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Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Middle School Students
with Specific Learning Disabilities

Audryn Damron

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

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ABSTRACT

Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Middle School Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

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Master of Science

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of explicitly teaching self-advocacy skills to three middle school students with mild/moderate disabilities by having them memorize a script and request accommodations in a training and generalization setting. The intervention components included 16 lessons comprising discussion and reflection about their disabilities and educational rights under IDEA, a four-part script, and a prompting procedure. The script included (a) greeting teacher and asking if it's a good time to talk, (b) expressing concern with assignment, (c) asking for accommodation, and (d) thanking teacher. The dependent variables were (a) frequency, measured by the number of cumulative requests made over the course of the study, and (b) accuracy, measured by number of steps aligning with the pre-rehearsed script. Results, evaluated using a multiple-baseline across-participants design, indicated a functional relationship between the intervention and the dependent variables. Results suggest that special education teachers can effectively teach self-determination skills, allowing students with disabilities to self-advocate for accommodations in the general education setting. Further research is needed to confirm current findings.

Keywords: middle school, specific learning disabilities, self-determination, self-advocacy, requesting accommodations

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I am extremely thankful for and indebted to Whitney Clancy, the research assistant assigned to this project. She quickly grasped the procedures and envisioned the end goal for the thesis. Whitney enthusiastically worked with the general education teachers and special education participants and put many hours into taking reliability data. She was intuitive and had a natural ability to prompt participants to make requests. Whitney Clancy was a great asset to this project!

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INTRODUCTION OF THESIS STRUCTURE

The description of this thesis, *Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Middle School Students with Specific Learning Disabilities*, is presented in a dual/hybrid format. This means that both traditional and journal formatting requirements are met.

The preliminary pages of this document meet the university requirements for thesis submissions. The thesis report is presented in a journal-ready format that meets length and style requirements for submitting research studies to education journals. Appendix A includes a full review of literature with its accompanying reference list. Appendices B-K include parent consent forms, student assent forms, teacher consent forms, teacher training lesson plans, lesson plans, the self-advocacy pre/post test, the self-advocacy script, the student initiation form, treatment fidelity checklists, and the social validity questionnaires.

Background

Middle school is a difficult transitional time for many students, but it can prove especially trying for students with disabilities (Mishna, Muskat, Farnia, & Wiener, 2011). Students going from sixth grade in an elementary school to seventh grade in a middle school have many challenges (Baer & Flexer, 2013). A few challenges include moving to a new, larger school, navigating that larger school and getting to know new teachers, and having increased academic demands. Middle school is a time when students develop and mature at various rates emotionally, physically, and socially.

Eccles, Lord, and Midgely (1991) explained that early adolescent development is characterized by “increases in the following: desire for autonomy from adult control, especially from one’s parents’ control; peer orientation, self-focus, [and] self-consciousness” (p. 534). Middle school students often desire increased independence and self-monitoring but lack the necessary skills and practice to manage their behavior successfully. Students with disabilities not only struggle with typical developmental and transitional changes, but must also deal with the effects of their disability, which may demand extra time and attention in order to be understood and managed.

By the time students reach middle school, many of them have been in special education for several years. Students are often disheartened and unknowledgeable about their disability. They lack the skills necessary to be successful academically during this transitional time. Their self-esteem tends to be low and they can have poor self-image (Eccles et al., 1991). These characteristics make the transition challenging and laborious. During the adolescent period, when children in general are dealing with physical, mental, emotional, and hormonal changes, students with disabilities have even more changes and obstacles to overcome. Students with

disabilities can be self-conscious about their disability, lack understanding of their disability, struggle with the new expectations set by multiple teachers, and have difficulty navigating a new school and schedule.

Students who possess self-determination, on the other hand, often exhibit an acceptance of their disability, understand how it affects them, are able to describe their disability, know what support services are needed to be successful, and possess a determination to overcome obstacles and trials that assuredly will come (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). The same authors further define self-determination as “being able to advocate for what you need, understanding your disability and how it impacts your learning, having self-confidence, being independent, and adjusting your schedule to make sure things get done” (2008, p. 79). Not many students with disabilities entering middle school have self-determined behaviors to strengthen their personal support system (Campbell-Whatley, 2008).

One component of self-determination, self-advocacy, is particularly important for students who have learning disabilities (Mishna et al., 2011). Often, students with disabilities rely on parents, teachers, and other adults to advocate on their behalf (Mishna et al., 2011). Research shows that although traditional high school and college preparatory programs focus on college preparatory classes and study skills for students with learning disabilities, few programs focus on social skills needed for college, such as self-advocacy. High school and college program directors are now more widely acknowledging the importance of self-advocacy skills for students to successfully navigate postsecondary settings (Skinner, 1998). Successful self-advocates demonstrate an understanding of the nature of a learning disability, including academic strengths and weaknesses and accommodations that promote learning (Skinner, 1998). Despite the lack of programs focusing on self-advocacy, providing support for individuals with

learning disabilities to become self-advocates is receiving increasing emphasis (Mishna et al., 2011).

Self-determination strategies can reduce many of the difficulties students face when transitioning from one school to another. Durlak, Rose, and Bursack (1994) outlined skills required for a successful transition into post-secondary schools. These skills can be applied to any major transition and include the following:

- (a) an awareness of academic and social strengths and weaknesses as well as compensatory strategies;
 - (b) the ability to express such an awareness to faculty and staff;
 - (c) an awareness of service needs and appropriate accommodations; and
 - (d) the ability to request information, assistance, and accommodation when appropriate and necessary.
- (Durlak et al., 1994, p. 51)

Students need numerous opportunities to practice self-determination skills (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001) in a safe and controlled environment in order to generalize those skills to other settings. Waiting until high school to teach self-determination is a disservice to students with disabilities (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001) because it leaves very little time before students graduate high school to practice and master self-determined behaviors and self-advocacy strategies. Repetition is a crucial tool in learning new concepts (Belfiore, 1995; Swanson & Sachs-Lee, 2000) but students rarely receive self-advocacy training prior to middle school and often don't receive such instruction in middle school or high school. Eisenman and Chamberlin (2001) recognized that prearranged efforts to stimulate self-determination must start before high school.

Self-determination instruction should begin in earlier years and “continue through the multiple stages of development” (Campbell-Whatley, 2008, p. 138). Eisenman and Chamberlin

(2001) also pointed out that students need numerous opportunities to cultivate skills in goal setting, plan development, monitoring and adjusting. Adolescents with disabilities need explicit instruction and systematic opportunities for practice to acquire self-determined attributes (Durlak et al., 1994; Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

Getzel and Thoma (2008) used focus groups to examine the experiences of successful college students with disabilities and the importance of self-determination. The research objective was to identify self-determination skills the students used to self-advocate and obtain essential supports. Dominant themes included self-awareness, goal setting, and self-management. Most of the college students voiced a desire for earlier instruction on the use of strategies for problem solving and identifying resources. Findings confirmed previous results suggesting a need for effective instructional methods to support the development of self-determination strategies in younger children (Chambers et al., 2007).

Based on statistics cited in their review, Konrad, Fowler, Walker, Test, and Wood (2007) found post high school outcomes for students in all disability categories to be less than desired. For example, the researchers discovered that only 82.6% of youth with learning disabilities were involved in postsecondary education, employment, or job training within two years of leaving high school. Konrad et al. (2007) explained that although this number has increased in recent years, the fact that 20% of youth with disabilities are not achieving important post-secondary goals gives rise to concern. Efforts to improve post-high school outcomes have caused researchers to evaluate the predictors of making a successful transition. These predictors include self-determination (Durlak et al., 1994; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Skinner, 1998).

Teachers often have the desire to teach and encourage self-advocacy in their own classrooms, but hesitate to take away time from the content they need to cover. Special

educators acknowledge the need for their students to learn self-determination skills, but point to time constraints as the main reason they do not teach these skills in their classrooms (Konrad et al., 2007). Fortunately, research shows that even educators who have few resources and little time for extra lessons can mindfully and explicitly add to existing opportunities to boost self-determination (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

Teaching Self-Determination in Schools

Campbell-Whatley (2008) piloted a study in which self-determination lessons were taught to elementary, middle, and high school students with disabilities. The researchers wanted to determine whether the lessons increased students' self-awareness and self-concept. Students' self-determination was measured before and after the lessons using the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale, which includes 80 questions that assess how children and adolescents feel about themselves.

The lesson activities “(a) compared a disability in learning to a physical disability, (b) explained eligibility procedures for special education, (c) explored student strengths and limitations, (d) addressed techniques related to advocacy, problem solving, anger control and social skills, and (e) presented various academic and job related strategies” (Campbell-Whatley, 2008, p. 139). Results indicated a compelling difference in student self-concept before and after intervention. Students' improved self-concept in the post-intervention phase suggested that the intervention had a significant impact. The lessons were administered in seven weeks and were implemented in a natural setting. However, the lack of a control group and the small number of participants presented generalization concerns. Including a control group in future investigations would help increase the external validity of the study.

Mishna et al. (2011) investigated topics similar to those examined by Campbell-Whatley (2008). Commonalities included a discussion about learning disabilities, an exploration of strengths and weaknesses, and knowledge of how to ask for help/find resources. The results of Mishna et al.'s (2011) study suggested that middle school students with learning disabilities can significantly increase their self-advocacy knowledge and ability via self-report. Although the self-report aspect of this study is intriguing, it is also a limitation. Further research would do well to include teachers' and parents' reports on the self-advocacy skills of students with learning disabilities.

Durlak et al. (1994) examined the acquisition of self-determination skills through the use of direct-instruction. Trainers taught self-determination skills to high school students with learning disabilities in a resource room setting. Critical features in the direct instruction model included corrective feedback, multiple opportunities for practice, modeling, and specific instruction to promote skill generalization (Durlak et al. 1994). Using those methods, students were taught the specific nature of their disability, including strengths and weaknesses, the impact of their disability on academic and social performance, how to identify the accommodations that could be used to deal with deficit areas, and how to identify strategies for arranging accommodations in the general education setting (Durlak et al., 1994). Results suggested that all participants acquired self-determination skills as a result of the direct-instruction provided.

Findings further suggested that students with disabilities can acquire, maintain, and generalize self-determination skills that include self-advocacy and self-awareness. Results also implied that intensive practice of these skills may be necessary if students are to feel comfortable sharing information of a personal nature with others. Although study participants

could role-play appropriate behaviors, they conveyed discomfort and embarrassment during the role-play and frequently had a hard time rehearsing the tasks (Durlak et al., 1994). They were unaccustomed to the vernacular used in describing their learning needs, which may have been indicative of a need for the repeated practice of self-determination skills, allowing students to feel comfortable and confident in their use.

Eisenman and Chamberlin (2001) addressed crucial aspects of teaching self-determination to students with disabilities, noting the need for additional studies to address research-to-practice issues. For example, future studies should use pre and posttest designs with control groups and demonstrate student performance before and after receiving instruction in self-determination.

Research shows that students with disabilities have lower levels of self-determination than their non-disabled peers (Wehmeyer, Palmer, Shogren, Williams-Diehm & Soukup, 2013). The researchers tested several curricula designed to teach self-determination strategies. The reasoning behind conducting such a study was that if teachers are going to devote only a limited amount of instructional time to teaching self-determination, then the curriculum must be effective. Some aspects of the curriculum included lessons highlighting the skills and personal information students need to coherently express their interests, skills, limits, and goals. Other features of the curriculum included teacher modeling, verbal rehearsal of steps, and group conferences with feedback (Wehmeyer et al., 2013).

The Need for Future Research

This study addresses the need for self-determination curriculum to be explicitly taught to students with mild/moderate disabilities. Implementing interventions to improve self-determination can generate significant changes in students' self-determination skills (Wehmeyer

et al., 2013). In the above example, student performance reports showed significantly greater and more positive growth patterns in self-determination than did the performance reports for students who did not receive the intervention (Wehmeyer et al., 2013). Given previous results linking self-determination to improved post-high school outcomes for students with disabilities (Konrad et al., 2007) and the accompanying need to identify efficient strategies to promote and strengthen self-determination (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001), additional research is needed to examine ways to promote its acquisition and generalization in applied settings (e.g., Campbell-Whatley, 2008; Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

The literature also suggests that students with disabilities benefit from explicit instruction in self-determination strategies (Durlak et al., 1994; Wehmeyer et al., 2013). The need for research-practice studies evaluating experimental effects within controlled research designs has likewise been mentioned (Campbell-Whatley, 2008; Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

Purpose of Study

The objective of the current study is to extend the results of previous research by examining the effects of direct instruction on the self-determination skills of students with disabilities within a single-subject multiple-baseline design. The specific purpose is to extend previous findings in the areas of verbal communication, self-awareness, and self-advocacy (Durlak et al., 1994) by investigating the effects of an intervention designed to teach adolescents with mild/moderate disabilities to explain their disability and to identify and communicate personal strengths and weaknesses.

The following research questions will be addressed:

1. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a special education setting on the frequency of such a request, measured by the number of occurrences?
2. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a special education setting on the accuracy of requests, as measured by the number of steps that align with a pre-rehearsed script?
3. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a core academic subject on the frequency of such a request, measured by the number of occurrences?
4. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a core academic subject on the accuracy of requests, as measured by the number of steps that align with a pre-rehearsed script?

Method

Participants

Three students, one male and two females, were given the pseudonyms Trent, Michelle, and Jamie. The university and school district institutional review boards formally approved the study. Parents and teachers of the participants provided written consent (see Appendices B and C) and participants provided written assent (see Appendix D).

Selection criteria. Students were selected to participate in the study based on the following criteria: (a) concurrent enrollment in a resource learning academic support class and an English or history class, (b) lack of previous instruction about the Individualized Education Program (IEP) document, accommodations, and strengths and weaknesses in conjunction with the IEP, (c) an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) score ranging between a standard score (SS) of 70 and 90 according to the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–Fourth Edition and/or Woodcock-

Johnson III Normative Update Tests of Cognitive Abilities, (d) standard scores on academic assessments consistent with the achievement-discrepancy model (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2013), (e) a history of failing grades in core academic classes (grade of 69% or below), which indicates a particular need for self-determination skills (this information can be attained from the special education facilitator at the school, who knows which students were referred for an academic support class the previous year), and (f) an attendance record of at least 90%.

Special education students. Three eighth grade students classified with Specific Learning Disabilities according to state and federal guidelines were selected to participate in this study. The students were Caucasian and from middle to lower-class socioeconomic families. Each student's attendance record was reviewed to ensure the student was likely to attend school on a regular basis.

Trent. Trent was an eighth grader with a full scale IQ of 76 SS as measured by the Woodcock Johnson III NU Tests of Cognitive Abilities. Trent's standard scores in the areas of broad reading and brief reading were 100 and 99 according to the Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update Tests of Achievement (Form A). Trent's standard scores in the areas of math calculation and broad math were 85 and 92. Trent was classified as having a Specific Learning Disability according to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) criteria. Trent received special education services for math and academic support. He was enrolled in all general education classes except for the academic support class.

Trent scored an 873 lexile on the Scholastic Reading Inventory, which is approximately a seventh grade reading level. An eighth grader should score at least a 1025 lexile by the middle of the school year to be considered a proficient reader. Trent also scored a 385 Quantile on the Scholastic Math Inventory, which is a below third grade math level score. An eighth grader is

expected to score at least 1030 Quantile to be considered on grade level. Trent's math teacher reported that his math abilities are not that low, but that he doesn't test well. Trent had a 95% attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year. He has been in special education since fourth grade. The researcher and special education facilitator recommended Trent for the study because he was consistently failing multiple classes, including English, and it was believed he could benefit from self-determination instruction.

Michelle. Michelle was an eighth grader with a full scale IQ of 89 as measured by the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–Fourth Edition. Her standard scores in the areas of broad reading and brief reading were 96 and 95 according to the Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update Tests of Achievement (Form B). Michelle's standard scores in the areas of math calculation and broad math were 103 and 97. Michelle was classified as having a Specific Learning Disability according to IDEA criteria. Michelle received special education services for math and academic support. She was enrolled in all general education classes except for the academic support class.

Michelle scored an 864 lexile on the Scholastic Reading Inventory, which is approximately a seventh grade reading level. An eighth grader should score at least a 1025 lexile by the middle of the school year to be considered a proficient reader. Michelle also scored a 460 Quantile on the Scholastic Math Inventory, which is a below fourth grade math level score. An eighth grader is expected to score at least 1030 Quantile to be considered on grade level. Michelle's math teacher reported that her math abilities are not that low, as her grades throughout the year have been 70% or higher. Michelle had a 95% attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year. She has been in special education since sixth grade. The researcher and special education facilitator recommended Michelle for the study because she was

consistently failing multiple classes, including history, and it was believed she could benefit from self-determination instruction.

