiation outside the classroom.
- **Chapter 14:** Expanded section on peer-mediated interventions; discussion of the importance of classroom jobs for preschoolers and implementation suggestions from Featured Teacher Mark Fraley.
- **Chapter 15:** New Featured Teacher (Michael Craig, Detroit, Michigan); section on teaching reading at the secondary level; content on school-based enterprises (including suggestions from Featured Teacher Michael); removed sections on residential placements and supported employment models; increased emphasis on evidence-based predictors and practices for secondary transition.

Pedagogical Features

FEATURED TEACHER CONTRIBUTIONS The story of special education is written every day by teachers working in a variety of settings. Fifteen of these exceptional teachers share their stories in these pages. These highly skilled and dedicated educators use research-based instructional strategies to promote their students' achievement and successful transition to adulthood.

Featured Teacher Essays. Each chapter opens with a first-person essay describing the joys, challenges, and realities of teaching exceptional children. Drawn from urban, suburban, and rural school districts across the country, the 15 Featured Teachers share personal wisdom gathered from their experiences teaching exceptional children in a variety of school settings. For example, Keisha Whitfield (Gahanna, Ohio) describes how she and her colleagues collaborate to meet students' individual needs; Joshua Hoppe (Wai'anae, Hawaii) tells what he has learned about respecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of his students and their families; Amaris Johnson (New York City) explains how she uses schema-based instruction to teach strategies for solving math problems; Katelyn Johnson (Salt Lake City, Utah) details how to construct and use independent task materials for preschoolers with autism; Jennifer Sheffield (Bowling Green, Kentucky) discusses how open-ended learning opportunities motivate her gifted students; and Michael Craig (Detroit, Michigan) explains how a school-based enterprise provides a service to the community while building students' skills for successful transition to adult life.

412 Chapter 14 Early Childhood Special Education

Education, Teaching Credentials, and Experience

- B.S., physical education, MidAmerica Nazarene University, 1999
- M.Ed., early childhood special education, University of Kansas, 2003
- Idaho State, professional teaching certificate, special education, pre K-3
- 16 years as an early childhood special education teacher and 2 years of paraprofessional work in a self-contained special education preschool classroom

Content Extension 14.1



Example of Featured Teacher Mark's take-home sheets.

Featured Teacher

Mark Fraley

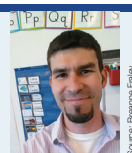
Skyway Elementary School
Vallivue School District • Caldwell, ID

I teach 22 preschoolers who have been found eligible to receive special education services following a process that involves a child find screening, a consent to assess, an evaluation report, and eligibility determination. Each of my students falls into one of the disability categories, most often developmental delay or language impairment. I do have students who are on the autism spectrum and several who have multiple disabilities. I work alongside a terrific team composed of two educational assistants, a speech-language therapist, a school psychologist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, and supportive administrators. The way we work together as a team helps us keep student needs always at the forefront.

On a typical school day, we start off with reviewing our daily routine so students are aware of the activities and how the day will proceed. Having a structured routine is very beneficial for young children; predictability limits anxiety and brings a level of reassurance that helps them thrive in the classroom. For students who are on the autism spectrum, we provide a visual schedule that enables them to make successful transitions. In planning the day, I consider striking a balance between teacher-led and child-led activities, high energy versus quiet listening, and highly motivating work versus a less preferred type of work. I look for my students to participate fully and implement accommodations as needed.

Collaborating with families is critical for student success. I make my classroom a welcoming place from day one by inviting the families to participate in volunteer opportunities and visits. Upon arrival at school, we talk with families and see how their children's day has started. Did they sleep well? Did they eat a good breakfast? Are they in a good mood? Significant communication delays prevent many of my students from providing a satisfactory answer when their parents ask, "What did you do in school today?" To help with that, I create take-home sheets by importing the day's photos from my digital camera to my classroom computer, pasting a few of the most telling shots on a PowerPoint, and making copies on a printer in the school work office.

I take countless pictures during the school year. These photos are a powerful, effective form of communication that lets parents and families see what their children do in school. I get so excited when seeing families celebrate their children's progress, when they begin seeing new possibilities that were originally crushed with a diagnosis or a traumatic event.



Source: Brianne Fraley

Content Extensions. The special educators featured in this text provide examples of actual materials used in their classrooms. These artifacts are practical tools for planning instruction, arranging learning environments, collecting data, engaging learners, and collaborating with families. Additional Content Extensions include essays and other supplemental resources that enable readers to deepen their understanding of various topics.

Sustainability Problem-Solving
Sustainable Food Production

Seven Billion People...and Rising

How can students conceptualize the magnitude of Earth's human population of over 7 billion people, and rising?

These lesson suggestions are designed as introductory activities for the topic of sustainability. Individual and group activities can be used as informal pre- and formative assessments, providing students engaging and creative ways to demonstrate existing knowledge of connected math and science principles.



Math & Science Connections

Common Core Standards

Understand the place value system.
CCSS.Math.Content.1.NBT.A.1
 Recognize that in a multi-digit number, a digit in one place represents 10 times as much as it represents in the place to its right and 1/10 of what it represents in the place to its left.
Convert like measurement units within a given measurement system.
CCSS.Math.Content.1.MD.A.1
 Convert among different-sized standard measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m), and use these conversions in solving multi-step, real world problems.

NGSS Science Content Standard
MS-ESS3-4
 Construct an argument supported by evidence for how increases in human population and per-capita consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems.

Can students create scale representations of a rising human population that numbers in the billions and communicate the potential outcomes for our planet?

How can students conceptualize the idea of the population of our planet being over 7 billion people? That's a REALLY big number! Population estimates project that number to rise to over 9 billion people by 2050. How can students even begin to grasp the magnitude of such a large quantity? Can students find ways to creatively use their understanding of the Base Ten number system to visually represent large numbers? Can students design clear and accurate graphic representations the population growth curve to scale? This lesson can be a one-day activity or can span throughout the unit – it's up to you and your class to decide!

