California State University, Monterey Bay

Digital Commons @ CSUMB

Spring 2015

High School Students with Learning Disabilities: Self-advocacy Skills in the General Education Classroom

Adam P. Castro
California State University, Monterey Bay

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes

High School Students with Learning Disabilities: Self-advocacy Skills in the General Education

Classroom

Action Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of

Arts in Education

California State University at Monterey Bay

Spring 2015

High School Students with Learning Disabilities: Self-advocacy Skills in the General Education Classroom

By: Adam P. Castro

APPROVED BY THE GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr. Cathi Draper Rodriguez, Thesis Advisor, Master of Arts in Education

Dr. Lou Denti, Coordinator, Master of Arts in Education

_____

Dr. Kris Roney, Ph.D. Associate Vice President
For Academic Programs and Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies

Acknowledgements

First, I want to thank my family for all your love and support you have given me to help me accomplish my goals, both educational and professional. Thank you to my parents Joe and Anna, and my siblings Melissa, Aaron and Emilie. Without the unconditional love you have given me, all my educational, professional and personal goals would be harder to accomplish. To my friends Donny, Ta'shanne, Eddie, and Gus that I speak to on a daily and weekly basis thanks for listening to me and giving me constructive feedback when I need it most. I appreciate your friendships and I am lucky to have such a supportive network.

Second, I want to thank my colleagues at the school where I teach and have grown so much the last three years. It has been a huge benefit of having two mentor master teachers, Michael and Catherine that I learned so much from in the field of special education. Also, thanks to Grace, my colleague who I shared my classroom with and had the opportunity to share classroom ideas and teaching strategies on a daily basis. In special education, the use of research based instruction has proven to be most helpful. I have enjoyed and grown so much through the collaboration process not only with my special education colleagues, but my general education colleagues as well. This project allowed me to meet, discuss and take a substantial look into the perspectives of general education teachers. I want to thank Patrick, Carrie, Karen, and Brian for all your feedback, open discussion, and most valuable perspectives.

Third, I want to thank the teacher preparation department at CSUMB. I completed my Level II/clear credential program as well as Masters of Arts in Education at CSUMB. While at CSUMB, I learned so many new skills that will help me to grow, flourish, and contribute as a professional in education. I want to thank my classmates Bingta, Jamie, Julie and Guadalupe in

the teacher preparation program for your help and feedback. I want to thank Dr. Denti and Dr. Draper Rodriguez for your mentorship, help and guidance with my thesis project. It was great to have instructors so in touch with the challenges and needs that special education teachers face and are able to offer the appropriate academic and professional guidance. As a result, I am a more capable educational researcher and can make better decisions to help all my students in the classroom. I will leave the teacher preparation program better served to collaborate on a daily basis and help my colleagues, administrators, families and most of all, students to ensure the most positive life outcomes possible.

Abstract

This study took an exploratory look into the perceptions of special education students and participating teachers in the use of self-advocacy skills in the general education classroom. A sample group of 5 mild to moderate high school graduation diploma track students with Learning Disabilities participated in a systematic self-advocacy training. After students practiced the self-advocacy skills in the real class setting, qualitative data was collected in the form of interviews, questionnaires and a focus group. Themes were discovered pertaining to the positive changes these students made, the ongoing challenges these students continue to face and strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior in the future.

Keywords: self-advocacy, mild/moderate learning disabilities, accommodations, student perceptions, general education teacher perceptions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

There are many requirements for High School students to graduate with a diploma in the state of California, California Education Code Section 51225.3 (2013). Students in grades 9-12 must meet requirements of accumulative grade point averages, passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and attaining the required number of graduation units. They also need to pass certain classes in defined categories such as English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Fine Arts, Electives, Physical Education, Science, Social Sciences and Foreign Language. Contributing to these academic requirements is the fact that teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills needed for success in school and beyond is treated as an afterthought (Delfer, 2003). One population meeting High School graduation requirements are students with mild to moderate learning disabilities. High school students with learning disabilities qualify for transition plans as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP), (Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 2004). Even though students with learning disabilities receive transition goals, transition skills are often taught in an inconsistent manner (Thoma, Pannazzo, Fritton & Bartholomew, 2008). Unfortunately, this leaves students with mild to moderate learning disabilities at a disadvantage in areas of transitional skills when they depart school leaving them vulnerable to a host of social liabilities in the areas of employment and independent living (Bouck, 2014).