Jamie. Jamie was an eighth grade student with a full scale IQ of 92 as measured by the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–Fourth Edition. Jamie’s standard score in the area of reading comprehension was 82. Her standard scores in the areas of math calculation skills and broad math were 54 and 69. Jamie was classified as having a Specific Learning Disability according to IDEA criteria. Jamie received special education services for reading and academic support. She was enrolled in all general education classes except for the academic support class.

Jamie scored an 858 lexile on the Scholastic Reading Inventory, which is approximately a seventh grade reading level. An eighth grader should score at least a 1025 lexile by the middle of the school year to be considered a proficient reader. Jamie also scored a 980 Quantile on the Scholastic Math Inventory, which is an eighth grade math level score. An eighth grader is expected to score at least 1030 Quantile to be considered on grade level. Michelle had a 95% attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year. She has been in special education since sixth grade. The researcher and special education facilitator recommended Michelle for the study because she was consistently failing multiple classes, including English, and it was believed she could benefit from self-determination instruction.

General education teachers. Three general education teachers participated in the study. Teachers were selected based on willingness to participate and having a participating student in class. The teachers included two English teachers and one history teacher with teaching experience ranging from one year to 29 years. All the teachers were female and Caucasian.

Prior to data collection, the general education teachers were taught how to use the script and collect accurate data in a 25-minute training conducted by the researcher. See Appendix E

to view the lesson plan. General education teachers mastered the evaluation criteria with 100% accuracy.

Special education teacher. The special education resource teacher, (who was also the researcher) taught resource learning (academic support) and writing skills. The special education teacher was female and Caucasian and had three years of teaching experience.

Setting

The intervention took place in a public middle school in the western United States that served over 1,000 students in grades 7 and 8. The school schedule consisted of block periods (85 minutes each) on Monday and Tuesday and regular class periods (45 minutes) Wednesday through Friday. Fourteen percent of students qualified for special education and 41% percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. The school was predominantly Caucasian (80%), with the second highest ethnicity/race being Hispanic/Latino (19%).

Special education (training) setting. The researcher delivered the self-determination lessons in a special education setting. Class sizes varied from 6 to 13 students and all students were receiving special education services and required academic support services as written in their IEPs. The class was structured to include a self-start, a study skills lesson, and in-class time to work on assignments from other classes. The technology available for teacher and student use included an interactive white board, teacher laptop, one iPad, eight iPad minis, and eight Macintosh computers. The teacher and/or students used technology 80-100% of the class time.

General education (generalization) setting. A research assistant observed the intervention in the general education setting. Class sizes varied from 29 to 36. The general education teacher was the only adult in the room. Classroom procedures included daily writing

prompts at the beginning of class, whole group lessons with videos, PowerPoint presentations, discussions, notes, projects outlined according to rubrics, and small group activities. Out-of-class assignments varied from each generalization setting. Each setting included weekly assignments such as reading logs or current event summaries, but the amount and frequency of assignments changed depending on the teacher.

Materials

Lessons were adapted from the *Me! Teaching self-awareness and self-advocacy to students with disabilities* curriculum (Cantley, Parker, & Martin, 2009). See Appendix F to view lesson plans. Lessons began with daily objectives, included discussions and visuals (worksheets and PowerPoint presentations). Lessons were divided into two units: self-awareness and communication skills. Each unit included four lesson plans with multiple lesson objectives in each lesson. Participants were given a pre and posttest (see Appendix G) and a script (see Appendix H).

Independent variable. The independent measure consisted of two sets of lessons comprising self-awareness and communication skills. Students were taught to ask for accommodations using a script with four sections: (a) approaching the teacher and asking if it is a good time to talk, (b) expressing the concern with the assignment given that day and linking the concern to student strengths and weaknesses, (c) asking for an accommodation(s), and (d) thanking the teacher.

The teacher recorded student performance using a checklist at the end of each class period. The teacher did not show the student the checklist. Student performance data were not shown to the participants.

The researcher provided participating general education teachers training prior to the commencement of the study (see Appendix E). The purpose of the training was to ensure the checklist, script, and necessary teacher prompts were used correctly.

The lessons were taught to all the students in a resource academic support class in three different class periods throughout the school day. Each lesson totaled 20-35 minutes. The lessons were taught by the special education teacher/researcher. The lessons were interactive and included discussion, modeling, role-playing activities, PowerPoint presentations, and worksheets/guided notes. The lessons included unit objectives as found in Table 1.

At the conclusion of the unit, students practiced and memorized a script by reading it out loud and role-playing with a peer prior to passing off the script with the resource teacher (without looking at the script).

In the lessons, students were taught the importance of asking for help whenever an assignment was given in class that presented a challenge. Students were taught to recognize a challenging assignment, or opportunity, as an assignment they were unable to complete in the time given, or an assignment they received a failing grade on. Although a high frequency of initiations was not expected of every student in the academic support classes, the participating students were expected to initiate a conversation with their special education teacher daily and with their general education teacher every time an “opportunity” was presented in class. This allowed enough data points to be collected. Thus, each opportunity represented one session.

Dependent variables. The two dependent variables included (a) cumulative frequency of student-initiated requests for an accommodation from the general education and the special education teacher (number of student-initiated requests divided by the number of opportunities to make a request) and (b) the correct number of steps used in making the request, based on a

Table 1

Unit Objectives

Units	
Self-Awareness	
Objective 1	I can define self-awareness and self-advocacy.
Objective 2	I can identify personal strengths, weakness, likes and dislikes.
Objective 3	I can write down key terms and definitions related to special education.
Objective 4	I can identify barriers and/or prejudice people with disabilities face.
Objective 5	I can identify three historical events impacting attitudes toward disabilities.
Objective 6	I can write down key terms and definitions related to special education.
Objective 7	I can describe the process of being identified and placed in special education.
Objective 8	I can identify and describe key events in my educational history.
Objective 9	I can write key information about disabilities from an online source.
Objective 10	I can describe important information in my IEP, including goals, accommodations and modifications.
Objective 11	I can identify and list accommodations/modifications in my IEP.
Communication	
Objective 12	I can distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate non-verbal communication (body language) including personal space, eye contact, posture, etc.
Objective 13	I can distinguish between verbal and nonverbal communication.
Objective 14	I can identify the appropriate people to share information with (teachers, peers, counselors) in varied settings.
Objective 15	I can recognize situations when an accommodation may be needed.
Objective 16	I can use a script to practice communicating with teachers about accommodations.

Note. Adapted from Cantley, P., Parker, K., & Martin, J. (2009). *Me! Teaching self-awareness and self-advocacy to students with disabilities*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma.

pre-rehearsed script. The evaluation included a knowledge or acquisition measure and a generalization measure.

Data Collection

The frequency of student-initiated requests was calculated by adding the number of requests over a cumulative period of time. The accuracy of each request was calculated by dividing the number of steps completed out of the total number of steps according to a script.

In the special education setting, an opportunity was defined as a timed assignment given at the beginning of class in which students had to read a passage (alternating between U.S. history, eighth grade science, and eighth grade English topics) and answer up to five comprehension or vocabulary questions or complete grade-level calculation problems (adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive/negative integers).

In the general education setting, an opportunity was defined as any assignment the student was given where he or she could not complete the assignment in the time given or any assignment the student received a failing grade on and needed to redo. Examples of such assignments in the history class included writing a summary and opinion for a current events assignment (due weekly), filling out a class packet (either copying from the board, working in a group to write answers to an assignment, taking notes during discussion, book work, etc.). Examples of assignments given in the English classes included annotating and defining vocabulary from articles, writing multi-paragraph papers, completing vocabulary exercises and taking vocabulary tests, reading novels as a class and completing comprehension worksheets, completing graphic organizers on a topic and giving presentations in front of the class, and so on.

When the teacher finished explaining the assignment to the class and the student had worked on the assignment enough to determine if he or she could complete it in the given time

frame, the student participant needed to recognize the need for an accommodation, determine an appropriate time to speak with the teacher, and present a request for an accommodation.

At the end of the training phase, the student was prompted to request an accommodation each time an opportunity was given in the special education setting. The research assistant was trained and instructed to prompt the participants to ask for accommodations in the general education setting. The frequency of requests was calculated by counting the number of requests made in all. The calculation for accuracy of requests was as follows:

$$\frac{\text{\# of steps used correctly}}{\text{Total number of steps according to the script}}$$

Participating general education teachers collected data in their classrooms. At the end of the class period after an opportunity to ask for an accommodation was given, the teacher marked yes or no if the student requested an accommodation after an assignment was given. If the student asked for an accommodation, the teacher marked “yes” on the data collection form (see Appendix I) and wrote check marks in boxes representing each step in the script to show whether the student followed the script accurately. If the student did not ask for help, then the teacher marked “no” on the data collection form and did not fill out the accuracy portion of the form. Both frequency and accuracy data were kept on the same form. The general education teacher participants, special education teacher/researcher, and research assistant filled out the data collection forms during baseline, training, and post-training phases for acquisition and generalization phases.

Interobserver agreement. Interobserver agreement (IoA) checks were made during each phase of the study by an independent observer in the general education and special education settings. Reliability data were collected during 26% to 35% of general education

sessions and 40% to 52% of special education sessions. All reliability data in the general education setting were collected by an independent observer via direct observation. Since a large percentage of the sessions were recorded via an iPad in the special education setting, the observer calculated reliability by watching recordings of these sessions. Any sessions that were not recorded were observed directly. Reliability coefficients in the general education setting averaged 97% (range: 96% to 100%) and averaged 92% (range: 83% to 97%) in the special education setting.

Research design. The design for this study was a multiple-baseline across-participants single-case design. The intervention was conducted across three different class periods held during the school day. A functional relationship between the dependent and independent variables was demonstrated when a change in each participant's performance was obtained at the time the intervention was introduced and not before. The intervention was introduced to the first participant when all baseline data showed a stable level and trend. When the performance of the first participant reached the criterion of 80% frequency and at least 75% accuracy as linked to performance on the script, the intervention was introduced to the second participant. This procedure was followed across subsequent replications.

Data analysis. Graphic (visual) analysis was used to interpret the data. The investigator graphed each participant's data weekly during baseline, intervention, and post-intervention phases. A cumulative line graph was used. The data were evaluated by interpreting the trend, level, and variability. Once stability was achieved in each phase (beginning with baseline), the next phase was introduced.

Baseline. During baseline, the general education teacher and special education teacher recorded participant data using a checklist. The general education teacher recorded each

occurrence of the target behavior, that is, each time the participant initiated a request for an accommodation during the session. The general education teacher and special education teacher also recorded the number of correct steps used in making the request. All data were recorded on the same form.

Training. During the training phase, the general education teachers and special education teacher recorded data on the number of student-initiated requests and the number of correct steps used in making the request based on the script taught in the resource setting. The teachers also kept data on the accuracy with which the students conducted each initiation according to the script.

Post-Training. Following training, the general education teachers and special education teacher continued to record the number of student initiated requests and the number of opportunities to make a request as well as the correct number of steps used in making the request based on the pre-rehearsed script. Students were verbally prompted in the special education setting if a request was not initiated within five seconds of the time ending. The verbal prompt included the following statement, “How did this assignment go?” This phrase cued the student to ask for an accommodation. The research assistant prompted participants in the general education setting by quietly mentioning an assignment the student needed to turn in or re-do in order to receive a higher grade. The special education teacher gave the research assistant a list of missing assignments to help her prompt the participants. Data were recorded until stability was visually represented.

Treatment Fidelity. Treatment fidelity was assessed using the form displayed in Appendix J. The teacher collected data (on all steps of the script) for each intervention session conducted in the training setting. An independent observer collected reliability data on 43% of

Trent's intervention phase, 62% of Michelle's intervention phase, and 87% of Jamie's intervention phase. No disagreements between the first and second observer were noted.

Social Validity. At the conclusion of the study, a research committee member whom the participants did not know interviewed the participating students. They were asked eight questions such as, "Did you like learning more about your disability?" "What was your favorite part of the lessons?" and "Were you prepared to ask your teacher for an accommodation?" (See Appendix K.) The participating general education teachers were given a questionnaire (see Appendix K) via email at the conclusion of the study. There were five short answer questions. Specific questions included, "Did the intervention work well?" and "Was it convenient for you to implement?"

Results

The evaluation consisted of a knowledge (special education setting) and generalization (general education setting) measure. The effects of explicitly teaching self-determination skills to adolescents with mild/moderate disabilities were specifically measured by evaluating the frequency and accuracy of participants using a script to request accommodations in special education and general education settings.

The dependent variables, the frequency of making a request and the accuracy of the request, were measured the same way in both settings. Frequency was measured by cumulatively counting the number of requests made. Each session was defined as a single class period, ranging from 45 to 85 minutes, in a special education or general education classroom. In the special education setting, an opportunity was defined as a timed assignment given at the beginning of class. In the general education setting, an opportunity was defined as any assignment given to the student that he or she could not complete in the given time period.

Accuracy was measured by counting the number of steps completed based on a pre-rehearsed script.

For the knowledge measure, participants were explicitly taught 16 lessons about the history of disabilities, components of an IEP, and communication skills. These lessons laid the foundation for the memorization of a script to request accommodations. The generalization measure differed because it required students to recognize the need for an accommodation to make a request in an unpredictable situation. The special education setting provided structured opportunities to make requests whereas the general education setting was more varied. Participants used the memorized script in both settings.

Knowledge Measure

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a special education setting on the frequency of such a request, measured by the number of occurrences?
2. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a special education setting on the accuracy of requests, as measured by the number of steps that align with a pre-rehearsed script?

Frequency. Figure 1 shows the effect of explicitly teaching self-determination skills on participants' frequency of requests for accommodations in the special education setting. Figure 1 data for the baseline, training, and post-training phases are summarized below. Results were recorded cumulatively based on whether the participant made a request or did not initiate the desired behavior. Each session provided one opportunity for the participant to make a request. If the participants did not make a request, it was recorded as a 0. If a participant did make a

request, it was recorded as a 1. Each request was added together to make a cumulative graph that depicts an upward trend as each request was made.

<Insert Figure 1>

Trent. Trent often exhibited quiet, off-task behaviors such as daydreaming and doodling and needed frequent prompting. He was polite to those around him and willing to participate in class discussion when verbally prompted.

Baseline. Trent's baseline included four sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Trent made no requests in the baseline phase.

Training. The training phase for Trent consisted of 24 sessions. Near the end of the training phase, a script was introduced and Trent began to make requests. Trent made four requests with verbal prompting during the last four sessions of the training phase.

Post-Training. Trent's post-training phase consisted of 71 sessions. In the post-training phase, Trent continued to make requests and the data show a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests. Trent made 56 requests in all. When given the opportunity, Trent didn't make a request on three occasions. The other occasions when he didn't make a request were due to teacher absences, student absences, or scheduling conflicts.

Michelle. Michelle was an observant, studious student. She was quick to provide answers and participate during discussions. She was also helpful and often provided helpful suggestions to other students as they were completing their assignments.

Baseline. Michelle's baseline phase consisted of 38 sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Michelle made no requests in the baseline phase.

Training. Michelle's training phase consisted of 23 sessions. Near the end of the training phase, a script was introduced, but visual analysis of the data showed that Michelle did not make any requests.

Post-Training. Michelle's training phase consisted of 39 sessions. In the post-training phase, Michelle received verbal prompting and began to make requests. The data show a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests. Michelle made a total of 26 requests in the post-training phase. Michelle didn't make a request on two occasions when she finished the assignment and did not require an accommodation. During nine other occasions she didn't make a request due to teacher absences, student absences, or scheduling conflicts.

Jamie. Jamie was a bright student who was willing to help those around her. However, she enjoyed telling stories in class and often visited with other students. She tended to be forgetful and frequently required redirection to stay on-task.

Baseline. Jamie's baseline phase consisted of 70 sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Jamie made no requests in the baseline phase.

Training. Jamie's training phase consisted of 16 sessions. Near the end of the training phase, a script was introduced, but visual analysis showed that Jamie did not make any requests during the training phase.

Post-Training. Jamie's post-training phase consisted of 16 sessions. In the post-training phase, Jamie began to make requests with verbal prompting. The data show a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests. Jamie made a total of 10 requests during the post-training phase. Jamie made a request during each opportunity she was

given. Jamie didn't make a request on 6 occasions due to teacher absences, student absences, or scheduling conflicts.

Accuracy. Figure 2 shows the effect of explicitly teaching self-determination skills on the accuracy of participants' requests in the special education setting. Figure 2 data for the baseline, training, and post-training phases are summarized below. For each phase except baseline, two calculations are reported for each mean and median. The first calculation includes all data points, even instances when a request was not made, and was thus recorded as a 0. The second calculation includes only the data points recorded when a request was made, meaning no zeros were included in the calculation.

<Insert Figure 2>

Trent. Although Trent often needed to be prompted to make a request, he memorized the script quickly and used the script appropriately thereafter.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Trent made no requests during the baseline phase. The accuracy of the requests was therefore not measured.