Sustainable Food Production unit was created by Jennifer Sheffield for Project GEMS, a research collaborative between Warren County Public Schools and The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University. Project GEMS was funded through a Federal Jacob K. Javits gifted and talented education grant.


Content Extension 13.3



Featured Teacher Jennifer Sheffield's PBL activity on sustainable food production.

ADVICE FROM THE FEATURED TEACHER by Mark Fraley

Use Child-Centered Teaching Tactics
 Children learn by playing. If a child is on the floor playing with building blocks, I sit on the floor and simply join her. This shows I value her as a person and respect what she has to say or contribute. When I am at the student's level, I follow her lead. By allowing students to self-direct their learning to a certain degree, it is easy to find what they are interested in and plan activities that incorporate these things. The following tips can help increase student learning and enjoyment during child-centered activities.



- **Give students choices.** I use a choice board that contains photos of each learning center and Velcro-backed pictures of the students. Each child sticks his picture next to the center of his choice.
- **Don't ask too many questions during play.** Asking questions is not only intrusive to play but also changes my role from play partner to test giver. How much fun is it to play with a test giver? Not much! Instead, I'll make comments like a sports broadcaster: "I see you are building a green tower with long rectangle blocks. It is very tall!"
- **Let students make and learn from their mistakes.** I used to get upset when my students responded incorrectly or took too long to complete a task. I have to remember that young children, especially those with developmental disabilities, need many, many opportunities to master a skill. Allowing room for mistakes gives them a chance to try another strategy or method. It is fun as a teacher to make a mistake in front of students, such as trying to put the wrong lid on a bin during clean-up. Your students will see this and step in to help or guide you as you have taught them through problem solving. Making mistakes can also encourage more communication opportunities as they will need to request items or identify the problem.

Create an Organized and Predictable Environment
 Preschool classrooms are busy places with many activities occurring simultaneously throughout the day. Posting your plans and intentions reduces the chance of conflicts with staff or parents over misunderstandings of who was supposed to be doing what, with whom, and when. When a conflict occurs or if there is breakdown in the way services are delivered, posted schedules can be a reference tool to review and troubleshoot.

- **Create a master activity schedule.** The master schedule shows what activities everyone in your classroom, professionals and children, should be doing during each time period of the day. One matrix hanging on my classroom wall indicates the roles that all members of the teaching team—my instructional assistants, the speech-language pathologist, physical therapists, and occupational therapists—are to assume throughout the day (e.g., lead teacher, collector of child performance data). Another matrix makes it easy for parents and classroom volunteers to quickly see what's going on and how they might help.

students across ages, skill levels, and abilities. Topics include teaching "soft skills" for employment (Chapter 4); teaching learning strategies for transitioning to college (Chapter 5); preventing school dropout (Chapter 6); teaching self-advocacy to students with communication challenges (Chapter 8); teaching students with visual impairments to use technology for independence (Chapter 10); and implementing classroom jobs for preschoolers (Chapter 14).

In Chapter 1's *Transition: Next Year Is Now* box, readers will meet Tyler Lewis, a young man with autism spectrum disorder. Tyler describes his experiences in videos of himself as a fourth grader, a ninth grader, and an adult with a full-time job. Tyler continues his story in a series of captivating videos presented in Chapters 3, 7, and 15. Tyler and his father discuss some of the challenges posed by autism and how school achievement and successful transition depend upon high expectations and the understanding that disability does not mean inability. Tyler's story is a powerful testament to what can be accomplished when students, teachers, and families work together.

Advice from the Featured Teacher. Each chapter ends with practical tips for enhancing student learning and avoiding common pitfalls in the classroom. Suggestions cover a wide range of topics, such as organizing your classroom; learning about and respecting students' cultures; successful co-teaching; collaborating with families; handling paperwork; minimizing stress; and celebrating each student's accomplishments, no matter how small.

Transition: Next Year Is Now boxes address special education's ultimate goal—preparing students for successful transition to adulthood. These features present a range of strategies for effective transition-focused instruction for

Transition: Next Year Is Now

Every Teacher Is a Transition Teacher

Although increasing numbers of special education students are leaving high school for college or a job, a place to live on their own, and friends with whom to share recreation and leisure activities in the community, such positive outcomes elude far too many young adults with disabilities. Special education cannot be satisfied with improving students' achievement on classroom-based measures only. We must work equally hard to ensure that the education students receive during their school years prepares them to cope with and enjoy the multifaceted demands and opportunities of adulthood.

To achieve optimal outcomes for a student's independence and quality of life, transition planning and implementation must begin early and continue throughout elementary, middle, and high school. From preschool through the last year of high school, every teacher in a child's life can be a positive force for accomplishing ambitious long-term transition goals.

Meet Tyler Lewis: A Special Education Success Story

Let us introduce you to Tyler Lewis, a young man with autism who describes his experiences with school and work life in a series of videos. In elementary school, Tyler made friends, participated in extracurricular activities, and discovered his love for dancing and maps. In high school, Tyler was fully included in regular education classes, developed social skills and self-confidence singing in the choir, and began exploring vocational interests. Today, Tyler works full time at Kroger, a job he's held since graduating from high school. This retrospective of Tyler illustrates what effective transition looks like.

Tyler grew into a self-determined 24-year-old man who gets himself to work independently, leads the store safety team, and asks for help when he needs it. Tyler's father says he's an "ut terly reliable, independent, and affectionate adult." The quality of life Tyler experiences today is the joint product of his own hard work and that of his teachers, specialists, and family members all striving for the same goals with skill, passion, and persistence throughout his school years.

