
Foreword

What is the magic formula to help special learners succeed? Where is the magic bag of tricks that every special education teacher seems to have in order to help “those” special kids learn? I know I would be a more effective general education teacher in teaching “those” special learners in my classroom if I knew the magic techniques and formula . . . if I had the magic bag of tricks!

This is the sentiment described time and time again by almost every general education teacher, from the brand new teacher to the seasoned veteran. Most general education teachers are unfamiliar with effective strategies and techniques employed to teach special learners. In fact, the unfamiliarity can go beyond a lack of knowledge—a real sense of fear can set in. General education teachers often feel a sense of hopelessness and fear due to limited knowledge of special learner issues and needs, and they may not know how to even begin to approach the academic needs of the student.

Through my 10 years experience as the Director of Pupil Personnel Services in the San Dieguito Union High School District, 12 years experience as a college instructor, 16 years teaching experience in the K–12 public schools, and 8 years as a commissioner with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, I confidently state the fact, “teachers strive to teach all learners.”

The reader about to embark on this book is in for a real dose of magic! The 60 research-based strategies to help special learners succeed are presented in a clear, concise reference format including “real life” teaching application techniques for today’s challenging classroom.

Real teachers use these strategies and techniques in their classrooms. Although the strategies are research based, the real testimony comes from the experienced teachers and authors of this book. Their knowledge and teaching experience is moving and compelling. Still not convinced of the magic? Head to North San Diego County to the San Dieguito Union High

xii ● What Successful Teachers Do in Inclusive Classrooms

School District to see for yourself! Treat yourself to a visit to observe the authors Sarah McNary, Neal Glasgow, and Cathy Hicks in action in their classrooms. Believe me, you will not only be convinced, but you will want to thank me personally. We are grateful they elected to share their knowledge, teaching experiences, and promising practices with their readers.

This book is about all students learning. The strategies are designed to guide the teacher through the process of adapting the teaching practices and learning environment to address the needs of all learners. The instructional strategies presented are relevant for any student, any grade level.

Special learners deserve the chance to be taught in the general education classroom with effective strategies necessary for individual student success. General education teachers deserve the knowledge of the research-based instructional strategies paired with hands-on application techniques.

Yes, you deserve the magic in this book! So here it is—the magical techniques to help students. Keep it on your desk within reach at all times. Enjoy learning and teaching. Most of all, enjoy and celebrate your students' success!

Torrie Norton