Training. At the end of the training phase, Trent began to make requests. On the basis of all his scores, Trent's mean accuracy was 16.66%. However, when considering scores that included only Trent's four requests, his mean accuracy was 75%. He achieved 100% accuracy when making his final request. Trent's median scores were 0 and 75, respectively.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Trent continued to make requests and the data show that Trent used the script accurately. His mean accuracy scores were 91.25% and 97.76%. Both of his median scores were 100.

Michelle. Michelle memorized the script quickly and accurately. She knew when to use the script and did not require continuous prompting to use the script.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Michelle made no requests during the baseline phase. The accuracy of the requests was therefore not measured.

Training. Even though a script was introduced at the end of the training phase, Michelle did not begin to make requests until the post-training phase. Visual analysis of the data showed that Michelle made no requests during the training phase. Therefore, the accuracy of the requests was not measured.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Michelle began to make requests and the data show that Michelle used the script accurately. Her mean accuracy scores were 91.96% and 99.03%, respectively. Her median scores were both 100.

Jamie. Jamie learned to use the script quickly and accurately. She seemed to enjoy using the script and demonstrating to the teacher that she knew it perfectly.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Jamie made no requests during the baseline phase. The accuracy of the requests was therefore not measured.

Training. Even though a script was introduced at the end of the training phase, Jamie did not begin to make requests until the post-training phase. Visual analysis of the data showed that Jamie made no requests during the training phase. Therefore, the accuracy of the requests was not measured.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Jamie began to make requests and the data show that Jamie used the script accurately. Her mean accuracy was 100%. Jamie made requests during each session, so she only has one score. Her median score was 100.

Generalization Measure

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a core academic subject on the frequency of such a request, measured by the number of occurrences?
2. What are the effects of explicitly teaching adolescents with SLD to request an accommodation in a core academic subject on the accuracy of requests, as measured by the number of steps that align with a pre-rehearsed script?

Frequency. Figure 3 shows the effect of explicitly teaching self-determination skills on participants' frequency of requests for accommodations in the general education setting. Figure 3 data for the baseline, training, and post-training phases are summarized below.

<Insert Figure 3>

Trent. Trent's grade was frequently below 70% due to incomplete or failed assignments. This created many opportunities to make requests for extended time on assignments. Despite having many opportunities to make requests, Trent required heavy verbal prompting prior to making requests.

Baseline. Trent's baseline included four sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicates that Trent made one request in the baseline phase.

Training. The training phase for Trent consisted of 24 sessions. During the training phase, Trent made one request without prompting. Trent did not receive prompting from the teacher during this phase and therefore made no other requests.

Post-Training. Trent's post-training phase consisted of 71 sessions. Up to session 81 there was an occasional request, but beginning on session 82 Trent received verbal prompting

and his requests became more constant. After prompting began, he continued to make requests and the data show a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests. Trent made 13 requests in the post-training phase.

Michelle. Michelle wasn't afraid to approach her teacher, but she only did so when she felt she needed it. She did not always make requests when she should have and required prompting to make requests.

Baseline. Michelle's baseline phase consisted of 23 sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Michelle made five requests in the baseline phase. Michelle felt comfortable approaching her teacher for help and initiated conversations with the teacher several times. Still, each request remained at 75% accuracy as she did not know to ask for an accommodation.

Training. Michelle's training phase consisted of 23 sessions. Visual analysis showed that Michelle made no requests during the training phase.

Post-Training. Michelle's post-training phase consisted of 39 sessions. In the post-training phase, Michelle did not make requests until she was prompted to do so. Up to session 96, Michelle made occasional requests, but on session 97 Michelle received prompting and her requests became more constant. After prompting began, she continued to make requests and the data show a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests. Michelle made fewer requests in the generalization measure due to her success in the class. Michelle achieved at least an 80% average in the class the last term of the school year. Michelle's success reduced the number of opportunities, that is, the need to make requests. However, when Michelle had assignments that required accommodations, she consistently made requests.

Jamie. Jamie was a vocal person and approached her teacher when she wanted to. However, she was often careless in assignments and did not ask for help when she should have. She did not require prompting for one out of four requests during the post-training phase.

Baseline. Jamie's baseline phase consisted of 70 sessions. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Jamie made five requests in the baseline phase. Jamie was willing to ask her teacher for help, but her accuracy according to the script reached only 25% on two occasions and 50% on three other occasions.

Training. Jamie's training phase consisted of 16 sessions. During the training phase, Jamie made one request without prompting. Jamie's accuracy according to the script was low for this request.

Post-Training. Jamie's post-training phase consisted of 16 sessions. Jamie immediately began to make requests following the training phase. Jamie required minimal prompting as she continued to make requests. She made four requests in the post-training phase, making a request each time that she received an assignment requiring an accommodation. Jamie was passing her class with at least a 70% average during the post-training phase and therefore did not have many assignments that needed to be re-done or that required an accommodation. Still, the data showed a consistent upward trend, suggesting a steady increase in the frequency of requests.

Accuracy. Figure 4 shows the effect of explicitly teaching self-determination skills on the accuracy of participants' requests in the general education setting. Figure 4 data for the baseline, training, and post-training phases are summarized below. For each phase, two calculations are reported for each mean and median. The first calculation includes all data points, even instances when a request was not made and was thus being recorded as a 0. The

second calculation includes only the data points recorded when a request was made, meaning no zeros were included in the calculation.

<Insert Figure 4>

Trent. Trent did not make requests in the general education setting without verbal prompting from a research assistant trained to recognize opportunities. After Trent was prompted to make a request, he did so accurately.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Trent made one request during the baseline phase. Trent's mean accuracy was 12.5% and 50% respectively. His median scores were 0 and 50.

Training. During the training phase, Trent made one request. Trent's mean accuracy scores for this phase were 4.16% and 100%. Both of his median scores were 0.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Trent began to make requests after receiving prompting. The data show that Trent used the script accurately. His mean accuracy scores were 18.84% and 100%. His median scores were 0 and 100.

Michelle. Michelle was quiet, but confident in the way she made requests. She was accurate in her use of the script.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicates that Michelle made five requests during the baseline phase. Michelle's mean accuracy for these requests was 75%. Her median score was 75.

Training. During the training phase, Michelle made no requests. Therefore, the accuracy of the requests was not measured.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Michelle began to make requests after receiving prompting. The data show that Michelle used the script accurately. Her mean accuracy scores were 20% and 100%. Her median scores were 0 and 100.

Jamie. Jamie was willing to talk to her teacher and ask for help, but she did not ask for help appropriately and accurately until she was taught the script. She did not reach 100% accuracy using the script until the post-training phase.

Baseline. Visual analysis of the data indicated that Jamie made five requests during the baseline phase. The mean accuracy of these requests was 3.22% and 40%. Her median scores were 0 and 50.

Training. During the training phase, Jamie made two requests. Jamie's mean accuracy scores for this phase were 6.25% and 62.5%. Her median scores were 0 and 62.5.

Post-Training. In the post-training phase, Jamie began to make requests with some prompting. The data show that Jamie used the script accurately. Her mean accuracy scores were 25% and 100%. Her median scores were 0 and 100.

Social Validity. When asked if they liked learning about their disability, participants unanimously agreed that they enjoyed it. Participants reported that they learned why they were struggling in some areas and what they needed help with. One participant commented, "It helped me learn how...to turn my disability into my ability." Participants all agreed that this experience helped them understand themselves better. One participant stated, "In the past I was confused about why I was taken in privately for testing and stuff—but now I understand that better." Participants commented that their favorite parts of the lessons included learning about the history of disabilities and practicing asking for accommodations. Participants felt that they were prepared to ask their teachers for accommodations. They also felt that this experience

helped them get more schoolwork completed along with getting better grades. One participant commented that she “used to be failing more classes and [would] have to rush to get things done at the end of the term—but with extended time [she could] get more stuff done.” Overall, students made positive comments about the experience and said they found it helpful and applicable in their schoolwork.

When asked if the intervention worked well with their student, all three teachers felt that the intervention worked better for students who were motivated and proactive. The general education teachers commented that even students who were not being tracked (but had received the lessons) asked for accommodations. Teachers felt that the benefits of the intervention included empowering students and helping them feel more comfortable talking to their teachers and asking for accommodations. Teachers were also asked if the intervention was convenient and the data collection checklist was easy and quick to fill out. Teachers felt that the intervention was convenient to implement. One teacher commented, “I didn’t have to do anything out of the [ordinary] for them. Just say yes and ask when they would be coming in for extra help or how much longer they needed for an assignment.” One teacher, who was a first-year intern that year, said that she would forget to update her checklist on a daily basis and would have a hard time remembering the specifics at the end of the week.

When asked what changes would be recommended if they were to participate in this study again, teachers reported that allowing enough practice time so students didn’t require prompting until the very end would be helpful. Jamie’s teacher commented that the help that the research assistant provided in prompting the participant was beneficial, but “to have a true measure of what they’ve learned...the last couple of weeks post-training should be without prompting.” Michelle’s teacher reported that she liked having someone to check up on

Michelle. She felt that if Michelle had been prompted earlier, she wouldn't have had to be prompted at the end. In summary, the general education teachers felt that prompting students earlier and then fading the prompting so students reached independence would have added strength to the study.

Overall, both the students and the general education teachers made positive statements about the intervention's outcomes. For example, the students reported feeling more confident about approaching a teacher and the teachers reported feeling satisfied that their students could communicate their needs in an appropriate manner.

Discussion

Previous research shows that students with disabilities need to be explicitly taught self-determination behaviors, particularly self-advocacy skills (Durlak et al., 1994; Wehmeyer et al., 2013). The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of explicitly teaching participants self-advocacy skills by having them memorize a script and request accommodations in a special education and general education setting. The lessons in the present study taught participants how to request accommodations using a script that contained four sections: (a) approaching the teacher and asking if it is a good time to talk, (b) expressing the concern with the assignment given that day and linking the concern to student strengths and weaknesses, (c) asking for an accommodation(s), and (d) thanking the teacher. The data demonstrated a functional relationship over three applications of the intervention in training and generalization settings. It may therefore be inferred that the intervention package produced an experimental effect.

Participants became empowered through learning about the history of disabilities, reviewing their own IEPs and personal educational history, discussing good communication skills, and practicing the script. The intervention, which contained 16 lessons, allowed students

to reflect on their educational experiences, ask questions, and make comments about having IEPs and being in special education. It also helped students to become aware of their rights and opportunities in a school setting. Three participants were taught using lessons relating to the above topics in a resource setting and were prompted to use a script to request accommodations in both the special education and a general education setting.

Knowledge Measure

It was hypothesized that participants would not request accommodations in the special education setting until after receiving the intervention and results confirm this hypothesis, suggesting that participants did not ask for accommodations until after they had received the intervention. Results also clearly indicate that participants required verbal prompting in order to make requests. Pre and posttest scores suggest that prior to the intervention, participants were unaware of the nature of their disability and did not know about their accommodations. The Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA) (see Appendix D) included questions such as “What does IEP stand for?” and “What is an accommodation on an IEP?” Trent received a score of 57% on the pretest and improved his score to 92% on the accompanying posttest. Michelle scored a 53% on the pretest and improved her score to 100% on the posttest. Jamie scored a 53% on the pretest and improved her score to 96% on the posttest.

During the training, Trent was shocked that he had accommodations and exclaimed that his teachers would be surprised to know he had accommodations. Several students in Trent’s group, but who were not involved in the study, were excited to discover what their accommodations were and how they could request them. Michelle and Jamie were also unaware of the accommodations available on their IEP and gained insight into their disabilities when reviewing their personal educational histories. Participant responses therefore suggest

that few students in special education may (a) know about their rights to accommodations and (b) have the communication skills necessary to approach teachers and make requests for accommodations. Study results suggest that participants benefited from explicit instruction in and frequent practice of the script.

The special education setting provided structured opportunities to request accommodations. The opportunities to make requests were presented at the beginning of every class period as a self-start assignment. Participants became familiar with the assignments and were able to recognize when to make a request. Results indicated that participants knew the classroom procedures and were able to recognize when they needed to request an accommodation to finish an assignment. The assignments that were used to help students recognize the need for an accommodation were referred to as classroom self-starters. These assignments were made available to the participants over a six-month period. The extended length of time made it possible for participants to receive ample opportunity to practice using communication skills to get the teacher's attention and make a request for an accommodation.

All participants memorized the script within two or three practice sessions (each session lasted 20-30 minutes). Participants also had accurate retention of the script sections. Trent repeated the script with 100% accuracy, even after a two-week winter break. Michelle repeated the script with 100% accuracy after being absent for a period of two weeks in the spring. The script was natural sounding and brief, which may have contributed to easy memorization and retention.

Generalization Measure

It was hypothesized that participants would not make requests in the general education setting prior to receiving the intervention. The findings clearly demonstrate that participants did not make frequent and accurate requests until the intervention was completed.

It was surprising to discover that even after students could make requests without frequent prompting in the special education setting, students neglected to make requests in the generalization setting. Participants struggled to generalize the behavior without prompting from a trained adult. To encourage generalization following the training, the researcher asked the resource learning class as a whole whether students had asked their general education teachers for accommodations on assignments that were difficult. Students who were not involved in the study made comments such as, “That’s scary,” or “I don’t feel comfortable asking my teachers for accommodations.” Other students simply forgot to ask their teachers for accommodations. It became clear that merely providing explicit instruction in the special education setting would not be enough to generalize the behavior. One or two proactive students not involved in the study were able to approach their teachers and make requests, but this was uncommon. In order for students to generalize the behavior and make requests comfortably, prompting from an adult was necessary.

The general education setting provided less structured opportunities for participants to request accommodations. Participants had to be self-aware and recognize opportunities to ask for accommodations. Participants varied in their self-awareness and proactivity in making requests. Trent appeared to lack self-awareness skills that enabled him to recognize and choose an assignment to ask for an accommodation. When the research assistant began prompting him, she explained that she would help him choose assignments and know when to ask for an

accommodation. Trent had many missing assignments and showed enthusiasm for this extra assistance. Verbal prompting greatly enhanced Trent's number of requests and helped him recognize when opportunities to make requests arose.

Michelle was proactive in using the script and asking her teachers for accommodations. Michelle generalized this skill across several settings and asked other teachers for accommodations on assignments. On one occasion she emailed her English teacher for an accommodation. Her teacher was very impressed and immediately shared this success with the researcher. She also approached her math teacher on several occasions and used the script to ask for extra time on assignments. Although data were not collected in either her English or math classes, subject area teachers reported this information to the researcher because they knew of the study.

Jamie had the least amount of time in the post-training phase but demonstrated understanding of the skill. She required verbal prompting from the research assistant in order to make requests. Similar to Michelle, Jamie was passing her class and didn't have many assignments that required an accommodation to complete. When there was an assignment that allowed Jamie to request an accommodation, the research assistant prompted her to make the request.

Present Findings Related to Previous Research

The results of this study strengthen previous findings stating that students need to be explicitly taught self-determination skills and require practice in using self-advocacy skills. The literature makes it clear that middle school students generally do not have the self-determination skills necessary to be successful (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). Observations of the participants involved in this study support this claim. Prior to the intervention, participants lacked the

knowledge needed to empower them to accept their disability and use their accommodations to become successful students.

Previous findings also suggest that students with disabilities view communication skills to be critical to their academic success. According to Field, Sarver, and Shaw (2003), a sample of college students with disabilities viewed their ability to communicate effectively with their teachers to be one of their greatest deficits. The current study responded to the need for research in this area, demonstrating that communication skills can be acquired through explicit instruction by providing frequent opportunities to practice newly learned skills. Current findings specifically suggest that middle school students can learn communication skills and approach their teachers when they need help. Routine practice and prompting aided participants' success in the present study, and the described procedures could potentially be replicated at the classroom level.

Previous research has also suggested a need for lessons specifically designed to teach self-determination skills (Raskind et al., 2002). It is a disservice to wait until high school to teach students with disabilities to self-advocate. Students need explicit instruction and numerous opportunities to practice self-advocacy skills (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

The current study addressed the above recommendations by assessing the effects of explicitly teaching self-determination/self-advocacy skills to middle school students. Skills taught included recognizing strengths and weaknesses, identifying components of the IEP, differentiating between appropriate and inappropriate communication skills, and memorizing a script. Present findings corroborated Eisenman and Chamberlin's (2001) earlier conjecture, demonstrating that explicit instruction and practice prepared participants to pass off a memorized script successfully—in this case, with 100% mastery. The evidence is strengthened

by that fact that participants were able to maintain the skill for a period of at least two weeks following completion of the intervention. At a broader level, current study findings suggest that middle school students can be taught to self-advocate with success.

Limitations

There are several limitations to the study. First, due to the restricted time frame in which the study was conducted, it was not possible to fade the prompting of participants in the special education and general education classroom to request an accommodation. It is acknowledged that the researcher may have waited too long to begin prompting the first participant; the amount of post-training time available for the second and third participant was thereby lessened. In short, to complete the study within one school year, the study had to be kept to a specific time frame. Despite the restricted time frame and the continued use of the prompting procedure, all participants met evaluation criteria, suggesting that the intervention achieved a positive result.