Transition goals must emphasize self-advocacy and self-determination so that students are equipped to access what they need in all aspects of life, make responsible decisions, and reap the rewards of their accomplishments—now and in the future. Indeed, today's lessons are for the learner's benefit tomorrow; not only tomorrow, but next year's tomorrow and all the tomorrows in all of the years to come.

Each chapter in this text includes a "Transition: Next Year Is Now" box focusing on intervention strategies and supports that address a variety of transition needs across ages and exceptionalities. Topics include culturally responsive transition planning (Chapter 3), college success strategies (Chapter 5), dropout prevention (Chapter 6), self-advocacy (Chapter 8), friendship building (Chapter 9), self-management technology (Chapter 11), and even classroom jobs for preschoolers (Chapter 14).

As you continue reading this book, consider how you—and every teacher—can be a transition teacher.



Pearson eText
Video Example 1.8
Tyler in fourth grade.



Pearson eText
Video Example 1.9
Tyler as a high school freshman.



Pearson eText
Video Example 1.10
Tyler as a young adult.

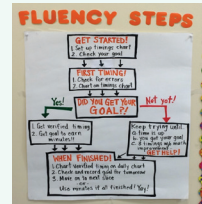
TEACHING & LEARNING

It's Good to Go Fast! Fluency Building Promotes Student Achievement

What Is Fluency and Why Does It Matter? Fluency is the combination of accuracy and speed that characterizes highly skilled performance. Although accuracy, typically in the form of percent correct, is commonly used to assess student performance, fluency gives a more complete picture. Whereas two students might each complete a page of math problems with 100% accuracy, the one who finishes in 2 minutes is much more accomplished than the one who needs 7 minutes to solve the same problems. Fluent students perform skills automatically, without hesitations, as if by second nature.

Fluency has important functional implications. Many skills used every day must be performed at a certain rate or speed. A student who needs 5 minutes to read the directions on a worksheet that his classmates read in 1 minute may not be able to finish the task in the time allotted. Students who are fluent with a particular skill are likely to exhibit (Stocker et al., 2019):

- **Better retention.** The ability to use the skill or knowledge at a later point in time.
- **Greater endurance.** The ability to stay engaged in the task for longer periods of time. Fluent performers are also less likely to be distracted by minor events in the environment.
- **Improved application and generalization.** The ability to apply new skills in novel situations. Students fluent with component skills (e.g., multiplication facts and subtraction) may learn composite skills (e.g., long division) more quickly.



How Can I Promote Fluency? The three fluency-building techniques described next can be teacher-directed, peer-managed, or independent approaches.

Repeated Reading. With repeated reading, the student orally reads the same passage, usually three to five times per session and/or until a predetermined goal is met (e.g., 100 words per minute). With each successive reading, the student self-graphs and tries to increase the number of words read correctly per minute. When the student achieves the fluency criterion on a given passage, the teacher introduces a new, perhaps slightly more advanced, passage. Numerous studies show repeated reading improves oral reading fluency for elementary, middle, and secondary students with and without disabilities (Alber-Morgan et al., 2007; Kostewicz & Kubina, 2011; Lee & Yoon, 2017; Tam et al., 2006; Yurick et al., 2006).

Timed Practice Trials. Giving students the opportunity to perform a skill as many times as they can in a brief period is an excellent way to build fluency. Practice in the form of 1-minute timings helps students with and without disabilities achieve fluency with a wide range of academic (e.g., math facts), vocational (e.g., assembling tasks), and other skills (Finley et al., 2012; Greene et al., 2018; Ramey et al., 2016).

SAFMEDS. Say All Fast a Minute Each Day Shuffled (SAFMEDS) consists of a deck of cards with a question, vocabulary term, or problem on one side of each card and the answer on the other. A student answers as many items in the deck as he can in 1 minute. The student looks at the question or problem, states the answer, flips the card over to reveal the correct answer, and



Pearson eText
Video Example 1.6
Use fluency practice to improve students' skills while building their confidence and a supportive classroom community.


HLP20 Provide intensive instruction.

Emphasis on Research-Based Practices

Good instruction provided by skilled teachers is the foundation of special education. In every chapter, *Teaching & Learning* features and video examples illustrate a wide range of evidence-based teaching practices. Additionally, *High-Leverage Practices* recommended by the Council for Exceptional Children are highlighted throughout the text.

Teaching & Learning Boxes. Each strategy described in the *Teaching & Learning* features is classroom tested and supported by scientific research documenting its effectiveness. A complete list of all the *Teaching & Learning* features is found on page xviii. Here is a sampling of the topics covered:

- It's Good to Go Fast! Fluency-Building Promotes Student Achievement (Chapter 1)
- Guided Notes: Helping All Students Succeed in the General Education Curriculum (Chapter 5)
- Behavior Traps: Turning Obsessions to Motivational Gold (Chapter 7)
- Supporting Children with Cochlear Implants in Inclusive Classrooms (Chapter 9)
- Peer Helpers: Including Students with Severe Disabilities (Chapter 12)

High-Leverage Practices (HLPs). Throughout this text, margin notes with this symbol  alert readers to *High-Leverage Practices* (HLPs) identified by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center. HLPs are 22 practices and priorities focusing on collaboration, assessment, instruction, and social/emotional behaviors. Examples include the following: HLP 3 *Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services*. HLP 6 *Use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes*. HLP 7 *Provide a consistent, organized, respectful learning environment*. HLP 18 *Use strategies to promote active student engagement*.