There are employment disparities and overrepresentations of working age (18-64 years old) persons with disabilities living below the poverty line, which impacts independent-living. According to the United States Census Bureau and the United States Department of Commerce (2013), 28.8% of persons with disabilities aged 18-64 live at or below the poverty line. As a comparison, 14.5% of working age persons 18-64 without disabilities live at or below the

poverty level. Working age persons with disabilities have a double the chance outcome of living

in poverty as compared to non-disabled peers according to United States Census Bureau and

United States Department of Commerce statistics.

There is need for improvement in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the

workforce (Whitt, Cawley, Yonker, & Polage, 2014). Whitt et al. (2014) stated that workers with

disabilities including invisible disabilities face stigmatization, and in general, are hindered in the

workplace. Other hindrances for workers with disabilities include requesting accommodations in

the workplace because workers may face negative outcomes as a result (Whitt et al., 2014).

According to the American Survey 2010-1012 data, 32% of persons with disabilities are

employed, 7% are unemployed and looking for work but 60% are not in the workforce at all.

Persons with disabilities need skills that will make the transition from no inclusion to workplace

inclusion. Nevala, Pehkonen, Koskela, Ruusuvuori, and Anttila (2014) found that one such skill

to help persons with intellectual disabilities achieve sustained employment is self-advocacy.

Self-advocacy is a barrier to achieve sustained employment because some persons with

intellectual disabilities may need workplace accommodations to succeed. Nevala et al. (2014)

also discovered that workplace accommodations are more effective as facilitated by the disabled

worker themselves than compared to accommodations from an intellectually disable person's

advocate, like a case manager. Future job growth projections show a need for new workers to

enter the workforce. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012-2022, job growth for all

workers is expected to grow 10.8% by the year 2022 and 10.4% for workers with disabilities. In

the next several years, more workers with disabilities who never worked before will need to enter

the workforce.

Self-advocacy is an important skill and behavior needed to be taught to persons with disabilities (Lee, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, & Little, 2008). In an effort to aim for positive post school outcomes, high school students with learning disabilities practicing self-advocacy behavior is necessary. The goal of this thesis is to reflect on the perceptions of both student and teacher participants after students with learning disabilities complete a self-advocacy training and practice self-advocacy skills in the general education classroom. Hopefully, students will become more effective at managing their abilities to use classroom accommodations in an independent manner. Students learning to appropriately request their own learning accommodations is practicing a self-advocacy skill. Self-advocacy skills are important and are necessary to prepare students for their next stages of life, whether it is in higher education or a job (Dipeolu, Hargrave, Sniatecki, & Donaldson, 2012).

Problem Statement

As a result of working with students as a high school resource teacher in the mild/moderate Special Education program, there is a need to review self-advocacy skills. Some skills that students need are understanding their own academic areas of need, appropriately asking for help and being effective at requesting learning accommodations when communicating with their general education teachers. One observation in high school mild/moderate special education students are the levels of passiveness in areas of educational decision making. Research showed students who are passive in areas like requesting classroom accommodations would benefit in being assertive (Lee et al., 2008). In addition, transition goals need to be written in the IEP for each individual student. Transition goals are necessary to aim for positive future outcomes in both employment and education/training (Johnson, Stodden, Emanuel, Luecking, & Mack, 2002). Johnson et al. (2002) stated high school students would benefit directly with

effective transition goals. Often, students present a lack of communication or participation in the problem solving of their academic deficiencies (Lee et al., 2008). Reasons students give for failing grades in their academic classes include forgetting to turn in assignments even when they are completed, not understanding the assignment, running out of time taking tests or being convinced that their teachers do not like them. Other problems include their inability to concentrate due to sitting placement or becoming too distracted by peers. Students can become too dependent on the assistance of educational professionals to fix their problems. Mithaug, Campeau, and Wolman (2003) compared general education and special education students in self-advocacy skills. Mithaug et al. (2003) found that special education students lag behind their general education peers in skills like expressing needs, abilities and setting academic expectations. In addition, special education students lag behind their general education peers to make a plan for goal achievement, monitor it and evaluate for goal completion (Mithaug et al., 2003). Too often these students are dependent on professionals to speak on their behalf and advocate for individual student needs. As stated above, students with mild/moderate disabilities are facing post-school challenges like stigmatization in the workplace, high chances of living in poverty and the passivity in their own educational decision making. Therefore, there is a need to provide systematic training in order for students with mild/moderate disabilities to advocate for themselves in and out of school to enhance academics and to increase independent thinking and social skills.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to increase student self-management behavior in the area of self-advocacy. This thesis was designed to implement an intervention, collect data, analyze the data, and present themes found in the perceptions of both student and teacher participants whom

participated in the study. This training consisted of a 4 Lesson Unit that can be taught in the classroom. This training was chosen because of the target skill. The target skill of the training is student-led accommodations.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed were:

- How do mild/moderate special education students perceive a self-advocacy intervention in the general education classroom?