Another limitation is the lack of interobserver reliability data during the baseline phase for participant 1. Due to concerns about beginning the study as soon as possible, baseline data were collected in four sessions for participant 1 without taking interobserver reliability data. Still, visual analysis indicated that zero requests were made across the three consecutive sessions, demonstrating stability of the data.

Finally, participants required frequent prompting in order to make requests. Despite the many practice opportunities, participants required explicit instruction to help them determine when they should ask for an accommodation in a particular setting; participants also required verbal prompting to make the request. By way of example, Trent required verbal prompting throughout the entire post-training phase. Trent seemed to be more inclined to daydreaming and he often got caught up in what he was doing at the moment and appeared to forget to ask for an

accommodation to finish his assignments. The researcher did not prompt Trent for several sessions immediately following the training. However, it was eventually decided that Trent would require verbal prompting in order to make requests. His self-awareness appeared to be low since he struggled to make requests on his own. As soon as he was prompted, however, he would quickly use the script and make an accurate request.

Michelle was quick to learn the script and recognize opportunities to make requests. She required prompting only one or two times before she was able to use the script when needed and with 100% accuracy. Jamie had the least amount of time in the post-training phase, but she also quickly recognized opportunities to make requests for accommodations in the special education setting. She required prompting on occasion, but was able to make requests independently most of the time.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

This study clearly demonstrates that explicitly teaching self-determination skills can benefit adolescents with mild/moderate disabilities. First, students in the study became more self-aware about why they were receiving special education services and more knowledgeable about the ways in which their disability impacts their learning. Considering how little students in secondary schools seem to know about their IEP and the accompanying accommodations, additional instruction in this area is crucial. Second, it is important that students learn how to use appropriate communication skills to approach teachers and ask for accommodations. The intervention evaluated in this study contained this essential component. Finally, results suggest that memorizing and practicing a script can empower middle school students with mild/moderate disabilities to make requests for accommodations across multiple settings.

Conclusion

Many educators view self-determination skills as the most important outcome of our educational system (McDougall, Evans, & Baldwin, 2010). Yet, many teachers neglect to explicitly teach self-determination skills due to time constraints (Konrad et al., 2007). Explicitly teaching self-determination skills, particularly self-advocacy skills, to secondary students leads to great benefits. Research has shown that providing a stronger focus on self-determination skills can add to more positive life experiences for individuals with disabilities (Field et al., 2003). The current findings suggest that explicitly teaching middle school students with mild/moderate disabilities self-determination skills via a script can give them the necessary confidence to approach their teachers to ask for help and request accommodations.

Teachers play a large role in encouraging use of such skills as they attempt to establish an environment in which students are comfortable enough to talk openly about their disabilities. It is therefore important that teachers provide lessons specifically incorporating self-determination skills and that they allow students the opportunity to use self-advocacy skills in their classroom. The evidence further suggests that for efforts to teach self-determination skills to be effective, teachers must present numerous opportunities in order for students to reach mastery and generalize the behavior.

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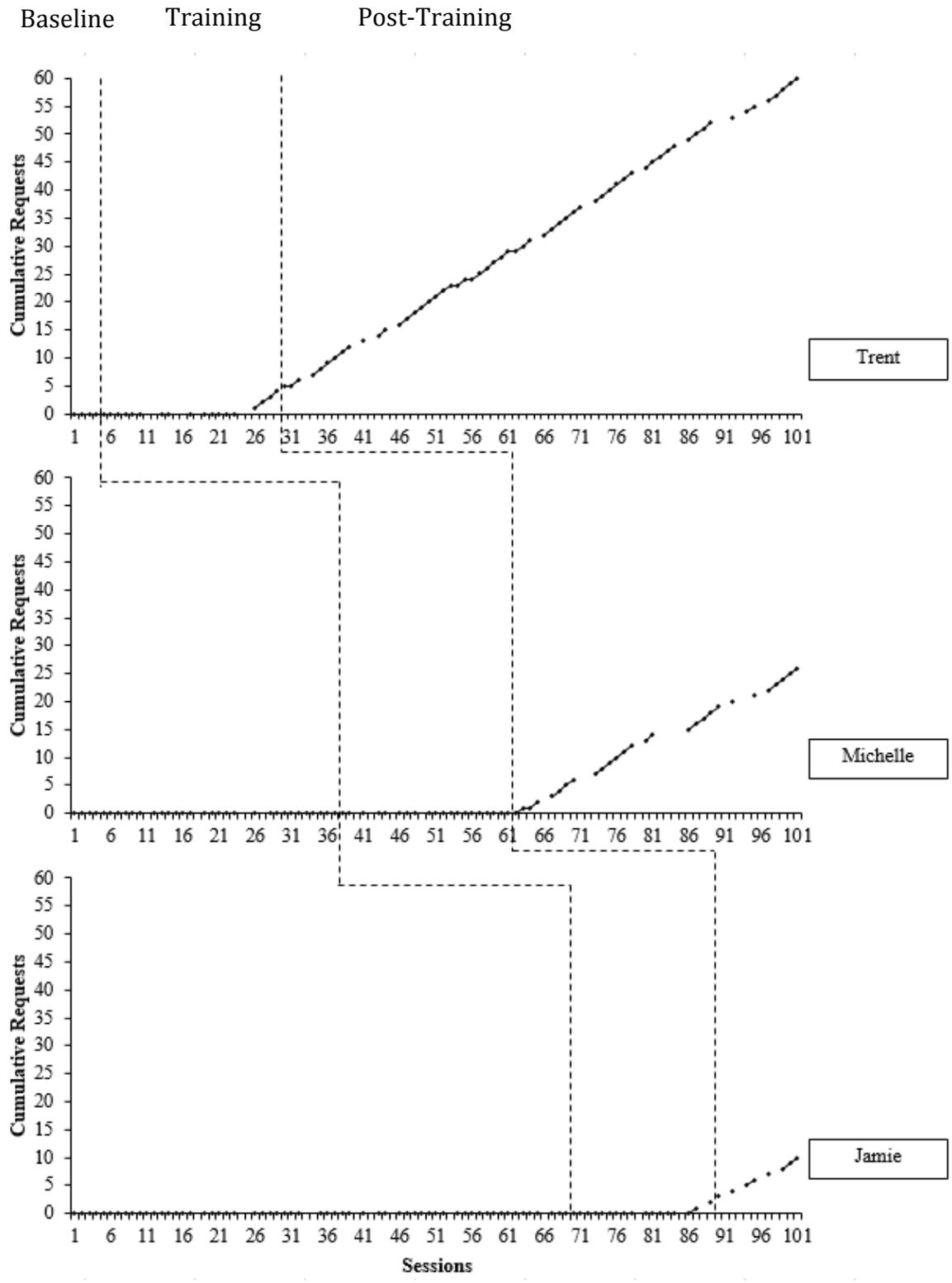


Figure 1. Cumulative number of requests: special education setting.

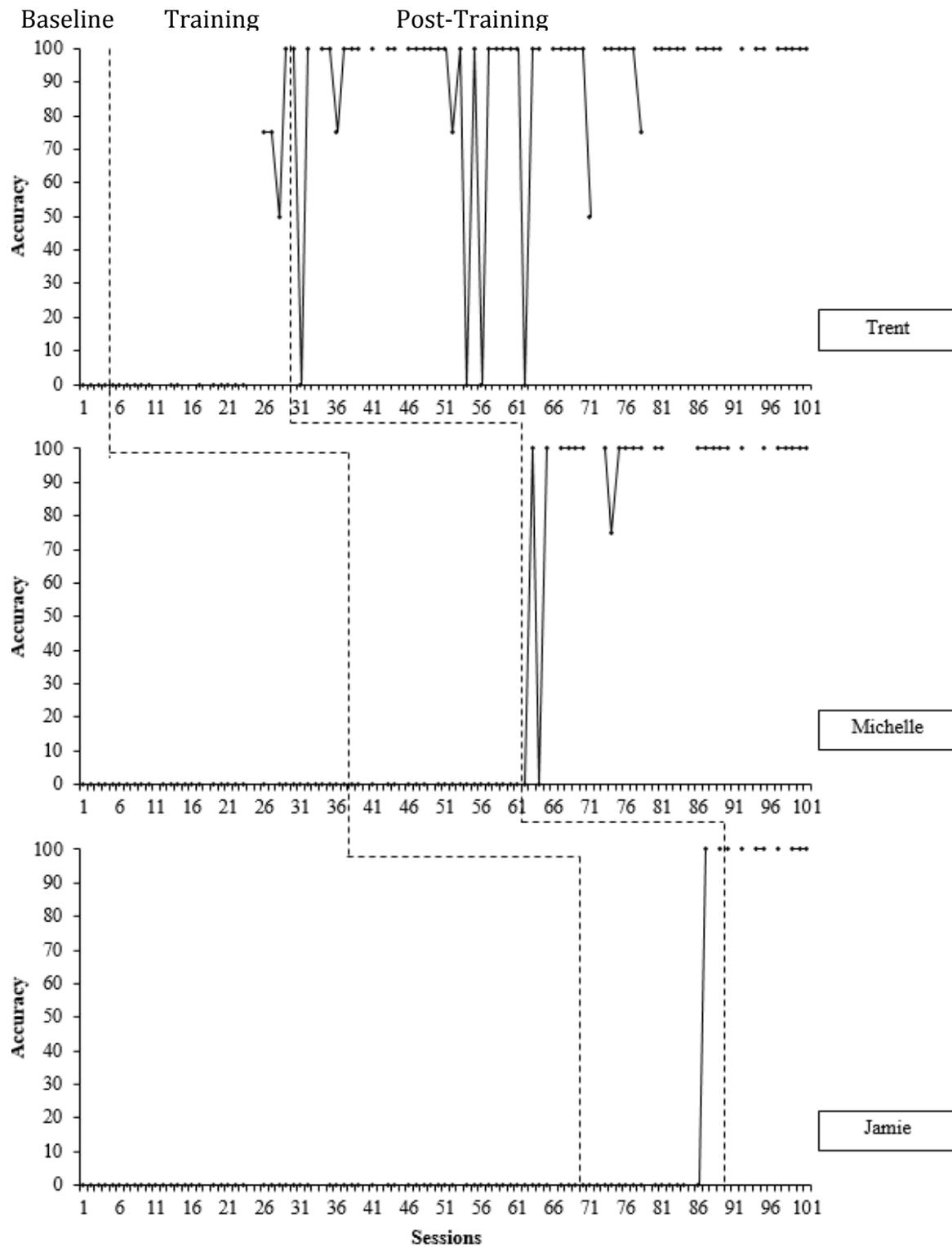


Figure 2. Percentage of steps accurately completed: special education setting.

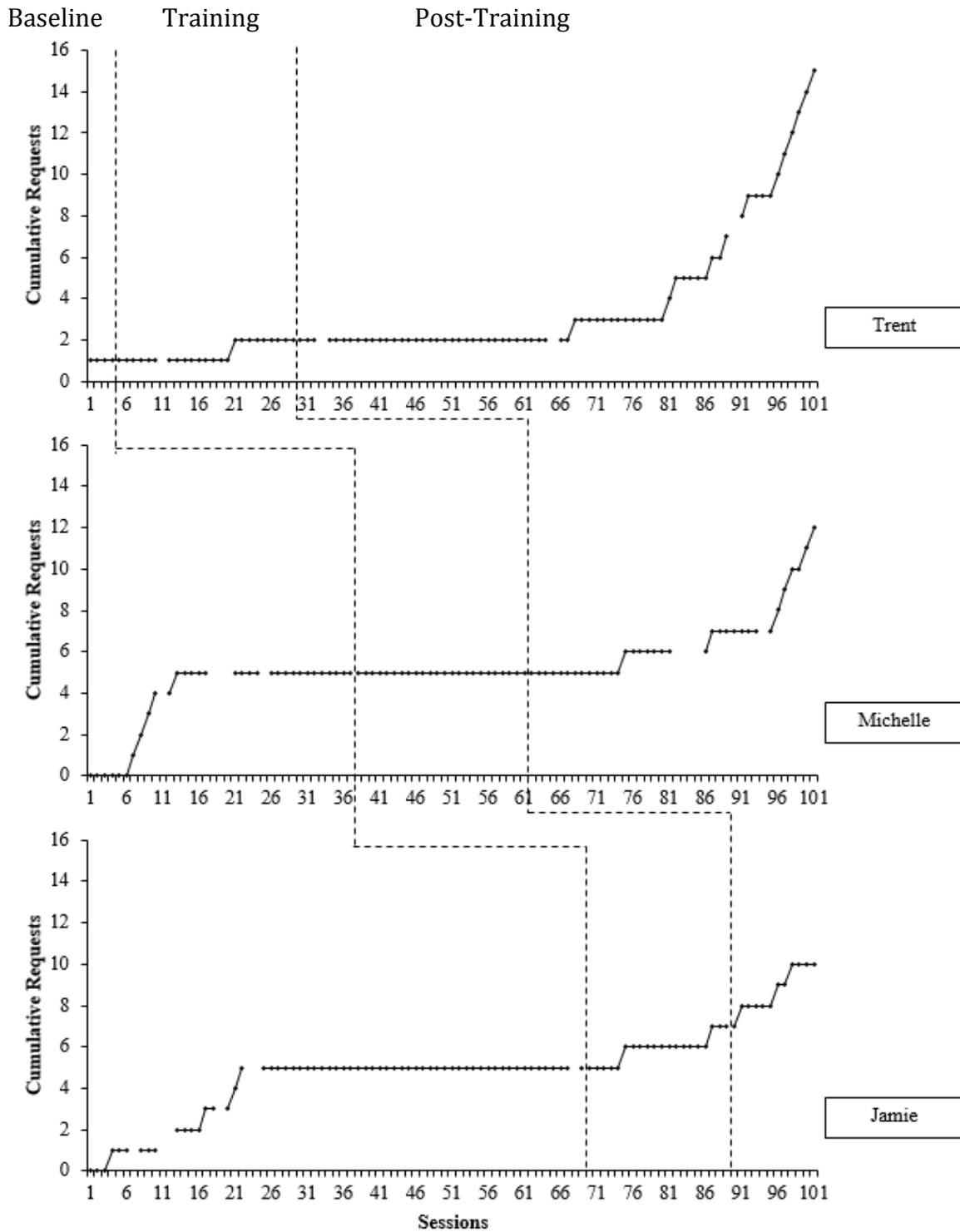


Figure 3. Cumulative number of requests: general education setting.

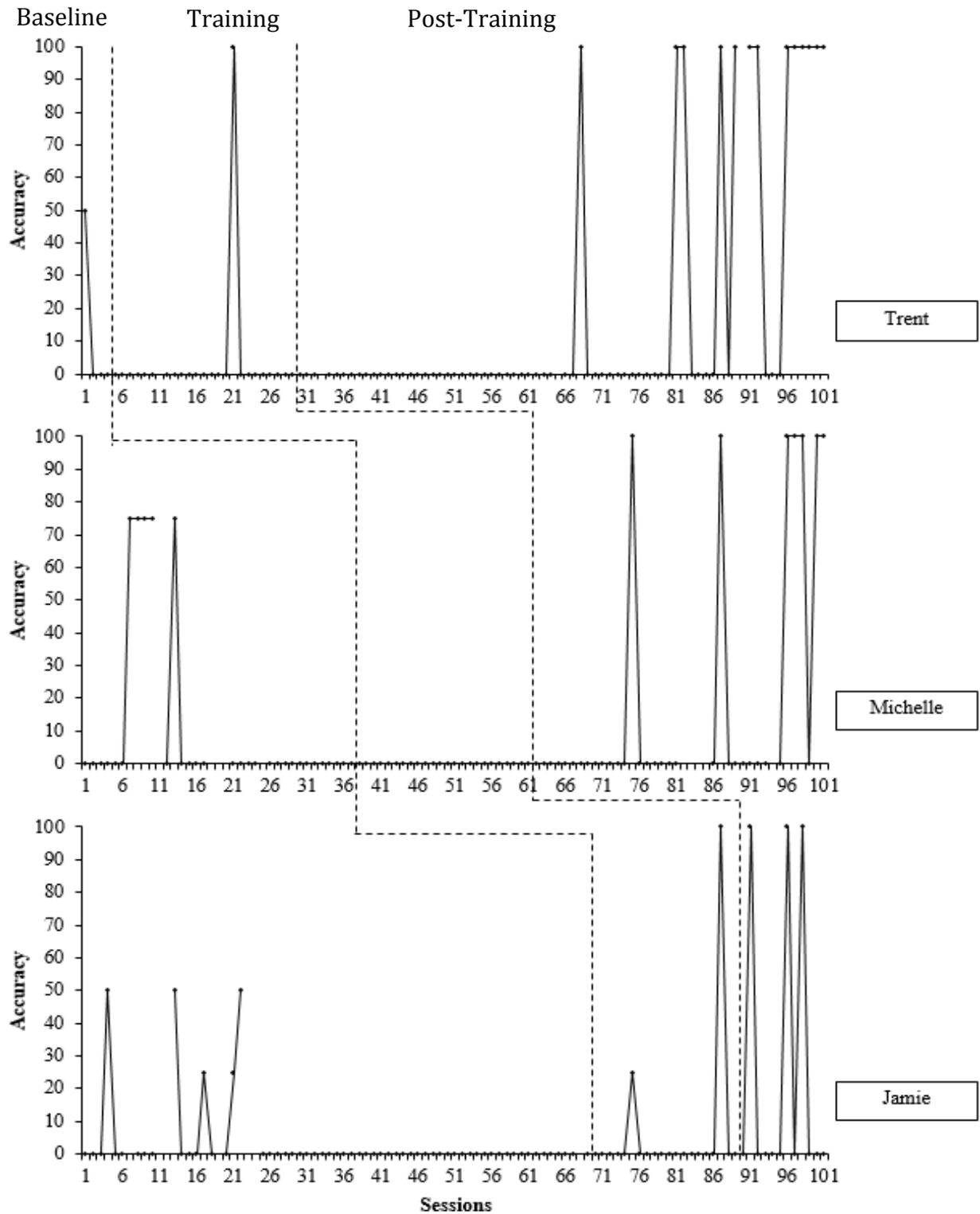


Figure 4. Percentage of steps accurately completed: general education setting.

