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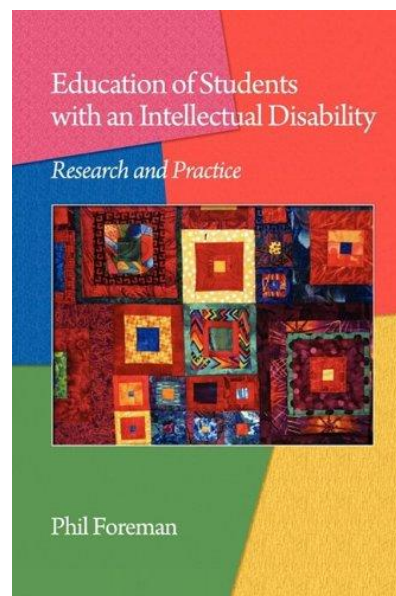
Foreman, Phil (2009). *Education of Students with an Intellectual Disability: Research and Practice*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, INC.

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Education of students with an intellectual disability: Research and practice is a text written for undergraduate and/or graduate students interested in acquiring additional knowledge about persons with intellectual disabilities above the introductory course level information. Although geared to be used as a college course textbook, anyone interested in intellectual disabilities will find useful information in an easy to read format.

Background information of the author and why he incorporates information about intellectual disabilities from Australia and the United Kingdom as well as the United States is contained in the preface of the book. Even though the author is Australian, he recognizes that the United States has been in the forefront of



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inclusive practices for persons with intellectual disabilities with the enactment of the Individual with Education Act (IDEA) (Mandlawitz, 2007). This text therefore is written for an American college course. To aid in the development of the course, the author also provides a basic guideline to instructors in the preface.

“What is an intellectual disability?” is answered in Chapter One. For example, the chapter contains a discussion of how definitions of intellectual disabilities have developed over time and how intelligence is measured. It includes a brief history of diagnostic assessments and several definitions of intellectual disabilities (American, Australian, and British). This information provides the reader with a thorough understanding of the classification of persons with intellectual disabilities. To assist with the organization of the chapter, subheadings are used throughout the chapter and at the conclusion of each subheading the author provides discussion and reflective questions. In addition to the discussion questions within the context of each subheading, there are mini case studies with its own set of discussion questions. Each of these case study questions are designed to require students to expand their knowledge through journal readings of current research as well as understanding the material presented within the previous part of the chapter.

In the course of being able to understand the concept of intellectual disabilities, a logical flow of content is necessary. The author accomplishes this in Chapter Two by examining the factors identified as the cause or having a casual effect on intellectual disabilities during the neonatal, perinatal, and postnatal development of an individual. Genetic and chromosomal disorders as well as the implications of certain environmental factors on a child during each of the three periods of development are discussed in detail. Providing the factors that have a causal relationship to intellectual disabilities, the author includes a section on prevention. Part of the prevention discussions involves ethical issues surrounding medical interventions that can diagnose disabilities during the neonatal period. Examples, case

studies, and reflective questions are given throughout this chapter as well.

Before a person can be classified as having an intellectual disability, he or she must be assessed by a battery of tests (Taylor, Brady, & Richards, 2004). Chapter Three delves into the assessment tools used in determining the intellectual capabilities and limitations of individuals. The answer to the question of “What determines an intellectual disability?” is defined in this chapter. Many of the tests used in classifying intellectual disabilities are described beginning with the test used to test babies and ending with the behavioral adaptive scales for older children. The author gives a brief description of each type of test including a brief history of the test, the scoring, and the cautionary tale about the interpretation of results. Questions for reflective discussion are again included after each section as well as a mini case. The mini case gives the students an opportunity to use their assessment skills in determining if the correct assessment was administered. This type of case requires the students to understand the age of the child, the types of assessments that are available, and to research the results of the testing.