- How do general education teachers perceive mild/moderate special education students use of a self-advocacy intervention for inclusion in academic required classes?

Theoretical Model

Social cognitive theory states how people learn through observing others in a social setting (Bandera, 2001). Social cognitive theory is important because it states that people learn directly through a person and/or many persons in a social setting. The classroom is a social setting where behaviors are copied and modeled. Therefore, a teacher can shape student's behaviors based on modeling. Bandera (1977) also showed a model of changing behaviors through self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the idea that a desired change in behavior can be brought about through expectations, recommendations, and advice.

Deci and Ryan (2012) defined self-determination as an empirically derived theory of human motivation and personality in social contexts that differentiates motivation in terms of being autonomous and controlled. These authors have thirty years of research in the areas of motivation, self-regulation and self-determination. In the span of thirty years, these authors have developed mini-theories. Some mini-theories stemming from their research include effects of social environments on intrinsic motivation; the development of autonomous extrinsic

motivation; the effects of different goal contents on performance; and individual differences in general motivation. In education, these authors have researched Self-Determination theory in order to link student's motivations and increase student achievement.

Fiedler and Danneker (2007) researched self-advocacy in the special education setting. Self-advocacy is when a person speaks up for what they need. Self-advocacy stems from self-determination, however, in school students need to practice self-advocacy in a practical classroom setting and on a daily basis. Special education students need to be taught self-advocacy skills in a systematic, explicit instruction. The basis for self-advocacy is the thought that persons with disabilities benefit when they advocate for themselves.

Researcher Background

I am a high school Resource teacher and I have been teaching mild/moderate special education in California for 6 years. I have a clear Credential in mild/moderate special education and earned a B.A. in Economics from Fresno State University. One of the goals I try and teach my students is to become more empowered in personal decision-making. It is important for students with disabilities to make decisions about their future and plans for success. These students can overcome challenges, but it does take time and work. One challenge is overcoming academic difficulties, but it is not a reason for students with disabilities to give up on their life dreams and goals. In the subject of problem solving, I want resolutions to be derived more from the student point of view and less from adults. These students need to make independent decisions. Self-advocacy is an important skill to practice. I want to teach skills that would not only be beneficial in the short term, but in the long term as well. I have also experienced speaking on behalf of my students to their general education teachers. My students would benefit if they spoke up for themselves and became more active participants. I want my students to

become empowered, take more control of their futures and learn to be independent. There is a problem when students have other people solve their problems.

Summary

Self-advocacy skills are when persons with disabilities speak up for themselves and what they need (Fiedler & Danneker, 2007). Mild to moderate special education students can learn self-advocacy skills, however, these skills need to be taught in a systematic and explicit manner (Fiedler & Danneker, 2007). Problems facing persons with disabilities include barriers to favorable post school outcomes like independent living, facing stigmatization in the workplace or high likelihood of living below the poverty line as working age adults. Other problems facing mild to moderate special education students success in school are a lower awareness in academic needs and planning for goal achievement when compared to general education peers (Mithaug et al., 2003). This thesis will implement a self-advocacy intervention, collect data, analyze the data, produce themes based on both student and participant perceptions, and last discuss a plan for new practice.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

One of the problems facing students with learning disabilities in the high school setting is the ability for them to advocate for their own learning (Lee et al., 2008). Educators would benefit with access to data showing deficiencies or lapses on specific self-monitoring skills, such as individuals addressing own areas of weaknesses and problem solving as well (Dipeolu, Hargrave, Sniatecki, & Donaldson, 2012). The availability of data in the area of self-advocacy skills for students with learning disabilities will result in appropriate employability intervention skills that aim for successful post-school settings (Dipeolu et al., 2012).

This action study implemented a self-advocacy intervention, collected data, analyzed the data, produced themes, and last, discussed new practice. This chapter reviewed literature in the topic areas of self-advocacy, self-determination, skills needed for post high school success and self-advocacy intervention in the mild to moderate Learning Disabilities student population.