APPENDIX A: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Learning disabilities (LD) are an assorted group of disorders that negatively impact a person's ability to learn. They can affect a person's ability to speak, listen, think, read, write, spell, or compute (NCLD, 2014). Currently, 2.4 million students are diagnosed with LD and receive special education services in schools (NCLD, 2014). Michael Skinner (1998) pointed out that students diagnosed with LD in childhood are likely to experience the same struggles as adults. The higher demands of adult life can also make learning problems more difficult to diagnose and treat (Skinner, 1998).

In the school setting, many general education teachers and parents view students with disabilities as unmotivated. Academic inadequacies can be attributed to lazy behavior rather than to a child's having a disability (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). Students with learning disabilities may focus primarily on their learning and social deficits. The invisibility of learning disabilities can make it so that these individuals are overlooked during times of transition (Mishna et al., 2011). Encouraging these students to engage in self-determined behaviors can contribute to success at such a critical time (Mishna et al., 2011). Research states that factors connected with self-determination are regarded as important in the overall adjustment to life demands (Dulak, Rose, & Bursuck, 1994) and middle school is such a time when students need to make adjustments and cope with major transitions (Eccles, Lord, & Midgely, 1991).

Transition to Middle School

Middle school is a difficult transitional time for many students, but can prove especially trying for students with disabilities (Mishna, Muskat, Farnia & Wiener, 2011). Students going from sixth grade in an elementary school to seventh grade in a middle school have many challenges (Flexer, Baer, Luft, & Simmons, 2013). Often, the school is larger, which requires

navigation and communication skills. Students need to know how to get to their various classes and who to ask for help when they get lost. Even after finding those classes, they need to routinely ask themselves what materials they need for each class, how the class is structured, and what is required to be successful in each class. This requires organization, social and communication skills, and problem-solving strategies.

Often, students have six or seven different teachers, each with different personalities and teaching styles, rules and procedures, and class content and assignments. Further, students struggle managing the workload that comes at a secondary level. Completing and handing in assignments is a large stumbling block for many students. Making a smooth transition from elementary to middle school requires certain self-determination skills, and students with disabilities show less self-determination than their non-disabled peers (Wehmeyer, Palmer, Shogren, Williams-Diehm, & Soukup, 2013).

Middle school is a time when many students are developing and maturing at various speeds emotionally, physically, and socially. Eccles et al. (1991) explained that early adolescent development is characterized by “increases in the following: desire for autonomy from adult control, especially from one’s parents’ control; peer orientation, self-focus, [and] self-consciousness” (p. 534). Middle school students often desire increased independence and self-monitoring, but lack the necessary skills and practice to manage their own behavior successfully. Students with disabilities struggle not only with typical developmental and transitional changes, but must also deal with the effects of their disability, which may demand extra time and attention in order to be understood and managed.

Lichtenstein created an ecological view of adolescence today in which mass media was noted as one of the critical domains (Flexer et al., 2013). Lichtenstein’s model is consistent

with the notion that youth tend to imitate behaviors of well-known individuals (e.g. popular actors and performers). Moreover, youth with disabilities can get confused by the media's unclear and negative productions of disabilities as "something that should be feared, pitied, overcome, or hidden" (Flexer et al., 2013, p. 7).

Flexer and colleagues (2013) additionally provided a brief history of society's views of persons with disabilities. On an application basis, the ecological model Lichtenstein created suggests that many deficits connected with individuals with disabilities are manifestations of cultural, community, organizational, and interpersonal barriers. One example comes from U.S. culture. Until recently, communities and organizations have perceived people with disabilities as being nonproductive and undesirable. Following World War II, the idea that a disability was a burden to society was still prevalent. It is not uncommon for people with disabilities to be viewed as a burden; in fact, many individuals still feel pity toward this segment of our population.

By the time students reach middle school, many of them have been in special education for several years. Students are often disheartened and unknowledgeable about their disability. They lack the skills necessary to be successful during this transition time. Their self-esteem tends to be low and they can have poor self-image. These characteristics make the transition challenging and laborious. During the adolescent period when children reach adolescence and are dealing with physical, mental, emotional, and hormonal changes in general, students with disabilities have even more challenges and obstacles to overcome. Research indicates that receiving instruction to strengthen self-determination can help these students improve their self-awareness and self-image (Kawanishi & Takahashi, 2005).

What is Self-Determination?

Students who possess self-determination often exhibit an acceptance of their disability, understand how it affects them, are able to describe their disability, know what support services are needed to be successful, and possess a determination to overcome obstacles and trials that assuredly will come (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). Getzel and Thoma further defined self-determination as “being able to advocate for what you need, understanding your disability and how it impacts your learning, having self-confidence, being independent, and adjusting your schedule to make sure things get done” (2008, p. 79). Not many students with disabilities entering middle school have self-determined behaviors to strengthen their personal support system (Campbell-Whatley, 2008).

Durlak, Rose, and Bursack (1994) outlined skills required for a successful transition into post-secondary schools. These skills can be applied to any major transition and include the following:

- (a) an awareness of academic and social strengths and weaknesses as well as compensatory strategies;
- (b) the ability to express such an awareness to faculty and staff;
- (c) an awareness of service needs and appropriate accommodations; and
- (d) the ability to request information, assistance, and accommodation when appropriate and necessary.

(1994, p. 51)

Self-determination strategies can reduce many of the difficulties students face when transitioning from one school to another. Konrad, Fowler, Walker, Test, and Wood (2007) provided a description of self-determination that encompasses what is needed for smooth transitions in life (not just in school):

Self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in a goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective are essential...When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults. (2007, p. 90).

Necessary Skills for Success

Results of a 20-year study suggested that there are specific "success attributes" that predict life outcomes for students with learning disabilities (Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, & Herman, 2002). The success attributes included self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, goal-setting, the presence and use of effective support systems, and emotional stability (Raskind et al., 2002). The researchers found that successful individuals generally referred to themselves as learning disabled and were very open about their life events and struggles in terms of their learning disability. Still, these individuals did not feel overly defined by their disabilities and were able to see their disabilities as only one part of themselves (Raskind et al., 2002). Numerous successful individuals had a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses, and distinguished between and accepted their talents and limitations. This study expounded on several key concepts of self-determination and showed a need for curriculum with specific activities designed to foster such attributes in students with learning disabilities (Raskind et al., 2002).

Field, Sarver, and Shaw (2003) noted that adults with disabilities are less likely to exhibit characteristics leading to a high quality of life (such as finding and keeping a job, attaining a satisfactory standard of living, establishing independence, etc.). Field et al. reported

that providing a stronger focus on self-determination education and support strategies could contribute to more positive experiences for persons with disabilities. These researchers discussed a previous study that interviewing students with disabilities in postsecondary environments. Results indicated the respondents viewed the ability to communicate to be an important component related to their success. Yet communication in the college environment proved to be relatively difficult for the participants. Participants rarely expressed satisfaction in their ability to communicate their needs and desires to university staff and faculty (Field et al., 2003).

Brinckerhoff, Shaw, and McGuire (1992) discussed issues of independence for students with disabilities. Training students to self-advocate was noted as a critical component of postsecondary programming/training. In this particular study, part of that training included teaching students to identify and request necessary accommodations. Brinckerhoff et al. (1992) referenced a report from the Department of Labor that listed skills employers want. One of those components was communication skills. Many adults with disabilities show deficiencies in this area (Brinckerhoff et al., 1992). Previous research therefore clearly indicates that communication skills are necessary for students' success.

The Need for Earlier Self-Determination Instruction

Repetition is a crucial tool in learning new concepts (Belfiore, 1995; Swanson & Sachs-Lee, 2000), but students rarely receive self-advocacy training prior to middle school and often don't receive such instruction in middle school or high school. Students need numerous opportunities to practice self-determination skills (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001) in a safe and controlled environment in order to generalize those skills to other settings. Waiting until high school to teach self-determination is a disservice to students with disabilities (Eisenman &

Chamberlin, 2001) because it leaves very little time to practice and master self-determined behaviors and self-advocacy strategies.

Self-determination instruction should begin in earlier years and “continue through the multiple stages of development” (Campbell-Whatley, 2008, p. 138). Eisenman and Chamberlin (2001) recognized that prearranged efforts to stimulate self-determination must start before high school. The authors also pointed out that students need numerous opportunities to cultivate skills in goal setting, plan development, monitoring and adjusting. Adolescents with disabilities need explicit instruction and systematic opportunities for practice in order to acquire self-determined attributes (Durlak et al., 1994; Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

Getzel and Thoma (2008) used focus groups to examine the experiences of successful college students with disabilities. The research objective was to identify the self-determination skills the students used to self-advocate and obtain essential supports. Dominant themes included self-awareness, goal setting, and self-management. Most of the college students voiced a desire for earlier instruction in the use of strategies for problem solving and identifying resources. Findings confirmed a need for effective instructional methods to support the development of self-determination strategies in younger children (Chambers, Wehmeyer, Saito, Lida, Lee, & Singh, 2007).

The Importance of Self-Determination

Based on statistics cited in their review, Konrad et al. (2007) found post-high school outcomes for students in all disability categories to be less than desired. For example, the researchers discovered that only 82.6% of youth with learning disabilities were involved in post-secondary education, employment, or job training within two years of leaving high school. Konrad et al. (2007) explained that although this number has increased in recent years, the fact

that almost 20% of youth with disabilities are not achieving important post-secondary goals gives rise to concern. Efforts to improve post high school outcomes have caused researchers to evaluate the predictors of making a successful transition. These predictors include self-determination (Durlak et al., 1994; Field et al., 2003; Getzel and Thoma, 2008; Skinner, 1998).

The Role of Teachers in Developing Self-Determination in Students with Disabilities

Teachers play a critical role in teaching and facilitating self-determined behaviors. Students with disabilities often want to develop and practice self-determined behaviors, but without explicit instruction have difficulty learning about and engaging in such behaviors (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). Interventions for students with learning disabilities often focus on academic skills and focus on psychosocial difficulties and adjustments less frequently. Self-determination strategies are vital for these individuals to transition successfully to adulthood (Mishna, Muskat, Farnia & Wiener, 2011).

Teachers have asserted that self-determination is a crucial outcome of education (Eisenman, & Chamberlin, 2001). It is the responsibility of teachers to enhance their current instruction with self-determination lessons in order for students with disabilities to experience successful school-to-adult-life transitions (Eisenman, & Chamberlin 2001). Durlak et al. found that students with learning disabilities “must be taught such skills directly” (1994, p. 56). Carter, Lane, Pierson and Stang (2008) documented substantial discrepancies in the measure to which special education teachers claimed they valued self-determination and the extent to which they actually made efforts to teach it in their classroom. It was noted that such discrepancies may be attributed to numerous factors, including a need for training and needed resources, the degree of administrator support, and competing instructional priorities.

Teachers have the ability to impact children's attitudes, and those attitudes can be altered using brief intervention. In a study conducted by Mishna et al. (2011), adult-guided discussion largely increased elementary school children's understanding of individuals with disabilities. Teachers and parents who are supportive and hold conversations about learning disabilities with their students with disabilities have an effect on students' ability to discuss their disability and gain self-realization. Even though such conversations are vital, students with learning disabilities report that their parents and teachers do not discuss their learning disability with them (Mishna et al, 2011).

Teachers often have the desire to teach and encourage self-advocacy in their own classrooms, but hesitate to take away time from the content they need to cover. Special educators acknowledge the need for their students to learn self-determination skills, but point to time constraints as the main reason they do not teach these skills in their classrooms (Konrad et al., 2007). Fortunately, research shows that even educators who have few resources and little time for extra lessons can mindfully and explicitly add to existing opportunities to boost self-determination (Eisenman, & Chamberlin 2001).

Teaching Self-Determination

Several studies have been conducted that show the positive results of explicitly teaching self-determination in the classroom. Research shows that students who have high levels of self-determination have high school achievement, better adult outcomes, and are more goal-oriented (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). The following studies demonstrate the effectiveness of explicitly teaching self-determination skills to students.

Before implementing self-determination into curriculum, it is important to understand the typical age at which students begin to demonstrate certain self-determination skills (Test,

Browder, & Algozzine, 2004). Children ages 2–5 show some here-and-now choice-making skills but have a finite knowledge of their options and have little ability to reflect on their choices. Children ages 6–8 begin to analyze and solve simple problems and can generalize across settings, but are limited in their ability to learn from consequences of previous choices. It is not until children reach the ages of 9–11 that they begin to set goals and use those goals to influence their choices and can make corrections as necessary. Finally, students over the age of 12 can make decisions, generalize problem-solving skills, target long-term goals, and adjust plans as necessary (Test et al., 2004). Thus, it can be inferred that self-determination lessons that focus on goals and self-reflection should be taught in middle school.

Hart and Brehm (2013) showed compelling evidence to teach self-advocacy skills as early as possible. Outcomes of research showed that youth and young adults with disabilities who gained self-determination skills had enhanced academic performance, more active class participation, improved employment and independent living opportunities, and more positive quality of life and reported life satisfaction (Hart & Brehm, 2013). Although the research was geared toward elementary school students, it can be applied to secondary education students as well.

Hart and Brehm (2013) outlined various curriculum ideas that teachers can implement. One intervention includes goal-setting templates. Teachers can use such templates and hold discussions about goal setting with their students. After students have developed some academic goals, teachers can facilitate the planning process for achieving their goals. Teachers should also have their students pinpoint and write down areas where they encounter challenges during instruction. Further interventions included lessons on what accommodations are and how students can ask for them and use them in their classrooms. Role-playing was one way to

practice such skills. Monitoring student progress as they learned these skills was also an important component of the outlined curriculum (Hart & Brehm, 2013). These interventions were intended to be easy for teachers to implement and provided a framework to get teachers started on explicitly teaching self-determination skills.

Campbell-Whatley (2008) piloted a study in which self-determination lessons were taught to elementary, middle, and high school students with disabilities. The researchers wanted to determine whether the lessons increased students' self-awareness and self-concept. Students' self-determination was measured before and after the lessons using the Piers Harris Self Concept Scale, which includes 80 questions that assess how children and adolescents feel about themselves.

The lessons were structured using the acronym TARGET: T–Target the goals and objectives of the lessons, A–Assess students' knowledge and implement objectives, R–Role play situations, G–Generalize to other school situations, E–Evaluate student attainment, T–Test transfer of skills to other environments (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). The lessons were designed to address the communication needs that students with disabilities will have in situations in which individuals do not understand what it means to have a learning disability. The lesson activities “a) compared a disability in learning to a physical disability, b) explained eligibility procedures for special education, c) explored student strengths and limitations, d) addressed techniques related to advocacy, problem solving, anger control and social skills, and e) presented various academic and job related strategies” (Campbell-Whatley, 2008, p. 139).

The results of this study indicated a compelling difference in student self-concept before and after intervention (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). Students' improved self-concept in the post-intervention phase suggested the intervention had a significant impact. The lessons were

administered in seven weeks and were implemented in a natural setting. However, the lack of a control group and the small number of participants present generalization concerns. Including a control group in a future investigation would help increase the external validity of this study.

