

Message From the Guest Editors: An Introduction to the Special Issue—Part II

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Article:

As we posited in Part I of this special issue, time is an important consideration for teachers to address when they are teaching students how to acquire, maintain, and generalize strategic approaches to learning. Time also poses a quandary to the educators who are attempting to promote the use of strategy instruction in classroom settings. Teachers are the engines that drive the delivery of strategic instructional approaches to students who need them. Rarely is time allocated for teachers to interact with one another within the framework of collaborative consultation. Like the gridlock that plagues metropolitan areas during rush hour, “timelock” interferes with the efficacy of collaborative consultation processes (Dettmer, Dyck, & Thurston, 1999; Keyes, 1991). The time that general and special education teachers need to collaboratively prepare and plan for the provision of strategic approaches to instruction is simply not available during the school day.

Part II of this special issue of *Exceptionality* features three articles that are also timely and relevant to the topic of strategic instruction. Boudah, Blair, and Mitchell explore the issue of traversing the research-to-practice abyss through the implementation of authentic and effective professional development. Boudah et al. remind us that “business as usual” approaches to teacher in-service programs are unlikely to produce meaningful changes in teachers’ classroom practices.

The remaining two articles offer strategic instructional approaches to facilitate students’ learning. Smolkin and Donovan advocate the use of the interactive information book read-aloud methodology to support comprehension acquisition by emerging and struggling readers in the primary grades. These authors provide support for this approach by offering examples of student responses from their research endeavors, and they conclude that this technique seems to be effective in engaging young male students who are often alienated by traditional story-type texts.

Butler’s article focuses on structuring instruction to promote self-regulated learning. She begins by delineating the theoretical and empirical basis for the strategic content learning (SCL) model and proceeds with a description of her naturalistic, multischool investigation of SCL with adolescent and adult learners with learning disabilities.

Parts I and II of this topical issue of *Exceptionality* are aimed at improving not only the strategic approaches employed by students with learning disabilities, but also those employed by their teachers and the educational researchers who influence the field of practice. Combined, the authors review the existing literature in varied ways to offer theoretical and empirical frameworks for enhancing strategic approaches to teaching and learning. Each article raises important questions about existing practices and offers innovative alternatives for improving outcomes for students and teachers. The time has arrived for a new vision and a renewed commitment to promoting strategic approaches to learning across and within the educational community.

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