Search Procedures

A systematic search through computerized databases was conducted at the California State University Monterey Bay Library. The databases were CSUMB Articles and Databases, EBSCO Host, and Google Scholar. The following search terms were used: (a) self-determination, (b) self-advocacy (c) social cognitive theory, (d) self-monitoring, (e) IEP goals, (f) transition planning, (g) high school, (h) accommodations, (i) learning disabilities, (j) post-secondary, and (k) intervention. These search terms were used individually and/or in groups to search through the research articles databases at California State University Monterey Bay. The abstracts, titles, and discussions of articles were reviewed.

Criteria for Selection

Studies were included in this review if: (a) the targeted population were students with learning disabilities, (b) the time frame of studies were dated between 1980 to 2014, (c) the study discussed the topic of transition planning with and without students with disabilities, (d) the research was about self-determination and self-advocacy skills (e) self-determination strategies were researched (f) teaching of strategies were implemented and (g) the study took place in a school setting.

Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

Denney, S. & Daviso (2012) defined self-determination as activities that promote goal setting, problem solving, self-monitoring, and choice. Agran, Blanchard, and Wehmeyer (2000) defined self-determination as when students can set their own goals based on students' wants or needs and the result is goal achievement. Part of the definition encompassed the process of students developing a plan, implementing it, then monitoring for progress independently. Deci and Ryan (2008) defined self-determination as a combination of both extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence a person's motivation.

Wehmeyer, Bersani, and Gagne (2000) described self-determination as having control and choice in lives. Wehmeyer et al., (2000) also described that in the past, it was professionals and advocates who gave control and choice to persons with disabilities. In the early to mid-twentieth century, persons with disabilities lacked power. However, change is happening in the current and future situation in self-advocacy for persons with disabilities. Due to advances and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, self-advocacy is increasing and as a result, persons with disabilities are taking more control of their lives. Wehmeyer et al.(2000) also stated that in the future persons with disabilities will be stronger self-advocates and contribute more in the planning, operating and monitoring of services they use in society.

In education, Fiedler and Danneker (2007) stated that self-advocacy skills are learned through self-determination skills. Also in education students with disabilities need to practice self-advocacy skills on a daily basis and with repetition. Last, Fiedler and Danneker (2007) stated special education students need to be taught self-advocacy skills in a systematic, explicit instruction.

Self-determination Theory

Lee, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, and Little (2008) investigated problems facing students with learning disabilities, specifically in the area of self-help. In general education settings, the majority of the help received by students with learning disabilities was teacher directed accommodations (Lee et al., 2008).

A model of teaching self-determination skills in the educational setting called the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI; Agran, Blanchard, & Wehmeyer, 2000). An important goal of this study was that students practiced self-regulation. The intervention was a 3 step process that 1) set a goal 2) made an action plan for goal 3) reviewed plan for adjustment. The model was easy to understand and shown effective after a timeframe of 4 to 16 weeks. This self-regulation practice was effective for 17 out of 19 special education students with disability qualifications in areas including Learning and Intellectual Disabilities. In 17 out of 19 students, proficiency in transition goal objectives were met at a rate of 80% correct or higher. In addition, 89% of transition goal performances met or exceeded teacher's expectations. Last, 5 out of the 19 students reported that learning the self-regulation steps has an effective of increased confidence. One implication of this study is that students with Learning and Intellectual Disabilities need time to reflect on barriers of achievement to achieve goals.

Reid, Trout, & Schartz (2005) conducted different studies and found self-regulation is

effective for students with ADHD and learning disabilities. Self-regulation is when a student monitors themselves in order to achieve a goal. Self-regulation helped improved the auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning over a period as measured in students with ADHD and learning disable. Even though this studied showed that specific self-regulation intervention skills can help, alongside treating ADHD with medication, to improve certain behaviors, it did not show the effects of more specific skills such as study skills (Reid et al., 2005). This study helped to differentiate between levels of student self-regulating. The different types of self-regulating were self-monitoring, self-monitoring plus reinforcement, self-management, and self-reinforcement. Students requesting accommodations in a class is a kinesthetic activity due to actions and communication itself taking place. Therefore, self-regulating and learned self-determination behavior may help the kinesthetic activity of communicating and requesting learning accommodations in the classroom environment.