Mishna et al. (2011) investigated the effects of a school-based program on the reported self-advocacy knowledge of students with disabilities (Mishna et al., 2011). The independent variable was an intervention that included weekly group treatments for students with learning disabilities in sixth and seventh grade. The group leaders were qualified social workers or school psychologists, unlike the previous study in which teachers implemented the intervention. The data were collected through self-report, which featured the interesting aspect of students' self-perception of their disability. The group session topics included

(a) introductions, purpose, group rules, goal setting; (b) definition and description of learning disabilities; (c) members' strengths and interests; (d) members' specific learning difficulties; (e) supports that help members learn and complete school work; (f) standing up for oneself/dealing with bullies; (g) role playing and practicing standing up for oneself; (h) asking for help with school work; (i) learning to calm down and relax; (j) relaxation and problem solving; (k) practicing lessons learned; and (l) summary, wrap-up, celebration, and awards. (Mishna et al., 2011, p. 192)

The study conducted by Mishna et al. (2011) investigated topics similar to those addressed in a study conducted by Campbell-Whatley (2008). Some commonalities included a discussion about learning disabilities, exploring strengths and weaknesses, and knowing how to ask for help/find resources. The results of Mishna et al.'s (2008) study indicated that middle school students with learning disabilities can significantly increase their self-advocacy knowledge and ability via self-report. Although the self-report aspect of this study is intriguing,

it is also a limitation. Further research would do well to include teachers' and parents' reports on the self-advocacy skills of students with learning disabilities.

Durlak et al. (1994) examined the acquisition of self-determination skills through the use of direct-instruction. Trainers taught self-determination skills to high school students with learning disabilities in a resource room setting. Critical features in the direct instruction model included corrective feedback, multiple opportunities for practice, modeling, and specific instruction for generalization (Durlak et al., 1994). Using those methods, students were taught the specific nature of their disability, including strengths and weaknesses, the impact of their disability on academic and social performance, how to identify the accommodations that could be used in dealing with deficit areas, and how to identify strategies for arranging accommodations in the general education setting (Durlak et al., 1994).

Results suggested that all of the students gained self-determination skills as a result of the direct-instruction provided (Durlak et al., 1994). Findings further suggested that students with disabilities can acquire, maintain, and generalize self-determination skills that include self-advocacy and self-awareness. Results also implied that intensive practice of these skills may be necessary if students are to feel comfortable sharing information of a personal nature with others. Although study participants could role-play appropriate behaviors, they conveyed discomfort and embarrassment during the role-play and frequently had a hard time rehearsing the tasks (Durlak et al., 1994). They were not accustomed to the vernacular used in describing their learning needs, which may have been indicative of a need for repeated practice of self-determination skills allowing students to feel comfortable and confident in their use.

Eisenman and Chamberlin (2001) examined secondary schools that implemented and assessed self-determination activities. Researchers observed self-determination activities using

multiple methods across multiple schools. Schools participating in the study already had a few self-determination measures in effect and several schools were willing to add to the current interventions in place. The self-determination interventions in place targeted career awareness and exploration, school-based enterprise, social skills and behavior management, and personal characteristic awareness (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

The career awareness and exploration segment focused on self-awareness and goal setting. Interactive lessons lasted 90 minutes and included topics such as identifying strengths and weaknesses, identifying needed accommodations, improving personal relationships, improving job performance, resolving conflicts, and building teams (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). Supplemental curricula selected by the schools included some lessons in which students learned to identify physical and psychosocial needs, personal interests, and abilities while other lessons facilitated in-depth self-awareness of strengths and limitations. Few of the schools documented the results of their activities on students' self-determination. At the classroom level, student production of inventory profiles, resumes, and reports about personal interests and goals were possibilities for hard copy measurements of self-determination skills. Other assessment ideas included creating graphic profiles of strengths, dreams, and career goals (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

Eisenman and Chamberlin (2011) reported that teacher-participants found self-determination to be valuable for all students. Participants noted that their students often feel tainted by their affiliation with special education (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). Students do not know very much about their disabilities and educational needs. This dilemma is complicated by the fact that teachers are hesitant to talk to students because they don't want them to feel uncomfortable. These concerns indicate a need for sensitivity when discussing students'

disability. Building self-determination in students requires providing safe places and additional opportunities to realistically talk about limitations and strengths (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001).

While teachers were enthusiastic about teaching self-determination, they found little time in their day to add another program, even worthwhile programs that teach self-determination (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). When teachers did attempt to include another program, it was a short, one-shot, workshop-like lesson that had little impact on the students (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). One recommendation for teachers to combat the time crunch includes providing numerous opportunities for student choice, goal setting and progress monitoring (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). Building self-determination into lessons and procedures already in place is a time-efficient way to encourage self-determination in students.

Eisenman and Chamberlin (2001) addressed crucial aspects of teaching self-determination to students with disabilities, noting the need for additional studies that analyze research-to-practice issues. For example, studies that use pre and posttest designs with control groups are needed to demonstrate student performance before and after receiving instruction in self-determination.

Research shows that students with disabilities have lower levels of self-determination than their non-disabled peers (Wehmeyer et al., 2013). Wehmeyer et al. (2013) tested several curricula designed to teach self-determination strategies. The reasoning behind conducting such a study was that if teachers are going to devote only a limited amount of instructional time to teaching self-determination, the curriculum taught should be effective. Some aspects of the curriculum included lessons highlighting the skills and personal information students need to coherently express their interests, skills, limits, and goals. Other features of the curriculum

included teacher modeling, verbal rehearsal of steps, and group conferences with feedback (Wehmeyer et al., 2013).

Results demonstrate that implementing interventions to improve self-determination can generate significant changes in students' self-determination skills (Wehmeyer et al., 2013). In this example, student performance reports showed significantly greater and more positive growth patterns in self-determination than did the performance reports for students who did not take receive the self-determination interventions. The results suggest that explicit instruction of such skills can benefit and enhance students' self-determination (Palmer, Wehmeyer, Gipson, & Agran, 2004; Shogren, Kennedy, Dowsett, & Little, 2014; Wehmeyer et al., 2013).

Applying Research-Based Interventions

In reviewing the research, several common themes have been noted. Teachers have a desire to teach self-determination in their classrooms, but due to the increased emphasis on academic skills, are concerned about using crucial instructional time for lessons on self-determination (Konrad et al., 2007). Self-determination is regarded by many as the most important outcome of the education system regardless of the concern teachers have for losing critical instructional time (McDougall, Evans, & Baldwin, 2010). The elements involved in the curriculum are similar and applicable to many age groups. Many interventions described in this review taught students to explore their own strengths and weaknesses (Campbell-Whatley, 2008), defined and discussed learning disabilities (Mishna et al., 2011), taught students how their disabilities affected their academic and social performances (Dulak et al., 1994), and taught students to identify needed accommodations (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001). These are components that can easily be combined into a curriculum that explicitly teaches self-determination to students with disabilities.

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APPENDIX B: PARENT CONSENT FORM

Parental Permission for a Minor

Introduction

This research study is being conducted by Audryn Damron at Brigham Young University to determine the effects of direct instruction on students' self-advocacy skills. Your child was invited to participate because he/she is a student in Ms. Damron's classroom at Centennial Middle School.

Procedures

If you agree to allow your child to participate in this research study, your child will be taught how to approach teachers and request an accommodation. Instruction will take place in Ms. Damron's classroom during the first semester of Resource Learning.

Risks/Discomforts

If you allow your child to participate, he/she may experience minimal discomfort or risks. All students in the classroom will be receiving the same instruction. However, your child may feel some discomfort when reflecting on his/her educational experiences. Your child may also feel anxious when asking teachers for an accommodation.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits for participating in the study. It is hoped, however, that through your child's participation educators will learn more about how students can be successful in school.

Confidentiality

All information will be kept confidential. For examples, actual names will be removed from data collection forms. Data will be stored in a locked drawer and only the researcher will have access to the information.

Compensation

There will be no compensation for participation in the study.

Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You may refuse to allow your child to participate at any time without adverse consequences.

Questions about the Research

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Audryn Damron at audrynd@provo.edu. For further information, contact Darlene Anderson at darlene_anderson@byu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as Research Participants

If you have questions regarding your child's rights as a research participant contact IRB Administrator at (801) 422-1461; A-285 ASB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; irb@byu.edu.

Statement of Consent

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will to allow my child to participate in this study.

Name (Printed): _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Consent to be a Research Subject

Introduction

This research study is being conducted by Audryn Damron at Brigham Young University to determine the effects of direct instruction on students' self-advocacy skills. You were invited to participate because you are a student in Ms. Damron's classroom at Centennial Middle School.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this research study, you will be giving students an opportunity to request accommodations in your classroom. You will be recording the number of times an accommodation is requested and the accuracy of the request.

Risks/Discomforts

You will experience minimal discomfort or risks. However, there is small, but additional, time commitment involved. This may cause some inconvenience.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you. It is hoped, however, that through your participation educators will learn more about how students can be successful in school.

Confidentiality

All information will be kept confidential. For examples, actual names will be removed from data collection forms. Data will be stored in a locked drawer and only the researcher will have access to the information.

Compensation

There will be no compensation for participation in the study.

Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate at any time without adverse consequences.

Questions about the Research

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Audryn Damron at audrynd@provo.edu. For further information, contact Darlene Anderson at darlene_anderson@byu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as Research Participants

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant contact IRB Administrator at (801) 422-1461; A-285 ASB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; irb@byu.edu.

Statement of Consent

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

Name (Printed): _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: CHILD ASSENT FORM

Child Assent (7-14 years old)

What is this research about?

My name is Ms. Damron and I am a student at BYU. I want to tell you about a research study I am doing. A research study is a special way to find the answers to questions. We are trying to learn more about how to help you be successful in school. You are being asked to join the study because you are in my Resource Learning classroom and I can tell that you want to do well in school.

If you decide you want to be in this study, this is what will happen. You will be taught lessons to learn more about yourself and how you can communicate with your teachers. Everyone in my Resource Learning classes will be learning the same things. In my class, you will be practicing how to talk to your teachers and then you will use what you learned in your other classes.

Can anything bad happen to me?

You will experience minimal discomfort or risks. All students in the classroom will be participating in the lessons. You may feel some discomfort when reflecting on your educational experiences. At first, you may also feel nervous when asking your teachers for an accommodation.

Can anything good happen to me?

We don't know if being in this study will help you. But we hope to learn something that will help other people some day.

Do I have other choices?

You can choose not to be in this study.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

We won't tell anyone you took part in this study. When we are done with the study, we will write a report about what we learned. We won't use your name in the report.

What if I do not want to do this?

You don't have to be in this study. It's up to you. If you say yes now, but change your mind later, that's okay too. All you have to do is tell us.

Before you say yes to be in this project; be sure to ask **Ms. Damron** to tell you more about anything that you don't understand.

If you want to be in this study, please sign and print your name.

Name (Printed): _____ Signature _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E: TEACHER TRAINING LESSON PLAN

Introduce problem statement for research:

Research demonstrates that implementing interventions to improve self-determination can generate significant changes in students' self-determination skills (Wehmeyer et al. 2013). Student performance reports have showed significantly greater and more positive growth patterns in self-determination than did the performance reports for students who did not receive the intervention (Wehmeyer et al. 2013). Given previous results linking self-determination to improved post-high school outcomes for students with disabilities (Konrad et al., 2007) and the accompanying need to identify efficient strategies to promote and strengthen self-determination (Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001), additional research is needed to examine ways to promote its acquisition and generalization in applied settings (e.g. Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001; Campbell-Whatley, 2008).

Thank you for being willing to participate in this study. I am really excited to work with you and I am excited for the improvement we will see in our students (hopefully).

You will be involved in collecting student data. As a teacher of students with various abilities, you probably see a difference in the way students ask for help and advocate for their needs.

I will be teaching a 2-week curriculum in Resource Learning. This curriculum will teach students about special education, disabilities, and how to communicate effectively. Students will practice a script (hand out the script and data collection form) that they will be required to use when they talk with you.

Your role as a teacher is to keep data each day the student is in your class. You will keep data according to the script. Notice that the data collection form has a box for each day marked yes/no. If the student approaches you before, after, or during class to ask for an accommodation, you will mark "yes." If the student does not approach you, mark "no." If the student approaches you (and you have marked "yes") you will write a check mark in the boxes labeled "Accuracy of Initiation." There are four boxes, labeled a, b, c, and d. These boxes match up with the script that students will practice and memorize.

I have labeled the script in four parts: (a) greeting, (b) student mentions task, (c) student asks for an accommodation, and (d) student thanks you.

Let's practice a couple of scenarios.

SCENARIO 1

In class, you notice that the student we are collecting data on is struggling with an assignment. Do not prompt the student more than you normally would. If the student comes up to you and says your name and asks if you have a minute to talk, you would place a checkmark in box (a). If the student then tells you what he/she is having a hard time with, you would place a checkmark in box (b). If the student asks for an

accommodation, you would place a checkmark in box (c). If the student thanks you at the end of the conversation, you would place a checkmark in the box labeled (d).

SCENARIO 2

The student approaches you and immediately tells you what he/she is struggling in. You would place a checkmark in box (b), but not in box (a). The student then asks for an accommodation and thanks you, so you would place a checkmark in boxes (c) and (d).

If the student skips any steps in the script, the student cannot receive a checkmark in that area. Any questions?

Now I will initiate a conversation as a student and have you fill out a data collection sheet. I will pretend to be speaking with Mrs. Smith.

Student: "Ms. Damron – can I ask you a question?"

Teacher: "Yes. Give me one minute to finish working with this student, then I will come over and talk to you."

Student: "Okay."

(one minute later)

Teacher: "What can I help you with?"

Student: "I am having a hard time writing down all of the notes in my packet. What accommodation can I use to help me?"

Teacher: "I'm so glad you told me about this. You can come into my class during PLUS time and write down all of the notes that you missed."

Student: "I can't come in for PLUS today because I have to go to math."

Teacher: "Okay. When can you come in? You can also stop by before or after school."

Student: "Hmm. Maybe I can come in on Thursday?"

Teacher: "That sounds like a great plan."

Student: "Okay. Thanks!"

You should have placed a checkmark in the box that says, "Yes" and placed a checkmark in boxes (a), (b), (c), and (d).

Conversations with students will be varied and different depending on the situation. We will practice the script extensively and will practice different situations that students might encounter. Hopefully that will help decrease any confusion and keep conversations similar in form and style.

I will give you several data collection forms, but I will collect the forms each Friday. I will also call you at the end of the day or stop by to ask if you have any questions about the day.

This research will take place for several months as I will be teaching one Resource Learning class at a time. I hope this mode of data collection is not too burdensome and seems doable. Thank you SO MUCH for agreeing to assist me in my research this semester. I can't wait to see what progress we see in our students.

APPENDIX F: LESSON PLANS

Self-Advocacy: LESSON 1

Objective 1:

Students will define self-awareness and self-advocacy.

Objective 2:

Students will identify personal strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes

LESSON OPENING

Read the following scenario to the class. This scenario is included on the back of worksheet 1-1, for reference as needed by students throughout Unit 1.

Handout: “Mike’s Story”

I will read you a short story about a high school student named Mike. Listen carefully while I read the story. Listen for situations in the story that are similar or different from your experiences. You can follow along on your worksheet. Highlight areas that you can relate to. That means – highlight the things that have happened in your own life or that describe how you also feel about things.

Mike is a 14-year-old middle school student who has a learning disability. He attends the general education classroom for all classes except English. He has always had a difficult time with spelling, reading and writing legibly. He attends Ms. Jones special education classroom for English. Mike has heard his teachers and mom talk about his IEP, but he is not sure what an IEP is and has never been interested enough to ask. He also knows that his mom comes to the school at least once a year for an IEP meeting. Last year, his special education teacher invited Mike to the meeting, but he hated the idea of sitting around a table with all his teachers while they talked about him.

When Mike takes a test for history or science class, he usually goes to the special education classroom to have Ms. Jones read the test to him. Most of the time he does not have to answer all of the questions, just the ones Ms. Jones or his classroom teacher has circled on the test. He rarely is required to answer the essay questions on tests. When he finishes his test, Ms. Jones puts it in a large envelope and places it in her desk. The only time Mike sees his test again is if he did poorly on it and needs to make corrections. Mike does not understand who decided he would take his tests this way but he likes the routine because it makes it easier for him to pass his tests.

Mike will be going to high school next year. He believes he should do well since he has always earned passing grades in his classes. (2 minutes)

Discussion point(s):

- Ask students to think about Mike’s situation. Specifically, his classes, tests, and assignments.
- Is there anything in Mike’s story that you can relate to your life?*
- What, if anything do you have in common with Mike? Please write down the things you have in common. You will have 2 minutes.*

- Provide students with 1 to 2 minutes to think about the questions you asked.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts if they wish to do so.
- Move on to the procedure below. **(6 minutes)**

- **Handout:** Distribute worksheet 1-1: Understanding Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy to each student.

Write the word “self-awareness” on the board in front of the classroom.

Ask students what they think “self-awareness” means and provide them an (opportunity to respond.