Early intervention is the natural progression to provide babies and toddlers with the therapies and intervention services that are needed to lessen the effects of intellectual disabilities (Cook, Klein, & Tessier, 2006). The author discusses the history of providing education to young children which is a relatively new concept. Chapter Four includes descriptions and outcomes of the several research studies conducted that paved the way for services being implemented for at risk babies and toddlers. Head Start, a government program for young children of poverty, was begun as a result of the Perry Preschool Project, and Abecedarian Project research studies because the socioeconomic factor of poverty precludes that these children have a higher risk of developing intellectually disabilities (Drew & Hardman, 2007). The Milwaukee Project was also instrumental in establishing the positive results for early intervention. Through the positive results of IQ points being gained by giving young children early intervention services, legislation was passed that mandated

in the United States that all babies at risk be eligible for services (Cook, Klein, & Tessier, 2006). The author makes note of the fact that there have been many critics of these research studies. Their argument is that the results do not necessarily point out that early intervention instruction sustains the child as he or she gets older. In other words, it is only a short term effect. Comparison is made between Australia and the United States of the legislation, laws, and funding for programs to provide services to babies and toddlers. Several mini case studies are provided as well as reflective questions at the end of each section.

Transition becomes a part of the life of the child with intellectual disabilities as soon as he or she enters into services. As the child ages towards preschool age, moving from a home-based or natural environment setting (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, & Soodak, 2006) to a public school setting, parents have many decisions to make. This transitional process often presents many issues for parents, the foremost one being the type of schooling, the educational setting, and the curriculum (Turnbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2010). Many parents look for the setting that keeps their child with the children who do not have disabilities that is part of the Individuals with Education Act (IDEA) and the principle of Least Restrictive Environment (Turnbull, Huerta, & Stowe, 2009). These issues of least restrictive environment and Inclusion are the main topics of Chapter Five with reflective questions provided. On the topic of Inclusion, research studies' results on attitudes towards students with disabilities, the academic success of students with disabilities, and the social outcomes are discussed. The author includes the positive and the negative results, as well as the limitations of the studies to help readers understand the studies. As Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is becoming more and more the standard practice of classroom lesson planning (Tomlinson, 2004), this chapter includes a section on the principles of UDL. Each principle is summarized in sufficient detail so that students can easily understand and implement these principles as they write out their lesson plan. The mini case study that is given is an example of UDL lesson. Students

are asked to discuss this case, to explain how this case represents UDL, and to make improvements to the plan.

Instructional strategies and curriculum development is important to the educational progress of students with disabilities. In the United States, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) guides the instruction for the child (Turnbull, Huerta, & Stowe, 2009). This, however, according to the author, is not the case for Australia and the United Kingdom. In Chapter Six, the author includes these two countries explaining the differences in laws and policies among the three countries. The goal, however, for each country, is to ensure maximum success for students whose intellectual disabilities may range from mild to severe. Students with intellectual disabilities often need assistive technology to be successful in a classroom (Beirne-Smith, Patton, & Kim 2005). The author addresses the issue of technology and includes several research studies that have been conducted with students and their use of technology. Another key to success in a classroom is behavior. Many types of behaviors are exhibited by children with or without a disability, but for some students with intellectual disabilities, their behavior may impede the learning process.

For these students, it is important to implement a behavior plan (Taylor, Brady, & Richards, 2004). The author describes a functional behavior assessment and a behavioral support plan in simple terms. The reflective discussion questions at the end of each section encourage students to explore and read journals to further their knowledge of the tools that are effective in teaching students with intellectual disabilities.

As children with intellectual disabilities grow and progress through the educational system, there comes a time that they will age out of the system. In order to plan for this eventuality, schools must plan for the transition of the student (Hardeman & Drew, 2007). Once again parents are faced with decisions about the future for their child. In the final chapter, Chapter Seven, the author focuses on the individual transition plan that outlines the student's progress through high school and then preparation for adulthood. Examples of employment and non-employment options as

well as day programs are provided in a discussion format. The case study further provides the students opportunity to explore the appropriate employment options for a person with intellectual disabilities. Because partnerships between school and family are another important component to the success of the child (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, & Soodak, 2006) the last part of the chapter centers around a discussion concerning the importance of family partnerships with teachers during the transitional process.

Intellectual disabilities are a very broad and complex subject. There are, however, common denominators that are associated with this disability such as definition, diagnostic tools, education, and educational outcomes with transition into adulthood. The author has written his book in such a way that it will provoke discussions and further research by students. This process results in students becoming actively engaged in the learning process and gaining a more in-depth knowledge of persons with intellectual disabilities.

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