Skills for Post-Graduation Success

In order to focus on career preparation problem areas, professionals need to attain more accurate data in the levels of students with disabilities (Dipeolu, Hargrave, Sniatecki, & Donaldson, 2012). Dipeolu et al., (2012) showed assessments should be reflective of the population being assessed when comparing results between high school students with Learning Disabilities and students without. Two units of measurement found to predict career preparedness were self-advocacy and self-determination (Dipeolu et al., 2012). In this study, the authors stated students with learning disabilities needed intervention in internal perception skills as well as external directions skills. The career inventory showed areas of weakness, however, did not offer more data in areas of need like student self-determination skills. The authors suggest more assessments normed for students with Learning Disabilities will help pinpoint right

skills for career intervention (Dipeolu et al, 2012).

Bolt, Decker, Lloyd, & Morlock (2011) found a connection between self-determination skills used in high school as well as in college. College students surveyed said that accommodations in high-school were as helpful as in college. Bolt et al. (2011) surveyed college students that had IEPs in the high school setting. This study focused on students with learning disabilities in reading and writing. The study found that interventions learned in high school, can carry over to post-high school settings. It is important for graduating high school students with mild/moderate learning disabilities have the appropriate self-advocacy skills before they attend college and/or enter the workforce. Collecting proper data and giving the proper assessments is one way teachers can determine the skill levels and needs for students in the area of transition planning (Dipelou et al., 2012). To ensure success, these career related skills can be taught and mastered before graduation from high school takes place.

Comparison of Different Self-Determination Measures

Konrad, Fowler, Walker, Test, & Wood (2007) reviewed studies in which self-determination interventions were used. The authors found a difference between strategies that used one intervention alone compared to two interventions together. Out of 30 studies, 19 studies were self-management alone, 11 used self-management with another goal setting intervention. This study compared the effectiveness of self-determination interventions towards a goal or targeted behavior. Konrad et al. (2007) found that strong targets were achieved with self-management with goal setting. Another strong effect was goal setting with math skills. This study looked at quality of work and productivity results after intervention implementation. Quality in the areas of math, reading, writing, and spelling were measured. Productivity in the areas of math, reading, writing, and spelling were measured. Measurements in math included a

percent increase in math problems completed towards productivity and the percentage correctly answered on an assignment for quality. Self-determination interventions along with goal setting showed to improve academic skills especially in math academics. The practice of implementing a self-determination intervention along with another evidence-based intervention shows promise to increase the productivity and quality of student work.

Self-Advocacy Interventions

Prater, Redman, Anderson, & Gibb (2014) used a 4 step lesson plan to explicitly teach students with learning disabilities how to appropriately request accommodations in general education settings. They found this lesson plan to be effective and helpful for students when requesting learning accommodations. A comparison of baseline, training and post-training data were evaluated for effectiveness of student training. The authors also accessed data through questionnaires from both student and general education teacher participants. The outcome not only raised student led accommodations, but also raised overall student confidences.

Roberts, Ju, and Zhang (2014) completed an empirical study reviewing current peer-reviewed Journal articles dated 2004 to 2014 in which Self-Advocacy was practiced. These authors concluded that there needs to be research improvement in the area of Self-Advocacy practice in students with Learning Disabilities. Out of the 18 studies reviewed, Roberts et al., (2014) only rated two studies as being "high quality" and zero studies as acceptable. Out of the 18 studies, only two studies included interventions in which both special education teacher and general education teacher were participants. There is also more need to study Self-Advocacy program effects on Learning Disable students from diverse backgrounds as seven studies did not include student participant ethnicity and eight did not include the community setting. In addition, more rigorous research on Self-Advocacy predictors and Self- Advocacy outcomes need to take

place.

Summary

Self-determination and self-advocacy need to be taught in a systematic, multi-step process (Lee et al. 2008). Self-advocacy stems from self-determination. The more students become aware of their own areas of need, they can become greater self-advocates. Roberts et al., (2014) reviewed peer-reviewed Journal articles and found that more rigorous research needs to be done on the predictors and outcomes of Self-Advocacy. Self-determination is the basis for students' intrinsic motivation and increasing achievement (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Self-determination in education needs to be taught to students with some time for reflection (Agran et al., 2000). In the studies reviewed, there were times for students to reflect on barriers to achievement and if any changes needed to be made for success (Reid et al, 2005). A combination of goal-setting, reviewing, practicing, and immediate feedback are the most effective ways to teach self-determination (SDLMI; Agran et al., 2000). One important component is for students to monitor themselves. Interventions with more than one skill were rated stronger (Konrad et al, 2007). For example, self-management with goal setting rated as a strong intervention. There are different levels and meanings of self-determination. Some examples are self-monitoring, self-monitoring plus reinforcement, self-management, and self-reinforcement (Reid et al. 2005). However, more recent studies show that strategies with student self-management are favored.

