



## Teaching Students with Learning Problems (8th Edition)

By Cecil D. Mercer, Ann R. Mercer, Paige C. Pullen

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Logically organized, comprehensive, and thoroughly applied, the eighth edition of *Teaching Students with Learning Problems* contains the resources teachers need to make informed decisions concerning their students with learning or behavior problems. No text on the market offers this many classroom-tested strategies, including activities and games. Unique in its coverage the materials and computer software most appropriate for students with learning problems in every content area, this top-selling text continues to be the most practical and well-researched resource for classroom teachers.

- Behavior management and affective intervention coverage provides teachers with the tools to help students succeed.
- New! Response to Intervention coverage throughout chapters explains this important information as it relates to IDEA 2004.
- Common characteristics of different categories of learning problems help teachers identify problems related to instruction to better choose appropriate teaching techniques.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

EXCELLENT text that provides clear, realistic answers to questions. For me, this text is the resource I need for my methods classes. It is so reader friendly, both general educators and special educators can use its wealth of information.

*DiAnna Garner, Virginia Commonwealth University*

All the topics are relevant to preservice and veteran teachers. All the areas are vital to students in the field of special education and can be used as a reference tool throughout their teaching careers.

*Jacques Singleton, University of Memphis*

### From the Publisher

Now in an updated version edition which features expanded coverage of research-based methods that improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

### From the Inside Flap

#### **PREFACE**

Most educators can recall key events that made lasting impressions on their minds or hearts. One such event occurred in 1968 during a PTA meeting at a small elementary school next to the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. The officers of the PTA were concerned about the uninterested, unmotivated, and misbehaving students in their school, and they asked me to discuss the topic. More than 70 people—parents, teachers, and central office staff—entered the small cafeteria for the PTA meeting.

Within a few minutes I was introduced. I told the audience that I was delighted to be with them and wanted to begin by giving them a short test. The test consisted of a problem involving the transporting of a chicken, a fox, and a bag of chicken feed across a lake. However, the problem was designed so that it was impossible to answer correctly. I gave these instructions: "This is a short test that most people with average ability finish in one minute. When I say 'Begin,' please start. Ready?" Toward the end of the minute, many of the assemblage were mumbling, fidgeting, and attempting to look at others' papers. I called time and asked how many had solved the problem. Nobody raised a hand. With a puzzled expression I said, "You must be tired. I'll give you another minute. Slow learners can usually solve it in two minutes."

Although I had anticipated some frustration, the behavior of this group of adults during the next minute was somewhat surprising. Many cheated, some cursed, others broke my pencils, and still others crumpled up the test and tossed it aside. At the end of the minute I informed them that time was up. I asked several people how they felt. Responses included "I feel like punching you in the mouth." "I want to leave and never come back." "I'd like to give you a piece of my mind." "What's the answer to this expletive thing?"

Within two minutes, this situation had prompted adults to cheat, swear, want to leave, destroy property, threaten physical violence, and talk rudely. I pointed out that what had happened to them was the same thing that often happens to students with learning problems. Tasks are assigned that are too difficult or practically impossible for them to do correctly. Moreover, failure to do these tasks generally is viewed as a reflection of

one's ability. The point was clear; Both students and adults are inclined to act aggressively or avoid situations in which they are given inappropriate tasks.

With adults reacting so quickly and intensely to this type of failure, I was reminded of what happens to youngsters who customarily face failure within the schools. Ann and I enthusiastically share the conviction of many educators that students with learning problems have a right to educational programs tailored to their unique needs. To us, individualized programming involves the student working on appropriate tasks or content over time under effective motivational conditions. The primary purpose of this book is to prepare special education professors and teachers, resource room teachers, remedial education teachers, and general classroom teachers for the challenges of individualized programming for students with learning or behavioral problems.

Individualized programming requires an understanding of subject matter, assessment, effective teaching practices for each content area, instructional activities, independent work activities, and commercial programs and software. Moreover, the complex needs of students with learning problems and the abundance of interventions necessitate that special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers, other professionals, and parents. As teachers of elementary, secondary, and university students, we have had difficulty finding a text that covers all of these areas. Resource and classroom teachers as well as special education professors often refer to one text for instructional activities, another for teacher-made materials, another for scope and sequence skills lists, another for assessment, and yet another for descriptions of commercial materials and software. This book provides a comprehensive, practical text for special education and remedial education methods courses; a resource for special education and remedial education inservice programs; and a handbook for individual teachers. New in This Edition

As a result of feedback from reviewers and users of the fifth edition, this sixth edition features some noteworthy changes, including the addition of the National Institutes of Health research on reading assessment and interventions in phonological awareness, phonics, comprehension strategies, and fluency. Moreover, reviewers indicate that the coverage of collaboration, inclusion, content enhancements, effective teaching practices, classroom management, phonological awareness, cultural diversity, affective development, functional curriculum, problem solving, explicit and implicit instruction, successful transition practices, and the use of adult volunteers or paraprofessionals in the classroom is timely and comprehensive. Also, descriptions of tests, materials, and software have been updated throughout this edition. We hope this edition will help other teacher educators and teachers to accomplish instructional goals more easily.

#### Acknowledgments

Many individuals deserve special attention for their contributions to this book. Appreciation and thanks go to the reviewers Jim Burns, College of St. Rose (New York), Rori R. Carson, Eastern Illinois University, Roberta Strosnider, Hood College (Maryland), and Cynthia Dieterich, Cleveland State University. We also express our gratitude to the many students who read the fifth edition and provided valuable suggestions for improving it. Thanks to Ann Davis, administrative editor, for her encouragement, support, patience, and belief that we would meet deadlines. Finally, we always will be indebted to students, parents, and teachers who have shared their successes and frustrations with us through the years.

Cecil D. Mercer  
Ann R. Mercer

#### **Users Review**

##### **From reader reviews:**

**Cora Spillane:**

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**Michael Espy:**

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