- ○ *The word “self” means “me” and the word “awareness” means to know something, to be informed of something.*
- ○ *“Self-awareness” refers to a person knowing about himself or herself.*
- ○ *Take a minute to write the meaning of self-awareness on your worksheet.*
- ○ *Take a minute to think of answers to the following questions:* ○ *What are some things you do well?*
- ○ *What are some things you need to improve?*
- ○ *What are things you enjoy doing? Why do you like these things*
- ○ *What are things you dislike doing? Why do you dislike these things?*
- ○ *What is important to you? Why?*
- ○ *Each of these questions are listed on your worksheet. (Use ME! Scale.)*

We will do the questions 1-14 of the ME! Scale together. I will read each question and you need to circle the answer that is the most true for you. Then you will complete questions 15-19 on your own. Hopefully this will take 10 minutes. (12 minutes)

- Have a few students share their answers aloud.
- *These questions are about basic information you need to know about yourself in order to be self-aware.*
- Write the word “Self-advocacy” on the board in front of the classroom.
- Ask students what they think “Self-advocacy” means and provide them an opportunity to (respond.
- *Self-advocacy refers to a person making a deliberate or purposeful effort to speak up for his/her needs or ideas.*
- *Take a minute to write the meaning of self-advocacy on your worksheet. (2 minutes)*

Discussion point(s): Read and discuss the following scenario about Lucy and self-advocacy.

- *The following story about Lucy is a good example of self-advocacy. Listen while I read. Try to identify how Lucy self-advocates during the story.*
- *Lucy is a middle school student who wears contacts. Even though she wears contacts, she*

cannot see small things from far away. When Lucy arrived to her Math 7 class on Monday, her teacher had made a new seating chart that left Lucy sitting at the back of the room. Lucy stayed after class to explain to her teacher that she needed to sit closer to the front because she could not see the board even when she wears her contacts.

Use the following questions to guide a class discussion about the scenario.

- Why was it important for Lucy to speak up for herself?
- Do you think Lucy did the right thing?
- Have you ever been in a situation that you needed something changed in order to do your best? For example, have you ever sat next to someone who really distracted you? Or, even after the teacher had explained the assignment, you still didn't know what to do? If so, did you speak up for yourself?
- Was it difficult for you to speak up for yourself? Explain.
- What would you have done in Lucy's situation?
- How could Lucy's actions in this situation impact her future? **(3 minutes)**

Later, we will discuss when you would need to self-advocate and different situations you might need to speak up for yourself and your needs.

(Take 5-minute break)

o Before the break, we talked a little about self-advocacy, self-awareness and the importance of knowing yourself. For the next ten minutes, we are going to talk about disabilities. Specifically, how people with disabilities have been treated throughout history. We will introduce this topic today and discuss it more tomorrow. I am going to read you some questions (write them on the board), you do not need to answer them aloud, just think about your answers.

- *What does disability mean?*
 - *How do you treat people with disabilities?*
 - *Why do you treat them like that?*
 - *How does society as a whole treat individuals with disabilities? What are some examples?*
 - *Has the treatment of people with disabilities changed over time?*
- o We are going to talk about some history of disabilities and how history has influenced the way people with disabilities are treated today. **(2 minutes)***

Handout: Distribute the worksheet 2-1: History of Disability. See teacher's edition of worksheet for additional information.

- *Before we discuss the history of disabilities, let's talk about some words you are going to hear. You may have heard some of these words, but you might not know how to explain them to someone else. It is important that you understand them so you understand what we talk about.*
- *Take a few moments to read through section 1 of your worksheet. We are going to work through section 1 together.*
- *We will talk about the meaning of each word and then you will have time to write the definition on your worksheet. (10 minutes)*

This vocabulary lesson was a preview for what we will begin our next class with. One more time – what does self-awareness mean? What does self-advocacy mean?

Self-Advocacy: Lesson 2

Objective 3:

Students will identify at least three historical events impacting attitudes toward disabilities.

Objective 4: Students will identify barriers and/or prejudice people with disabilities face.

Objective 5: Students will learn key terms and definitions related to special education.

Welcome to class. Who can raise their hand and tell me what we discussed in our last class? What is the definition of self-awareness? What is the definition of self-advocacy? Excellent! Pull out your worksheet with your definitions.

- *Now that you have your terms and definitions we are going to talk about the history of disabilities. We will start with how people with disabilities have been treated.*
- *Did you know that nearly 50 million people over age 5 have a disability? That means about 1 in 5 people have some type of disability.*
- *At times people with disabilities have been treated poorly and sometimes feared. This has often been due to a lack of understanding and knowledge about disabilities. As a result, there has often been prejudice against people with disabilities as well as low expectations.*
- *One example of mistreatment is the story of Balbrus Balaesus the Stutterer. A stutter is a speech disorder that causes people to hesitate, repeat, and/or prolong words when talking. Stuttering can make communicating with others difficult. This man was placed in a cage by a road during ancient Roman times. The road was busy with travelers who would stop to watch Balbrus. Many people thought it was funny to listen to him talk.*
- *You have probably learned about the Holocaust in Germany. During the Holocaust Jewish people were sent to concentration camps. Did you know that people with disabilities were also sent to concentration camps?*
- *In more recent years people with disabilities were put in special schools, hospitals and institutions where they had little or no contact with the public.*
- *While there have been many improvements in the way society treats people with disabilities, there are still barriers many people with disabilities face each day. Those barriers include low expectations and prejudice. Often people without disabilities are completely unaware of the barriers people with disabilities face each day. Sometimes people choose not to acknowledge the barriers that exist for people with disabilities.*

(3.5 minutes)

Activity: Ask students to take a couple of minutes and think of some examples of barriers or low expectations someone with a disability might experience. *I have written some examples of places there might be low expectations.*

Examples of low expectations may include:

- Jobs
- Education
- Social relationships (

Examples of barriers may include:

- Transportation
- Travel (hotel, airport, airplane, train, etc.)
- Restaurants
- Shopping
- Technology
- Suitable housing
- Gyms
- Sporting Events

- Provide students 2 -3 minutes to brainstorm in pairs or small groups.
- Have students share some of the low expectations they identified.
- Have students share some of the barriers they identified.
- Provide students 2 -3 minutes to brainstorm ways to overcome the barriers and low expectations they identified.
- Have students share solutions they came up with to overcome those barriers and low expectations.
- Continue with historical background information **(5 minutes)**

○ *Despite prejudice and barriers people with disabilities often face, there have been many improvements in the way people with disabilities are treated. Some specific events throughout history have contributed to changes and improvements in the way society views and treats people with disabilities. The following are all examples of such events.*

○ *In the late 1700's, a boy named Victor was found wandering around in the woods in France. He was about 12 years old when he was found. It is believed that Victor had been alone in the woods for at least 7 years. A man named Itard took the boy home and taught him how to read, write and live around people. Some people say this was the first time in history that an "IEP" was used. Itard wrote out goals and objectives based on Victor's needs. Many people have studied the information Itard wrote about Victor and believe that if Victor were alive today he would be diagnosed with Autism.*

○ *War has also been a reoccurring event in history which has forced society to reevaluate how disabilities are viewed. Several examples of this include: The Revolutionary War (1775-1783), The Civil War (1861-1865), WW I (1914-1920), WWII (1939-1945), The Vietnam War (1957-1975) and more recently, The Gulf War (1990-1991) and the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. One thing all of these wars have in common is that many veterans returned home with disabilities from their injuries. Many people began to change their attitude toward people with disabilities because they now had friends and/or family who returned home from war with a disability.*

○ *The civil rights movement in the 1960's also changed the way many people felt about people with disabilities. This was a time when minority groups, including Native Americans, Black Americans and people with disabilities, strongly advocated for equal rights.*

○ *In the 1970's the first law in history to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities was passed. In 1975, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed. The purpose of this law was to make education available to students with disabilities. This law is now known as IDEA.*

○ *Since the 70's, other important legislation has been passed that has helped improve the lives of people with disabilities. Legislation that has impacted education includes:*

- *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*
- *Americans with Disabilities Act* □
- *Rehabilitation Act Section 504*

These laws may seem like a lot of information, but the important part, is that you understand that disabilities have been a big issue for humans for a very long time. In the United States, we have passed laws to help people with disabilities. (4 minutes)

Let's review together, some events that have changed the way society treats people with disabilities. Who can raise their hand and tell us one of the things I told you that changed the way society treats people?

Write ideas on the board.

Really quick, let's talk about some barriers or prejudice that you have experienced in your own life so far. You don't have to share if you don't want to, but I want you to reflect on your own life and what experiences have brought you thus far.

Would anyone like to share a story? (3-5 minutes)

So far, we have learned about self-awareness, self-advocacy, and a little bit about the history of disabilities. For the rest of the lesson today, we are going to talk about special education. You will learn why some students are in special education and how they get there. Does anyone have any questions about what we've discussed so far?

Handout: Distribute worksheet 2-2a, Learning About Special Education.

Note to teacher: Use teachers guide of worksheet 2-2a to facilitate discussion about the information on the worksheet.

- *Many people are unfamiliar with the words and acronyms used to describe special education. Look at the worksheet I just gave you about terms and acronyms. Someone tell me what an acronym is.*
- *An acronym is a word formed from the first letter of several words. For example LOL. Many of you probably use this acronym regularly when texting. What does it stand for? Laughing Out Loud.*
- *Take a minute to write the definition of acronym on your worksheet. An acronym is a word formed from the first letter of several words.*

Note to teacher: Have worksheet on overhead to complete as an example for students. □

○ *An acronym you hear in special education is IEP. Does anyone know what those letters stand for? We talked about this one in our last lesson.*

- ○ *The letters IEP stand for Individual Education Program.*

- Continue using teachers guide to facilitate the completion of sections 1 and 2.
(5 minutes)

Self-Advocacy: Lesson 3

Objective 6: Students will describe the process of being identified and placed in special education.

Objective 7: Students will identify and describe key events in their educational history.

The past couple of class periods, we have discussed self-awareness, self-advocacy, some of the history of disabilities, and some key terms used in special education.

Handout: Distribute Learning About Special Education 2-2b & 2-2c Flow chart. Have students work in small groups or pairs to complete the chart.

- ○ *Now we are going to learn about how and why a student is placed in special education. Take a minute to look at the two sheets I just handed out. Sheet 2-2b has 9 boxes on it. Each box represents a step that must be taken in order for a student to be placed in special education. Sheet 2-2c has nine boxes with the different steps that must be taken for a student to be placed in special education. You are going to work together as a class to correctly arrange the information from sheet 2-2c into the boxes on sheet 2-2b.*

- Facilitate class discussion over the steps and answer any questions students have about the steps and information on their charts.
- Have students turn in completed flow charts.

○ *You just learned how and why students are placed in special education. Now you are going to use the information you learned, along with your memories, to create your own history of your education.*

○ *I am passing out a sheet called “Creating MY! History.” This sheet includes directions and questions that you will use to help complete today’s assignment. Look at your sheet while I read through the two paragraphs on the top of the page.*

Use teacher version of “Creating MY! History” worksheet to facilitate instructions and discussion of the assignment.

○ *You have the rest of this period to work on your history. Once you finish your history, you can begin your homework. I will be moving around the room to check on your work and answer any questions you might have.*

Self-Advocacy: Lesson 4

Objective 8:

Students will describe important information in an IEP, including goals, accommodations and modifications.

Objective 9:

Students will identify and list accommodations/modification on their IEP.

For a quick review, who can tell me some of the things we have discussed this week?

(Answers can include self-awareness, self-advocacy, history of special education, how kids qualify for special education, student educational history, etc.)

I am going to read you a short story about a student and her IEP.

Sonia is in 7th grade and has been attending her IEP meetings since the 4th grade. Every year Sonia sits quietly at the table during her IEP meeting while her parents and teachers talk about her IEP. Sonia would like to contribute to the meeting but does not know what to say and does not know what is written on her IEP. She is not even sure she knows what an IEP is. Every year she leaves the meeting confused and irritated that everyone is making decisions about her with little or no input from her.

Let's make a brief chart. What are some problems and solutions we can gather from this story? (Write answers on board.) (4-5 minutes)

Handout: Distribute copies of student IEPs and worksheet 3-1: Important Things In My IEP to each student. Have students work in small groups or pairs to complete worksheet 3-1.

Discussion point(s): Briefly introduce the IEP document to students.

- *I have given you two handouts. One is a copy of your IEP (or a blank IEP) and one is a list of words and definitions you will need to know when we talk about your IEP. Let's look at the IEP first.*
- *What is an IEP?* □ An IEP is a written document that describes the special education services a student needs and includes strengths, needs, goals, and transition plans.
- *Take a minute to look through the pages just to get an idea of what it looks like.*
- *How many of you have seen your IEP before?*
- *We are going to go through the IEP and talk about what the different parts of it are for and what some of the words mean.*

Discussion point(s): Briefly introduce worksheet 3-1: Important Things In My IEP to students.

- *Look at the handout I gave you.*
- *You see the first column? The words in this column are words you will see on an IEP. In the column next to it is the definition of each of the words. The third column is blank. As we discuss each of the vocabulary words and their definitions, you need to list the page of the IEP they are*

on.

○ *Look on the back of your worksheet. You will see five blank rows. As we go through the IEP, there might be words you have questions about. You can write those words and the page numbers on your worksheet in the blank rows. We can discuss those words you think we need to add.*

○ *You are going to work in pairs/small groups to complete worksheet 3-1: Important Things In My IEP.*

○ *Does anyone have any questions before we begin?*

(7 minutes)

Next we are going to discuss a very important part of your IEP: the section about accommodations and modifications.

Does anyone know what an accommodation is?

- ○ *Accommodations are changes made to the environment or assignments that change how students access information and how a student shows what he/she has learned. For example, a student might get more time to finish a test or project. A student might need their test read aloud or might need help taking notes in class.*

- **Note to teacher:** Important points about accommodations □

- Accommodations: □

- You have the right to accommodations on your schoolwork during high □ school and in postsecondary school.

Ask students to describe modifications.

Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

○ *Modifications are changes to the work students must complete. For example, answering one essay question on the test when there are three or watching a video while other students are required to read a book.*

Note to teacher: Important point about modifications

Modifications:

- You have the right to modifications on your schoolwork during high (school, but not in postsecondary school.

(1.5 minutes)

Discussion point(s): Have students create a list of their accommodations and modifications and describe their rights and responsibilities.

Read the following instructions while you draw an example on the board.

- *I have given you a blank sheet of paper. Fold it down the middle so you have two equal sides. Draw a line down the middle of the page and label the two columns like I am doing.*

My rights to:	My responsibility to receive:
Accommodations: 1. To have extra time on my test in math	Accommodations: 1. Talk to my teacher before the test to decide when I will come in for the extra time I need.
Modifications: 1. Write 2 pages for my U.S. History reports instead of the 4 assigned.	Modifications: 1. Talk to my U.S. History teacher to explain why the modification is important and come to an agreement about how many pages I will write.

- *Think about the accommodations and modifications we learned about when we talked about your IEPs. You still have your IEPs in your folder. Go back and look at them if you are having a difficult time remembering your accommodations and modifications.*
- *I need you to write your accommodations and/or modifications in this space. Point to the space for accommodations in the “My Rights to” column.*

- Provide students time to write their information in the two boxes. Move around the room to check student answers and assist students having a difficult time providing an answer.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their answers.

(7-8 minutes)

How are you feeling about your understanding of your IEP and particularly your accommodations? If you feel like you could find your accommodations in your IEP, raise your hand. Great. If you feel like you could point to your goals, raise your hand? Who can explain their accommodations to a partner or someone in this room? Who would be comfortable talking to their teacher about their accommodations?

(let students respond)

Our next lesson will be on communicating effectively.

Communication: LESSON 1

Objective 1:

Students will identify appropriate situations when they should approach others to present information about their disability and their needs.

Objective 2: Students will distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate non-verbal communication (body language) including personal space, eye contact, posture, etc.

Objective 3:

Students will demonstrate appropriate verbal communication skills including tone, volume, and vocabulary

Objective 4:

Students will identify the appropriate people to share information with (teachers, peers, counselors) in varied school settings.

LESSON OPENING □

Critical thinking: Read the following scenario to students. Have students identify key issues/problems and solutions.

Chris has been called to the office due to his recent tardies and absences in 3rd period. He knows he is in trouble and will likely be assigned Saturday school or trash duty during lunch as punishment. He is angry because he feels his reasons for the tardies and absences are valid. However, Chris has an angry tone of voice and is slouched down in his chair with his arms crossed while he is telling the principal his reasons for the tardies and absences. Chris also rolls his eyes every time the principal starts talking. As a result, the principal gets irritated with Chris and assigns him three weeks of Saturday school and refuses to listen to any more of Chris's excuses.

- Provide students time and opportunity to respond to the story.
- Record the problems and solutions students identify.

o During our last few classes you have learned about your IEP, special education, and your rights and responsibilities. Knowing this information will help you advocate for yourself. A crucial part to self-advocacy is communication. Today we are going to talk about some important communication skills.