There is a connection between accommodations for students in the high school setting as well as in college (Bolt et al., 2011). Research showed that college students with academic needs in writing and math viewed classroom accommodations as most helpful. College students with an IEP in high school surveyed that they do indeed need and use accommodations for learning in the college setting. Even though successful post high school outcomes vary by individual

students, this research focused mostly on the outcomes of students with mild to moderate

learning disabilities range. The goal of producing successful post school outcomes was the

purpose of this research review.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used to gather and analyze data to answer the research questions proposed, including the following:

- How do mild/moderate special education students perceive a self-advocacy intervention in the general education classroom?

- How do general education teachers perceive mild/moderate special education students use of a self-advocacy intervention for inclusion in academic required classes?

The type of action research used in this study was practical classroom action research, because it is designed specifically for teachers by studying and applying research-based practices for instruction and skill building targeted for improvement. Practical classroom action research provides teachers with sources of data that help to develop more effective ways to modify and enrich teaching practices, thereby enhancing students' chances for success and can be conducted by education professionals (Hendricks, 2006).

Setting

The setting of the study was a high school in California's Central Coast region. The following was taken from state websites (California Department of Education, 2012-2013). According to the California Department of Education (2013), the district served 10,730 students. Within the district's student population, 52.9% were Latino, 22.5% Caucasian, 6.4% African American, 5.5% Asian American, 4% Filipino, 2.2% Pacific Islander, 0.3% American Indian and 6% other. According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 estimates, the town where the school is located had a population of about 27, 247 consisting of 78.3% Caucasian, 13.7 % Latino, 7.9% Asian and 2.8% African American. The high school in which the study was conducted is one of

four high schools in the district. The high school served 1,209 students, of which 42% were Latino, 37% Caucasian, 7.2 % Asian American, 4% African American, 2% Filipino, 1.3% Pacific Islander, 0.3% American Indian and 5.7% other. Of the total students at Clark high school, 9% were English Learners and 57% considered socioeconomically disadvantaged. The classes in which the intervention was taught were 9th-12th grade mild/moderate special education tutorial classes for students in the high school setting. These classes are for students that qualify with a learning disability and have an Individual Education Plan. The first class consisted of 8 students, and the other consisted of 5 students. This made a total of 13 students. Nine students were boys and four students were girls. Of the total number of students, seven were English Learners, eight were Latino and five were Caucasian.

Participants

As with classroom action research in general, this project was based on a convenience sample consisting of all the students in two high school mild/moderate special education Tutorial classes as follows.

Students. There were a total of nine boys in both classes. The grades for the male students consisted of ninth through twelfth grade. Out of the nine boys, five were Latino and four were Caucasian. All the boys qualified for mild/moderate special education related services in the following disability areas: specific learning disability, other health impairment and intellectual disability. All of the male students were high school graduation track with a diploma. There were a total of four female students in the high school tutorial classes. The female students were in grades nine, ten, and eleven. Three of the female students were Latina and one was Caucasian. All the female high school students qualified for mild/moderate special education related services in the following area: specific learning disabilities. All the female

students were high school graduation track with a diploma. All participants were high school diploma track and were included in all general education classes, with the exception of one special education class. This special education class is a tutorial class, where students receive support in the form of specialized academic instruction that they do not receive in the general education setting.

      Teachers. This study involved both the researcher and several different general education teachers in the dual role of teacher and data collector as follows. The researcher was a Latino male with six years of teaching experience primarily in the middle and high school mild/moderate Special Education setting. The researcher had a bachelor's degree in Economics and was comfortable helping students in the high school academic grade level content areas.

      General education teacher #1 was a male math teacher. Teacher #1 had one participant in general education math class. He has a credential in math and has taught at the high school for two years. He had experience teaching special education students in his classroom.

      General education teacher #2 was a female Health and English teacher. Teacher #2 had one participant in general education English Language Arts class. She had a credential in English.

      General education teacher #3 was a female social studies teacher. Teacher #3 had one participant in general education World History class.

      General education teacher #4 was a male long-term science substitute teacher. Teacher #4 had two participants in general education Biology class. He had a substitute teaching credential and had been teaching at the school for three months.