Pearson eText, Learning Management System (LMS)-Compatible Assessment Bank, and Other Instructor Resources

The Pearson eText is a simple-to-use, mobile-optimized, personalized reading experience. It allows you to easily highlight, take notes, and review key vocabulary all in one place—even when offline. Seamlessly integrated videos and other rich media will engage you and give access to the help you need, when you need it. To gain access or to sign in to

your Pearson eText, visit <https://www.pearson.com/pearson-etext>. Features include:

- **Video Examples** Each chapter includes *Video Examples* illustrating principles or concepts aligned pedagogically with the chapter. Here's a sampling of the 114 videos embedded within the Twelfth Edition:
 - Video Example 2.4—Featured Teacher Keisha creates vision boards to help students prepare for IEP meetings.
 - Video Example 5.6—Direct Instruction gives children a strong foundation in reading, which makes everything in class more enjoyable.
 - Video Example 6.5—Students of all ages and skill levels benefit from clear expectations and consistent daily routines.
 - Video Example 9.6—Deaf students describe how they want their teachers to act in the classroom.
 - Video Example 12.7—Featured Teacher Carey and a student explain and demonstrate classroom routines and motivation system.
- **IRIS Center Modules** IRIS Center modules, headquartered at Vanderbilt University, are interactive online learning modules that describe strategies shown to be effective in teaching students with disabilities. In Chapter 10, readers will have an opportunity to use an IRIS module to learn how to set up a classroom to support students with visual impairments.
- **Interactive Glossary** All key terms in the eText are bolded and provide instant access to full glossary definitions, allowing you to quickly build your professional vocabulary as you are reading.

LMS-Compatible Assessment Bank

With this new edition, all assessment types—quizzes, application exercises, and chapter tests—are included in LMS-compatible banks for the following learning management systems: Blackboard (978-0-13-734675-2), Canvas (978-0-13-734681-3), D2L (978-0-13-734683-7), and Moodle (978-0-13-734679-0). These packaged files allow maximum flexibility for instructors when it comes to importing, assigning, and grading. Assessment types include:

- **Learning Outcome Quizzes** Each chapter learning outcome is the focus of a *Learning Outcome Quiz* that is available for instructors to assign through their learning management system. Learning outcomes identify chapter content that is most important for learners and serve as the organizational framework for each chapter. The higher order, multiple choice questions in each quiz will measure your understanding of chapter content, guide the expectations for your learning, and inform the accountability and the applications of your new knowledge. When used in the LMS environment, these multiple choice questions are automatically graded and include feedback for the correct answer and for each instructor to help guide students' learning.

- **Application Exercises** Each chapter provides opportunities to apply what you have learned through *Application Exercises*. These exercises have a short-answer format based on Pearson eText Video Examples, written cases, and scenarios. They provide students with active learning experiences with text content through (1) *analysis*, examining the complexities of teaching and learning processes; (2) *application*, considering how concepts and strategies are put into practice; and (3) *reflection*, thinking critically about these classroom processes. When used in the LMS environment, a model response written by experts is provided after you submit the exercise. This feedback helps guide your learning and can assist your instructor in grading.

Examples of the 45 Application Exercises developed for the Twelfth Edition are as follows:

- **Application Exercise 1.1 Writing Measurable Learning Objectives**—Readers identify missing or poorly written components in learning objectives and rewrite the objectives to add or improve the missing or poorly written component.
- **Application Exercise 3.1 Engaging Parents Effectively**—After reading a case about a parent-teacher conference, readers are asked to identify statements an “arguer” might say to parents and to provide what a skilled dialoguer might say instead.
- **Application Exercise 6.1 Helping Kids Stay in School**—After watching a video of a secondary student with emotional or behavioral disorders, readers are asked to identify what supports were in place for the student and what additional supports they would recommend as a member of the student's IEP team.
- **Application Exercise 12.2 Community-Based Instruction**—After reading a case about a high school student with a traumatic brain injury, readers are asked how they would plan community-based instruction to align with the student's IEP goals.
- **Chapter Tests** Suggested test items are provided for each chapter and include questions in various formats: true/false, multiple choice, and short answer/essay. When used in the LMS environment, true/false and multiple choice questions are automatically graded, and model responses are provided for short-answer and essay questions.

Instructor's Manual (978-0-13-575599-0)

The *Instructor's Manual* is provided as a Word document and includes resources to assist professors in planning their course. These resources consist of chapter overviews, learning outcomes, guidance for using available PowerPoint® slides to promote concept development, questions for discussion, supplemental teaching suggestions, and worksheets.

PowerPoint® Slides (978-0-13-575594-5)

PowerPoint® slides are provided for each chapter; they highlight key concepts and summarize the content of the text to make it more meaningful for students. Often, these slides also include questions and problems designed to stimulate discussion and to encourage students to elaborate and deepen their understanding of chapter topics.

Note: All instructor resources—the LMS-compatible assessment bank, the *Instructor's Manual*, and the PowerPoint slides—are available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com. Use one of the following methods:

- From the main page, use the search function to look up the lead author (i.e., Heward) or the title (i.e., *Exceptional Children*). Select the desired search result, then access the “Resources” tab to view and download all available resources.
- From the main page, use the search function to look up the ISBN (provided above) of the specific instructor resource you would like to download. When the product page loads, access the “Downloadable Resources” tab.

Acknowledgments

Many people contributed ideas, insights, and suggestions that greatly enhanced the substance and quality of each of the past editions of this text, and the Twelfth Edition of *Exceptional Children* is no exception. Fifteen amazing special educators graciously shared their knowledge and personal experience with essays, instructional materials, videos, and advice: Michael Craig, Carey Creech-Galloway, Mark Fraley, Joshua Hoppe, Amaris Johnson, Katelyn Johnson, Danielle Kovach, Dave Martinez, Emily Pickard, Michelle Nielson-Pugmire, Cecelia Peirano, Jennifer Sheffield, Jessica Stultz, Keisha Whitfield, and Madonna Wilburn. These special educators represent the very best of our field. We are inspired by their commitment to exceptional children and grateful for their substantial contributions to this book.