PROCEDURE

1. Make a brief presentation using poor communication skills. Ask students to identify problems with your communication behaviors.

Possible examples:

- – folded arms = defensive
- – hands in your pocket = lack of confidence
- – shaking or moving your feet and/or legs = nervous
- – blank stare on your face = lack of interest
- – rubbing your neck and/or head = bored

- – slouching = unprepared or lack of confidence
- – mumbled speech = unprepared or lack of confidence
- Have students brainstorm a list of good communication behaviors. Possible examples:
 - stand or sit up straight
 - make eye contact□
 - speak loud and clear

□6□minutes)

- Define and discuss verbal and non-verbal communication. (Hand out worksheet 1)
 - verbal communication: using written or spoken words to express your thoughts or message.
 - non-verbal communication: the use of body language to express your thoughts or message.
- Have students brainstorm examples of both verbal and non-verbal communication. □Possible examples:
 - Letters
 - Reports
 - Faxes
 - Telephone
 - Email
 - Video conferencing
 - Internet
 - Social networking
 - Face-to-face

(3 minutes)

- Present and discuss the importance of purpose, audience, and occasion in presenting information. Have students brainstorm different purposes and audiences. □Possible examples:

Audience	Purpose □
parents	ask permission to stay out late□
teachers	ask for help on an assignment□
friends	convince them to go to a movie instead of the game□
coach	tell her you will have to miss the big game because of work
boss	ask for time off during Christmas break□
classmates	give oral presentation during class

- Present and discuss things that affect communication behaviors of people. Possible examples:
 - attitude of sender□
 - body language of sender
 - does the person understand what they are trying to communicate

- prejudice, stereotypes, and perceptions
- inappropriate target audience

(5 minutes)

We are going to switch gears a bit.

- *Remember that the IEP is discussed in a group meeting. Who might be at the meeting that would know this information about you?*
- *Do you think it might be beneficial for you to share this information with other people?*
- *Let's talk about the people in the school who might not have been at the meeting, but might need to know this information. I need volunteers to share the names of people they have contact with almost daily from our school.*

Examples:

- school counselor
- principal
- assistant principal
- teachers
- coach

Note to teacher: You might want to prepare a list in advance with names and titles of people you know your students will come into contact with based on their needs and classes.

- *Now, let's think about during or after high school. Who do you think you might have a lot of contact with or see a lot if you were attending college?*

Examples: professors, coaches, advisor (counselor), music director

- *What if you were going to a Tech Center program? Examples: teachers, advisor*
- *What if you decide to get a full time job right after you graduate, who do you think you would see frequently at your job? Examples: Employer (Boss), co-workers, customers, children (students), clients (etc.); could vary depending on the jobs the students are interested in pursuing.*

Lead a discussion about the jobs and responsibilities of the people students identified above.

Do you remember learning that there are laws that made rights that you have as a person with a disability?

The people that we are discussing have some responsibilities because of that law. They may be able to give you some accommodations that could help you in college, in other schools, or on the job. We will talk about that more, but you need to think about who you would ask for help and how to ask for that help.

Think about your classes and jobs you may have in the future. Sometimes things might not go too well for you...maybe because you had a hard time reading a test, you failed it, or maybe you did not write down notes in class because writing is hard for you.

2. Share a story that illustrates a good example of when and why someone might need to ask for help on the job:

Jason, had a lot of difficulty reading and writing. He took a job at a garage working on cars and was also getting trained to be a mechanic. Often, he would be in the office at the garage and answer the phone. He would talk to customers and would then try to remember the messages and did not write them down. Jason had a learning disability and writing was very difficult for him. Sometimes he didn't see the garage manager to tell him the messages and he forgot, or the customers would call back and say that they had left a message with Jason. But, Jason had not written them down, and had not told his garage manager that he needed help with this. Jason had recorded the teacher lectures in his high school classes because he had an IEP. He probably could have recorded the messages at work using his cell phone or PDA. However, Jason did not know how to ask this or even that he could ask for help. He eventually got fired and had to find another job.

Discussion point(s): Ask students the following questions and provide time and opportunity for discussion.

- Who could Jason have spoken to so that he could have gotten help?
- What would Jason have needed to tell this person about how and why he needed help?
- Would he need to be able to explain his disability to this person? Why or why not?
- **Discussion point(s):** Revisit the questions asked during the opening of the lesson. Lead a discussion to help students recognize that some of the people they identified might be able to help them or work better with them if they had information about the student's disability.
- ○ *Think about your IEP and the information in your IEP, like the accommodations, your strengths, and areas you need help in. Which of these people that you have regular contact with, who were not at your IEP meeting, do you think might have helped change the situation for Jason?*

(10 minutes)

Communication: LESSON 2

Objective 5: Students will recognize situations when an accommodation may be needed

Objective 6: Students will use a script to practice communicating with general education teachers about accommodations.

Lesson Opening: Review “Lucy’s story.” Ask students how Lucy self-advocated for her needs. Discuss what communication skills she may have used. **(2 minutes)**

Discussion Points:

- Ask students to share stories about experiences they have had when they may have needed accommodations. (Experiences can be from elementary school, the current school year, a situation outside of school, etc.) Some teacher prompting may be necessary. **(4-5 minutes)**
- Discuss appropriate times to approach the teacher. Make a list of appropriate and inappropriate times to approach the teacher to hold a conversation about needed an accommodation.

The list may look something like this:

Appropriate Times to Approach Teacher	Inappropriate Times to Approach Teacher
Teacher is walking around the classroom monitoring student work	Teacher is giving instructions to the whole class
Teacher is not talking to another student	Teacher asks the entire class if there are any questions (this may be a private matter, so wait until you can approach the teacher without the attention of the rest of the class)
Teacher is answering questions one student at a time (maybe you can get in line?)	Teacher is surrounded by other students and seems a bit overwhelmed at the moment
	Teacher is on the phone, talking to another adult, etc.

(5 minutes)

Excellent job making a list of appropriate/inappropriate times to approach a teacher to ask for an accommodation. I am going to hand out a script that we will use to practice and memorize how to talk to a teacher about an accommodation. [Pass out scripts]

Notice that this script is not very long. Talking to a teacher doesn't have to take very long. I am going to read the script to you first, then we will practice it as a group.

Student: Mrs. Radandt – do you have a minute to talk?

Teacher: Yes – I can talk for a minute.

Student: In class today, you gave us the assignment asking us to _____. One of the things I have a hard time with is _____. I would like to use an accommodation so that I can get this assignment done.

Teacher: That is a great idea. Thank you for approaching me and taking initiative.

Student: You are welcome. Thank you for helping me figure out what is best for me.

[**teacher** states accommodation options for student]

[**student** should choose an accommodation that would help him/her]

Student: Thank you for helping me. I will let you know if I have any more questions.

Teacher: Sounds good.

Underneath this exact script, there is a general outline. You don't have to use these exact words when you talk to your teachers about accommodations, but you do need to hit the main points. The general outline looks like this:

Student: Greets teacher

Teacher: Acknowledges greeting

Student: States what assignment is, states need for accommodation, asks teacher for input

Teacher: Gives praise

Student: Makes positive statement in return

Teacher: Lists accommodation/modification options

Student: Chooses an appropriate accommodation

Student: Thanks teacher

Teacher: Acknowledges student thanks

Now I will read the teacher parts, and you will say the student parts together as a class. (3-4 minutes)

Wonderful job. We are going to practice this script for a couple of days so that you can memorize it and pass it off with me. Before we can practice the script to pass it off though, we

need to discuss the blanks in the script. You are going to have to fill in those blanks depending on what the assignment is and what you are having a hard time with. I have some examples of assignments up on the board. Notice that the examples are separated into areas (reading, writing, math, etc.)

[Teacher shows examples on the board. See table below.]

Reading	Writing	Math	Other
Read the article on your own...	Write a summary about what you read	Do the front and back of the worksheet before tomorrow.	(Teacher gave instructions, but you don't understand them.)
Fill out the worksheet on what we read today	Make sure you write down all of the notes in your packet	You will have 5 minutes to take the quiz – no calculators	(You are doing a lab and you are confused on what to do next.)

You are going to have to explain to your teacher what is hard for you. It really helps the teacher know how to help you if you can tell him or her what you are struggling with.

(2-3 minutes)

For the next 5 minutes, I want you to begin memorizing this script. Do it a little bit at a time. You can read it over and over. You can say it out loud. You will do this practice by yourself. Tomorrow you will practice with a partner.

Communication: LESSON 3

Objective 7: Student will use a script and work with a partner to practice communicating with general education teachers.

Welcome to class. Let's quickly review what we have learned so far.

- What does it mean to self-advocate?
- What is an accommodation?
- What are some good communication skills to have when talking to a teacher?
- When is it an appropriate time to talk to a teacher during class?

You have wonderful memories! Today will be spent practicing the script with a partner. You will practice by yourself for 5 minutes, then you will practice with a partner for 5 minutes. You will take turns being the teacher and being the student. After 5 minutes, you will get a new partner and trade off roles again. You will practice with 3 different partners.

[Teacher monitors students as they practice the script.]

(25 minutes)

Communication: LESSON 4

Objective 8: Students will memorize the script (and pass it off to Ms. Damron)

Today we will jump right into practice using the script. You will be practicing the script on your own today. I will sit at my desk while [teacher aide] walks around the classroom monitoring your progress. You can practice with [teacher aide] before you come up to my desk. When you are ready to practice and pass of your script with me, you will come up to my desk. If you notice someone else is at my desk practicing, stay in your seat and keep practicing. You can come up when that student sits down.

Once you have passed off your script, you can begin your homework.

(25-30 minutes)

APPENDIX G: SELF-ADVOCACY PRE/POST TEST

Name _____

Date _____

Self-Advocacy Pre/Post Test

1. The definition of self-awareness is _____
_____.

2. The definition of self-advocacy is _____
_____.

3. List 3 things you are good at when you are at school.

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

4. List 3 things you need help with when you are at school.

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

5. List 3 things you are good at when you are somewhere other than school.

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

6. List 3 things you need help with when you are somewhere other than school.

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

7. What does IEP stand for?

8. What is an accommodation on an IEP? _____

9. I have an IEP.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) I don't know.

10. I know what my accommodations are.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) I don't know.

11. I can tell my teachers about accommodations I need in class.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) I don't know.

12. Verbal communication is

- (a) Using written or spoken words to express your thoughts or message
- (b) The use of body language to express your thoughts or message.

13. Non-verbal communication is

- (a) Using written or spoken words to express your thoughts or message
- (b) The use of body language to express your thoughts or message.

14. List at least 3 people that attend an IEP:

APPENDIX H: SELF-ADVOCACY SCRIPT

Student: Ms. Damron – do you have a minute to talk?

Teacher: Yes – I can talk for a minute.

Student: In class today, you gave us the assignment asking us to _____. One of the things I have a hard time with is _____. I would like to use an accommodation so that I can get this assignment done.

Teacher: That is a great idea. Thank you for approaching me and taking initiative.

Student: You are welcome. Thank you for helping me figure out what is best for me.

[teacher states accommodation options for student]

[student should choose an accommodation that would help him/her]

Student: Thank you for helping me. I will let you know if I have any more questions.

Teacher: Sounds good.

General script outline:

Student: Greets teacher

Teacher: Acknowledges greeting

Student: States what assignment is, states need for accommodation, asks teacher for input

Teacher: Gives praise

Student: Makes positive statement in return

Teacher: Lists accommodation/modification options

Student: Chooses an appropriate accommodation

Student: Thanks teacher

Teacher: Acknowledges student thanks

APPENDIX I: STUDENT INITIATION FORM

(Intervention)
Name of Student

Day of the week/Date			Accuracy of Initiation			
	YES	NO	a.	b.	c.	d.
(1) Monday: 09/01/15			a.	b.	c.	d.
(2) Wednesday: 09/03/15			a.	b.	c.	d.
(3) Thursday: 09/04/15			a.	b.	c.	d.
(4) Friday: 09/05/15			a.	b.	c.	d.
Total:	/4	/4	1. /4	2. /4	3. /4	4. /4

Accuracy of Initiation:

- (a) Approaching the teacher and asking if it's a good time to talk,
- (b) Introducing the concern with the assignment given that day and linking the concern to student strengths and weaknesses,
- (c) Asking for an accommodation(s), and
- (d) Checking with the teacher to see if the accommodation is appropriate.

APPENDIX J: LESSON FIDELITY CHECKLISTS

DAY 1	
	Administer pre-test
	I CAN DEFINE SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-ADVOCACY.
	I CAN IDENTIFY PERSONAL STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, LIKES, AND DISLIKES.
	Share "Mike's Story" (Teacher passes out red worksheet)
	Define self-awareness
	Fill out Me! Scale together (teacher passes out green worksheet; teacher reads questions 1-14 and has students do questions 15-19 on their own)
	Define self-advocacy
/ 7	Total

DAY 2	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN WRITE DOWN KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS RELATED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION
	Read "Lucy's Story"
	Provide definitions of for history of special education (Teacher passes out yellow worksheet; students fill out Section 1 of yellow paper)
/ 4	Total

DAY 3	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN IDENTIFY BARRIERS AND/OR PREJUDICE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FACE
	Share history of special education history facts (Part I)
	Ask for examples of low expectations/barriers
/ 4	Total

DAY 4	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN IDENTIFY THREE HISTORICAL EVENTS IMPACTING ATTITUDES TOWARD DISABILITIES
	Share history of special education history facts (Part II)
	Students fill out Section 2 of yellow worksheet
	Ask for student experiences
	Review special education vocabulary
/ 6	Total

DAY 5	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN WRITE DOWN KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS RELATED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION
	Students complete worksheet 2-2 (orange worksheet) as a class
/ 3	Total

DAY 6	
	Introduces daily objective
	I WILL DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF BEING IDENTIFIED AND PLACED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
	Students complete worksheet 2-2b (white worksheet with cut-outs)
	Teacher reviews process for special education referral
/ 4	Total

DAY 7	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE KEY EVENTS IN MY EDUCATIONAL HISTORY
	Students complete worksheet 2-3 (pink worksheet) independently
/ 3	Total

DAY 8	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN WRITE KEY INFORMATION ABOUT DISABILITIES FROM AN ONLINE SOURCE
	Students complete "Disabilities" worksheet using ipads/computers to access internet
	While students do worksheet, teacher conferences one-on-one with students about their IEP
/ 3	Total

DAY 9	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN DESCRIBE IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN MY IEP, INCLUDING GOALS, ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS
	Read "Sonia's Story"
	Students fill out "Important Things in my IEP" worksheet (lilac worksheet)
/ 4	Total

DAY 10	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN IDENTIFY AND LIST ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS IN MY IEP
	Teacher defines “accommodations” and “modifications”
	Students fill out table about rights/responsibilities on lined paper
/ 4	Total

DAY 11	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (BODY LANGUAGE) INCLUDING PERSONAL SPACE, EYE CONTACT, POSTURE, ETC.
	I CAN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION.
	Share “Chris’s Story”
	Teacher gives poor communication skills presentation
	Teacher discusses verbal and nonverbal communication
/ 5	Total

DAY 12	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN IDENTIFY THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH (TEACHERS, PEERS, COUNSELORS) IN VARIED SETTINGS.
	Teacher discusses purpose and audiences
	Teacher leads discussion on types of people students encounter in various settings
	Share “Jason’s Story”
/ 5	Total

DAY 13	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN RECOGNIZE SITUATIONS WHEN AN ACCOMMODATION MAY BE NEEDED.
	Make list of appropriate/inappropriate times to approach teacher
	Pass out script to students and read together as a class
	Show examples of assignments in different areas
/ 5	Total

DAY 14	
	Introduces daily objective
	I CAN USE A SCRIPT TO PRACTICE COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS.
	Students practice script independently
	Students practice script in groups
/ 4	Total

DAY 15	
	Introduce daily objective
	I CAN USE A SCRIPT TO PRACTICE COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS.
	Review definitions of self-awareness and self-advocacy
	Review definition of accommodation
	Students practice script independently
	Students pass of script when ready
/ 6	Total

DAY 16	
	Students take post-test

APPENDIX K: SOCIAL VALIDITY QUESTIONNAIRES

Student Social Validity Questionnaire

The special education facilitator will ask the student participants the following questions in the privacy of her office.

1. Did you like learning more about your disability?
2. Did it help you understand yourself better?
3. What was your favorite part of lessons?
4. Did you like reflecting on your strengths and weaknesses?
5. Were you prepared to ask your teacher for an accommodation?
6. Did this help you get more schoolwork done?
7. Did this help you get better grades?

Teacher Social Validity Questionnaire

Instructions:

Please fill out this survey and return to the special education facilitator.

1. Did the intervention work well? Please explain.

2. Was it inconvenient for you implement? Please explain.

3. Was filling out the checklist easy and quick? Please explain.

4. What benefit, if any, did this intervention have for the student?

5. What changes would you recommend if you were to do this again?