Experimental Design

This study was practical classroom action research. Student participants were trained in a self-advocacy intervention during special-education classroom instruction then practiced the intervention skill in one of their general education academic classes. Data was collected one week after students practiced their self-advocacy skills. After data was collected it was then analyzed to create themes and categories as described in Inductive Content Analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The themes and categories were used to describe important findings in relation to the perceptions of the self-advocacy experience as a result from training for both student and teacher participants. Last, based on the themes, a new practice for training students in self-advocacy will be discussed.

Materials. Materials included a lesson plan (see Appendix A) covering the entire Self-advocacy Unit Lessons one through four (Smith, 2011). Lesson one materials included an Accommodations Poster, Self-Advocacy Poster and Treatment Fidelity Lesson One Checklist. Lesson Two included the lesson, Skills Inventory, Skills I Know, Skills I Need to Know and Treatment Fidelity Lesson Two Checklist. Lesson three included the lesson from lesson plan, the FESTA Poster, Role-Playing handout and Treatment Fidelity Lesson Three checklist. Lesson four included the lesson from lesson plan, Role-Playing handout, Student Checklist (see Appendix B) and Treatment Fidelity Lesson Four checklist. Students needed pencils, paper, textbooks and handouts to participate in each lesson. General education teachers needed Teacher Observation Checklists (see Appendix B) and pencils to complete checklists.

Materials for data collection included the Social Validity Scale for Students Questionnaire (see Appendix C) and Student Interview Questions (see Appendix D). In addition,

teacher participants completed a Social Validity Scale for Teachers Questionnaire (see Appendix E) and Focus Group Questions (see Appendix F).

Incentives used during the lesson. In order to expect maximum participation for students, incentives were used. Positive praise was used to complete all parts of each lesson. In addition, students had the opportunity to earn free time after the completion of each daily lesson. Free time was in the form of a ten minute student chosen activity in the classroom. For participation and completion of lessons one and two, students were provided a snack of their choice. In addition, another incentive in the form of a student chosen snack was provided at the end of the entire unit.

Procedures

First, students were trained in the Self-Advocacy Unit (Smith, 2011). This training consisted of four lessons. The procedures for training are listed in the section titled Lesson Format. Students trained during lessons one through four and had one week of practice after the unit ended. The one week of practice was called the post-training phase. Second, participating teachers monitored and checked for student skills using the Teacher Observation Checklist. Participating teachers monitored and checked for student skills from the beginning of lesson one and continued through the post-training phase. Third, students completed the Student Social Validity Questionnaire and Student Interview one week after the post-training phase. Fourth, participating teachers completed the Teacher Social Validity Questionnaire after the end of the post-training phase. Last, participating teachers participated in a focus group. The focus group took place after the student post-training phase.

In order to gather qualitative data, student and teacher questionnaires, student interviews, a teacher focus group and researcher reflection were collected. The data collection tools gathered

information regarding how both the student participants and general education teachers

perceived the intervention. The data collection tools will be further described in the data

collection section. Notes were collected during the implementation of the lesson plan by the

researcher. Notes were also written about how the lessons were implemented, dates, and student

performance. Work samples were collected.

Lesson format. The training consisted of implementing a 4 lesson Unit taught during

Tutorial classes and measuring effectiveness in the general education setting (Smith, 2011). The

lessons were taught in direct instruction format. The lessons were as follows:

- Lesson 1: Self-advocacy and accommodations.

- Lesson 2: Personal strength and needs.

- Lesson 3: Steps for asking accommodations.

- Lesson 4: Asking for appropriate accommodations.

The total training consisted of these four lessons along with a new addition. The new

addition to this intervention was the use of students writing a Learner's Biography in Lesson 2.

The Learner's Biography was a narrative where students wrote their individual learning styles,

learning strengths, and areas of learning weakness. The Learners Biography was used for the

purpose of communicating with their teachers, a further understanding of their learning

disability, and a copy that will help in future educational settings.

In Lesson 1, students defined and reflected on the words control, power, and self-

advocacy. Students shared situations when teachers made decisions for them. The teacher

reviewed accommodations and allowed time for students to review, practice and reflect on their

individual needs. Students also identified and matched accommodations with codes. In this

lesson students were asked to share situations in which they spoke up for what they needed. This lesson discussed accommodations in the general education classes and how they can be helpful.