The currency and quality of this edition have been enhanced tremendously by original essays, videos, instructional examples, and artifacts contributed by the following: Amanda Aspen and Liza Stack (both, California Autism Professional Training and Information Network); Amy Aenchbacher (Cherokee County School District, Canton, GA); Andy Bondy and Lori Frost (Pyramid Educational Consultants); Cassidy Aughe, Christina Billman, Helen Cannella-Malone, Carrie Davenport, Timothy Heron, Terri Hessler, Diane Sainato (all, The Ohio State University); Jill Dardig (Ohio Dominican University); Eli Jimenez (Georgia State University); Rick Kubina (CentralReach); Catherine Maurice (Association for Science in Autism Treatment); Stacie McConnell (Reynoldsburg, OH, public schools); Rebecca Morrison (Oakstone Academy); Kimberly Rich (Davis Country School District, Farmington, UT); Mary Salmon (Columbus Public Schools); Lorraine Thomas (Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington, KY); and Sandy Trask-Tyler.

A special shout-out goes to Hamilton STEM Elementary School (Columbus, OH) principal Christopher Brady, assistant principal Mary Jane Pettigrew, kindergarten teacher Kim Calloway, and fourth-grade teacher Michael Mitchell; and to Conkwright Elementary School (Winchester, KY) principal Julie Bonfield, speech-language pathologist Payton

Schmidt, physical therapist Lori Howard, occupational therapist Angie Thomas, vision specialist Jasamyn DeGrant, second-grade teacher Danielle Keeton, fourth-grade teacher Melissa Redman, and art teacher John Joseph. These educators welcomed us and our film crew into their schools and classrooms to get a glimpse into the everyday reality of professionals who serve children with exceptionalities.

A brilliant team of videographers at Many Hats Media worked with us to produce compelling and instructive videos exclusively for this edition. Thank you, Jon Theiss (director), Andy Eggert (camera), Alberto Viglietta (camera), and Eric Vucelich (sound).

The following special education teacher educators reviewed the previous edition and provided comments and suggestions that contributed to this edition: Joseph Boyle (Temple University), Brittany Hott (Texas A&M–Commerce), Amy M. Papacek (Arizona State University), Gretchen G. Robinson (University of North Carolina at Pembroke), and John Schaefer (Cleveland State University). Special thanks go to Adam Jordan (College of Charleston) for developing the application exercises and quizzes.

Special education is a team game and the same can be said for publishing. A talented team of professionals at Pearson Education helped bring this book to life. Senior Analyst Rebecca Fox-Gieg provided support and encouragement. Developmental Editor Jeff Johnston coached us through every stage: from revision planning to final draft. Copyeditor Joanne “Bonnie” Boehme improved the manuscript with a balance of technical skill and respect for our writing style, proofreader Sheila Joyce’s eagle eye prevented countless typos, and Production Project Manager Gowthaman Sadhanandham waved us home as we rounded third. Content Producer Janelle Rogers (All-Star Problem Solver) worked closely and patiently with the entire team throughout.

Most of all, we continue to benefit from the support and love of our families—wife Jill Dardig, son Lee, and daughter Lynn; husband David Morgan; and husband Mark Engelhardt, daughters Charlotte and Zaya.

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Prologue

A Personal View of Special Education

OUR PRIMARY GOAL IN WRITING THIS BOOK is to provide tomorrow's educators with information and tools to improve the lives of individuals with exceptionalities. In pursuit of that goal, we have described the history, practices, advances, challenges, and opportunities that make up the complex and dynamic field of special education in as clear, current, and accurate a manner as possible. This is easier said than done: Authors' descriptions of anything they hold dear are influenced by personal views. Because our personal beliefs and assumptions about special education—which are by no means unique, but neither are they held by everyone in the field—affect both the substance and the tone of this book, we believe we owe you, the reader, an explicit summary of those views. So, here are 10 assumptions that underlie and guide our efforts to understand, contribute to, and convey the field of special education.

People with disabilities have a fundamental right to live and participate in the same settings and programs—in school, at home, in the workplace, and in the community—as do people without disabilities. That is, children and adults with disabilities should, to the greatest extent possible, learn, live, work, and play alongside people without disabilities. People with disabilities and those without have a great deal to contribute to one another and to society. We cannot do that without regular, meaningful interactions in shared environments.

People with disabilities have the right to self-determination. Special educators have no more important teaching task than that of helping students with disabilities learn how to increase autonomy over their own lives. Teaching students with disabilities self-determination and self-advocacy skills should be a primary goal for all special educators.

Special education must expand the effectiveness of its early identification and prevention efforts. When a disability or a condition that places a child at risk for a disability is detected early, the chance of lessening its impact (or preventing it altogether) is greater. Significant strides have been made in the early detection of physical disabilities, sensory impairments, and developmental delays in infants and preschoolers. An approach called *multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)*, which you will read about in this edition, is improving the field's ability to identify and prevent less visible disabilities, such as learning disabilities and emotional or behavioral disorders.

Special education must do a better job of helping students with disabilities transition from school to adult life. Although increasing numbers of students with disabilities are leaving high school for college or a job, a place to live on their own, and friends with whom to share recreation and leisure activities in the community, these positive outcomes still elude far too many young adults with disabilities. Special education cannot be satisfied with improving students' performance on classroom-based measures only. We must work equally hard to ensure the education students receive during their school years prepares them to cope with and enjoy the demands and opportunities of adulthood. We feel so strongly about special education's imperative to improve postschool outcomes that we have added a new feature to each chapter in this edition. Its title, *Transition: Next Year Is Now*, underscores the importance of transition-focused instruction for students with disabilities, no matter their age or disability.



Special education must continue to improve its cultural competence and promote social justice. As we write this prologue, our nation is grappling with many social issues—a pandemic, economic inequality, use of deadly force by the police, climate change—that disproportionately affect people with disabilities and people of color. We believe teachers—and special educators, in particular—are well positioned to help address these challenges. Educators should see themselves as global citizens, equipped with evidence-based tools to right wrongs. We should ask ourselves every day, what am I doing to fight racism, to celebrate each child’s strengths and intersectional identities, to teach children of color effectively, to welcome all families, to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, to promote health and environmental sustainability, to make the world a more just place? Special educators, like the featured teachers you’ll meet in this edition, are the world’s best teachers. They know how to identify a problem, set an ambitious goal, and work systematically toward reaching that goal. Let’s get to it!

School and family partnerships enhance the meaningfulness and the effectiveness of special education. Professionals have too long ignored the needs of parents and families of exceptional children, often treating them as patients, clients, or even adversaries instead of realizing they are partners with the same goals. Some special educators have given the impression (and, worse, believed it to be true) that parents are there to serve professionals, when in fact the opposite is more correct. Parents are a child’s first—and, in many ways, best—teachers. Learning to work effectively with parents and families is one of the most important skills a special educator can acquire.

The work of special educators is most effective when supplemented by the knowledge and services of all the helping professions. It is foolish for special educators to argue over territorial rights when more can be accomplished for our students when we work together within an interdisciplinary team that includes our colleagues in medical and health services, behavior analysis, counseling, social services, and vocational rehabilitation.

All students have the right to an effective education. An educator's primary responsibility is designing and implementing instruction that helps students learn useful academic, social, vocational, and personal skills. These skills are the same ones that influence the quality of our own lives: working effectively and efficiently at our jobs, being productive members of our communities, maintaining a comfortable lifestyle in our homes, communicating with our friends and family, and using our leisure time meaningfully and enjoyably. Instruction is ultimately effective when it helps students acquire and maintain positive lifestyle changes. To put it another way, the proof of the process is in the product. Therefore,...

Teachers must demand effectiveness from the curriculum materials and instructional tools they use. For many years, conventional wisdom has fostered the belief, still held by some, that teaching children with disabilities requires unending patience. We believe this notion does a great disservice to students with exceptionalities and to the educators—both special and general education teachers—who teach them. A teacher should not wait patiently for an exceptional student to learn, attributing lack of progress to some inherent attribute or faulty process within the child, such as intellectual disability, learning disability, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or emotional disturbance. Instead, the teacher should implement evidence-based practices and use direct and frequent measures of the student's performance as the primary guide for modifying those methods as needed to improve their effectiveness. This, we believe, is the real work of the special educator. Numerous examples of instructional strategies and tactics demonstrated to be effective through rigorous scientific research are described and illustrated throughout this text. Although you will not know everything you need to know to teach exceptional children after reading this or any other introductory text, you will gain an appreciation for the importance of explicit, systematic instruction and an understanding of the kinds of teaching skills a competent special educator must have. And finally, we believe...

The future for people with disabilities holds great promise. Special education has only begun to discover the myriad ways to improve teaching, increase learning, prevent and minimize conditions that cause and exacerbate the effects of disabilities, encourage acceptance, and use technology to compensate for the effects of disabilities. Although we make no specific predictions for the future, we are certain that we have not come as far as we can in learning how to help exceptional children and adults build and enjoy fuller, more independent lives in the school, home, workplace, and community.

Chapter 1

The Purpose and Promise of Special Education

Source: E.D. Torial/Alamy Stock Photo



Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter and completing the embedded activities, you should be able to

- 1.1** Distinguish among the following terms: *impairment*, *disability*, *handicap*, and *at risk*.
- 1.2** Identify the percentage of school-age children served in special education by disability category and explain the advantages and disadvantages of disability labels.
- 1.3** Explain why laws governing the education of exceptional children are needed and identify key court cases and federal legislation that have led to mandates for a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities.
- 1.4** Define and give an example of each of the three types of intervention—preventive, remedial, and compensatory.
- 1.5** Describe the defining dimensions of special education and identify several challenges facing the field of special education.

Featured Teacher

Danielle Kovach

Tulsa Trail Elementary School, Hopatcong Borough Schools, Hopatcong, NJ

Ever since I was a little girl, I knew in my heart I wanted to be a teacher. I would wear my mother's high-heel shoes and pretend to teach to my stuffed animals. In high school, I volunteered at a camp for children with exceptionalities. The experience left me humbled and inspired by the perseverance the children displayed despite their challenges. It was that summer I knew I wanted to make a difference in the lives of children with disabilities.

My classroom always bustles with activity! We sing, dance, and act. I find ways to get my students moving to enhance their learning. Interactive lessons help students retain information and help students who have difficulty sitting still for long periods of time. My students often work harder and retain more when instructional time is segmented into small, manageable pieces. I design "learning labs" as 10- to 15-minute blocks of time for students to focus on one curriculum or skill area. It keeps them moving around the room, and I can address individual needs.

Using research and evidence-based practices as a guide to what works best for students with special needs, I create lessons incorporating technology, creative thinking, and collaboration. This gives my students the ability to become critical thinkers, working together to achieve success. Every day I count and measure some aspect of each student's performance. These formative assessments enable me to track their progress and modify, differentiate, and accommodate as needed.

When I teach, I strive to find the avenue to success. When one way does not work, I look for another path until I find a method that works. My experience as a special education teacher has taught me never to underestimate what a child can do. I cherish and celebrate each success, no matter how great or small.

I do not expect perfection, but I promote success. I do not lower the standards for my students to achieve, but I strive to make each child's work equally as challenging as it would be for any other student without a disability. My focus is not on what they cannot do but what they can. We are the "Can Do" class and the outside of my classroom door says, "No challenge too big, no victory too small!"

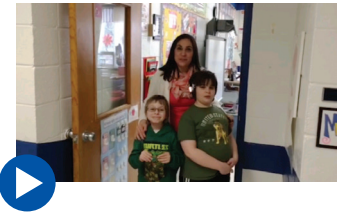
Let's face it. Teaching is hard work. If I do not go home exhausted, I know I have not worked to the best of my ability. The old saying "Never let them see you sweat" doesn't apply in my classroom. I want my students to see just how hard I work in the classroom. If I show them I am giving 100%, then my hope is they will give 100% of themselves. Teaching is not always a glorious job, but at the end of the day, the rewards far outweigh the challenges.



Source: Danielle Kovach

Education, Teaching Credentials, and Experience

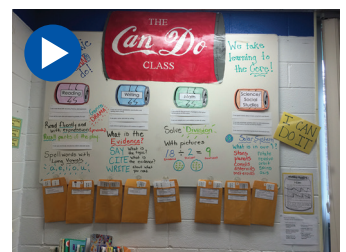
- *B.S.Ed., Elementary Education/Special Education, Kutztown University, 1997; M.Ed., Special Education, East Stroudsburg University, 2002; M.A., Educational Technology, New Jersey City University, 2007; Ed.D., Special Education, Walden University, 2014*
- *Elementary education and special education, New Jersey*
- *19 years of experience as a special education and general education teacher*
- *2011 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year; 2012 National Education Association (NEA) Award for Teaching Excellence; 2014 Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Teacher of the Year*
- *CEC President-Elect (2021-2022); CEC President (2022-2023)*



Pearson eText Video Example 1.1

Danielle and two of her students describe some of the features in her classroom.

Content Extension 1.1



Danielle's "Can Do" class poster.

EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN IS A REWARDING PROFESSION. Special educators such as Danielle Kovach work in a dynamic and exciting field. To appreciate their work, as well as the persistent and emerging challenges and controversies that characterize special education, it is necessary to examine some concepts and perspectives that are basic to understanding exceptional children.

Who Are Exceptional Children?

Learning Outcome 1.1 Distinguish among the following terms: *impairment*, *disability*, *handicap*, and *at risk*.

All children exhibit differences from one another in terms of their physical attributes (e.g., some are shorter, some are stronger) and learning abilities (e.g., some pick up new skills easily, others need intensive instruction). The physical attributes and/or learning characteristics of **exceptional children** differ from the norm (below or above) to such an extent that they require an individualized program of special education and related services to fully benefit from education. The term *exceptional children* includes children who experience difficulties in learning as well as those whose performance is so advanced that modifications in curriculum and instruction are necessary to help them fulfill their potential. Thus, *exceptional children* is an inclusive term that refers to children with learning and/or behavior problems, children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, and children with superior intellectual abilities and/or special talents. The term *children with disabilities* is more restrictive than *exceptional children* because it does not include gifted and talented children. Learning the definitions of several related terms will help you better understand the concept of exceptionality.

Although the terms *impairment*, *disability*, and *handicap* are sometimes used interchangeably, they are not synonymous. **Impairment** refers to the loss or reduced function of a particular body part or organ (e.g., missing limb). A **disability** exists when an impairment limits a person's ability to perform certain tasks (e.g., walk, see, read). A person with a disability is not *handicapped*, however, unless the disability leads to educational, personal, social, vocational, or other problems. For example, if a child who has lost a leg learns to use a prosthetic limb and functions in and out of school without problems, she is not handicapped, at least in terms of her functioning in the physical environment.

Handicap refers to a problem or a disadvantage a person with a disability or impairment encounters when interacting with the environment. A disability may pose a handicap in one environment but not in another. The child with a prosthetic limb may be handicapped (i.e., disadvantaged) when competing against peers without disabilities on the basketball court but experience no disadvantage in the classroom. Many people with disabilities experience handicaps that are the result of negative attitudes and inappropriate behavior of others who needlessly restrict their access and ability to participate fully in school, work, or community activities.

The term **at risk** refers to children who are considered to have a greater than usual chance of developing a disability. Educators often apply the term to infants and preschoolers who, because of biological conditions, events surrounding their births, or environmental deprivation, may be expected to experience developmental problems at a later time. The term is also used to refer to students who are experiencing significant learning or behavioral problems in the regular classroom and are therefore at risk of being diagnosed with a disability.

Although all children differ from one another in individual characteristics, exceptional children differ so markedly from the norm that an individually designed program of instruction—special education—is required if they are to benefit fully from school. Although exceptional children are more similar to other



Source: Laura Bolesta/Millennium/Merrill Education

Although children with disabilities have special instructional needs, they are more similar to other children than they are different.

children than they are different, an exceptional child differs in important ways from his same-age peers without exceptionalities. Whether and how families and professionals recognize and respond to those differences will have a major impact on the child's success in school and beyond.

How Many Exceptional Children Are There?

Learning Outcome 1.2 Identify the percentage of school-age children served in special education by disability category and explain the advantages and disadvantages of disability labels.

Approximately 7.3 million children and youth with disabilities, age 3 through 21, received special education services during the 2018–2019 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2020a). Table 1.1 shows the number of school-age children in each of the 13 disability categories used by the federal government. Here are some demographic facts about special education in the United States:

- Students with disabilities represent 9.5% of the school-age population.
- About twice as many males as females receive special education.
- In 2017, 388,694 infants and toddlers (birth through age 2) and 815,010 children age 3 to 5 received special education services.
- Although each child receiving special education is classified under a primary disability category, many children are affected by more than one disability. In a nationwide study of more than 11,000 elementary school students in special education, school staff reported that 40% of the students were affected by a secondary disability (Marder, 2009).
- There are 3 to 5 million academically gifted and talented students in grades K through 12 in the United States (National Association for the Gifted, 2020a).

TABLE 1.1 Number of students age 6 through 21 who received special education and related services by type of disability (2018–2019 school year)

DISABILITY CATEGORY	NUMBER (IN THOUSANDS)	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Specific learning disability	2,377,739	37.6
Speech or language impairment	1,036,790	16.4
Other health impairment	1,025,953	16.2
Autism	633,844	10.0
Intellectual disability	423,215	6.7
Emotional disturbance	344,473	5.5
Developmental delay*	167,704	6.2
Multiple disabilities	126,697	2.0
Hearing impairment	64,359	1.0
Orthopedic impairment	33,516	0.5
Traumatic brain injury	25,344	0.4
Visual impairment	24,169	0.4
Deaf-blindness	1,425	<0.1
All Disabilities	6,315,228	100.0

*Non-disability-specific category states may use to identify children age 3 through 9.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, IDEA Section 618 Data Products (2020a).

Why Are Exceptional Children Labeled and Classified?

Labeling people was of little consequence centuries ago; survival was the main concern. Those whose disabilities prevented full participation in the activities necessary for survival were left on their own to perish and, in some instances, were even killed (Berkson, 2004). In later years, people used derogatory words such as *dunce*, *imbecile*, and *fool* to refer to people with intellectual disabilities or challenging behavior, and other demeaning words were used for people with health impairments or physical disabilities. These terms shared a common function: to exclude people with disabilities from the activities and privileges of everyday life.

Labeling and Eligibility for Special Education

To receive special education and related services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a child must be identified as having a disability (i.e., labeled) and, in most cases, further classified into categories, such as learning disabilities or orthopedic impairments. (Children age 3–9 years can be identified with *developmental delay* and receive special education services without a specific disability category label.) In practice, therefore, a student becomes eligible for special education and related services because of membership in a given disability category.

Some educators believe labels used to identify and classify exceptional children stigmatize them and serve to deny them opportunities (e.g., Karten, 2017; Lockwood & Coulter, 2017). Others argue that a workable system of classifying exceptional children is a prerequisite to providing needed special educational services and that using more “pleasant” terms minimizes and devalues the individual’s situation and need for supports (e.g., Arishi & Boyle, 2017; Kauffman & Badar, 2013).

Labeling and classification are complex issues involving emotional, political, and ethical considerations in addition to scientific, fiscal, and educational interests (Florian et al., 2006; McLaughlin et al., 2006; Valle & O’Connor, 2019). As with most complex issues, valid perspectives and arguments exist on both sides of the labeling question. Reasons most often cited for and against the labeling and classification of exceptional children follow.

Possible Benefits of Labeling and Classification

- Labeling recognizes meaningful differences in learning or behavior and is a first and necessary step in responding responsibly to those differences.
- A disability label can provide access to accommodations and services not available to people without the label. For example, some parents of secondary students seek a learning disability label so their child will be eligible for accommodations such as additional time on college entrance exams.
- Labeling may lead to a protective response in which peers are more accepting of the atypical behavior of a child with disabilities.
- Classification helps practitioners and researchers communicate with one another and classify and evaluate research findings (e.g., National Autism Center, 2020).
- Funding and resources for research and other programs are often based on specific categories of exceptionality.
- Labels enable disability-specific advocacy groups to promote specific programs and spur legislative action (e.g., Autism Speaks, American Federation for the Blind).
- Labeling helps make exceptional children’s special needs more visible to policymakers and the public.

Possible Disadvantages of Labeling and Classification

- Because the labels used in special education usually focus on disability, impairment, or performance deficits, they may lead some people to think only in terms of what the individual cannot do instead of what the individual can do or might be capable of doing.
- Labels may stigmatize the child and lead peers to reject or ridicule the labeled child.
- Teachers may hold low expectations for a labeled student and treat the student differentially as a result. Such differential treatment could impede the rate at which a child learns new skills and contribute to a level of performance consistent with the label's prediction.
- Labels may negatively affect the child's self-esteem.
- Disability labels are often misused as explanatory constructs (e.g., "Sherry acts that way *because* she is emotionally disturbed"). When labels suggest that learning problems are the result of something inherently wrong with the child, they reduce the systematic examination of and accountability for instructional variables as causes of performance deficits. This is an especially damaging outcome when a label provides a built-in excuse for ineffective instruction (e.g., "Jalen's learning disability prevents him from comprehending print text").
- Because all members in a disability category share a particular characteristic (e.g., deafness), there is a tendency to assume that all children in a category share other traits as well, thereby diminishing the detection and appreciation of each child's uniqueness (Smith & Mitchell, 2001a, 2001b).
- A disproportionate number of children from some racial or ethnic backgrounds have been assigned disability labels.
- Classifying exceptional children requires the expenditure of a great amount of money and professional and student time that might be better spent delivering and evaluating the effects of intervention for struggling students.

Although the pros and cons of using disability category labels have been debated for several decades (Hobbs, 1976a, 1976b), neither conceptual arguments nor research has produced a conclusive case for the total acceptance or absolute rejection of labeling practices. Most of the studies conducted to assess the effects of labeling have produced inconclusive, often contradictory evidence and have generally been marked by methodological weakness.

Alternatives to Labeling and Classification

Educators have proposed a number of alternative approaches for classifying exceptional children that focus on educationally relevant variables (e.g., Hardman et al., 1997; Sontag et al., 1977; Terzi, 2005). For example, Reynolds et al. (1996) proposed that the lowest achieving 20% and the highest achieving 20% of students be eligible for broad (noncategorical) approaches to improvement of learning outcomes.

Some special educators have suggested that exceptional children be classified according to the curriculum and skills they need to learn:

If we shouldn't refer to these special children by using those old labels, then how should we refer to them? For openers, call them Rob, Amy, and Jose. Beyond that, refer to them on the basis of what you're trying to teach them.



Source: Katelyn Metzger/Colerain/Merrill Education

Changing the label used to identify Charlotte's for special education won't lessen the impact of her disability. But referring to her as "Charlotte, a fifth grader who likes to read mysteries," helps us recognize her strengths and abilities—what she can do—instead of focusing on a disability label.