In Lesson 2, students practiced identifying appropriate accommodations when given a classroom situation. Students discussed academic strengths and weaknesses. They reflected on their own individual skills. This is an important lesson because students looked closer into their own academic limits. An important component to the lesson was the opportunity for students to reflect on which accommodations were helpful in their own academic areas of need. This lesson also included the use of a Learners Biography as noted before.

During Lesson 3 the teacher reviewed accommodations that were available to students. The teacher also modeled how an accommodation can be used to help an academic area of need. Students practiced scenarios where they matched appropriate classroom accommodations with areas of academic needs. Students shared their answers. Also, the teacher introduced FESTA which stands for (a) facing the teacher, (b) maintaining eye contact, (c) stating the reason the accommodation was needed, (d) thanking the teacher and (e) implementing the accommodation. FESTA was used to help students remember the steps for appropriately requesting an accommodation.

In Lesson 4 students reviewed how to appropriately use accommodations for their own needs. Students reviewed the steps for requesting an accommodation in class. A successful request for accommodations was based on recognizing when an accommodations was needed, student requesting the accommodation, facing the teacher, maintaining eye contact, stating the reason the accommodation was needed, thanking the teacher and ultimately using the accommodation. This lesson allowed students to practice requesting accommodations in class. The teacher modeled a role-play. Next, students role-played with peers in class and received

feedback. Last, this portion of the Unit trained students to complete the Student Checklist for self-monitoring. The checklists were used as self-monitoring guidelines to help students remember the steps to follow when requesting accommodations.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data was collected one week after the end of the Self-Advocacy training. Student participants participated in training during Lessons one through four. After Lesson four, student participants practiced the self-advocacy skill in their general education classroom for a time period of one week. This section will list and describe data collection methods for Student Social Validity Scale Questionnaire, Student Interviews, Teacher Observation Checklist, Teacher Social Validity Scale Questionnaire, and the Teacher Focus Group as conducted by the researcher.

Student Social Validity Scale Questionnaire. After one week of Self-Advocacy Unit completion and practicing the skills learned in the Self-Advocacy Training Unit, data was collected from student participants. Student participants completed a Social Validity Questionnaire. The purpose of the Social Validity Questionnaire was to gather data from participants in the area of the effectiveness of the training and self-advocacy skills acquired. The questions asked student participants about their thoughts regarding their skills to self-advocate in the general education class, their knowledge of accommodations, understanding of accommodations and which accommodations are available to them. In addition, the questionnaire asked participant's perceptions about appropriately requesting and using classroom accommodations. Last, the questionnaire asked participant's viewpoints on continued use of requesting accommodations in class and whether this skill is beneficial. The participant answers

were recorded on a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The answers were used to discuss and validate student participant effectiveness.

Student Interview Questions. One week after the completion of Lesson four, students participated in an interview with the researcher. The researcher conducted the interview during special education classroom time in small groups of two or less. The interview purpose was to get information regarding participants' points of views while learning and practicing the self-advocacy skills. In addition, student participants reflected on the benefits and challenges of requesting classroom learning accommodations in a practical setting.

Teacher Observation Checklist. General education teachers observed and completed the Teacher Checklist for each of the student participants. General education teachers completed a checklist for each class during the student participant intervention training and post-training phases. The training phase consisted of classroom days that occurred from the start of Lesson one through the completion of Lesson four. The post-training phase consisted of the time period one week after the conclusion of Lesson four.

Teacher Social Validity Questionnaire. Teacher participants completed a Teacher Social Validity Questionnaire one week after the conclusion of Lesson four. The questionnaire gathered data from teachers after students had one week to practice self-advocacy behavior in the classroom and request learning accommodations when they needed them. The questions focused on student behaviors such as: did student participants demonstrate the ability to advocate for themselves, did students have a clear understanding of accommodations and which accommodations were available to them. Next, the questionnaire included questions regarding participating students' ability to appropriately request accommodations and if the student participants benefited from the intervention. Answers were recorded on a scale from strongly

agree to strongly disagree. The answers were used to discuss and validate student participant effectiveness.

Focus Group for teacher participants. Teacher participants met as part of a focus group to share their experience in the study. The focus group discussion took place one week after the conclusion of Lesson four. The teachers were chosen due to their roles as observing and monitoring the student participants through both training and post-training phases. The focus group answered questions regarding benefits, challenges, and applications in the real classroom setting as performed by student participants. The focus group was an opportunity to gather valuable data from the general education teachers' points of view. In addition, the school principal participated in the focus group discussion as a visitor.

Researcher Reflection. Notes were collected during the implementation of the Self-Advocacy Unit Lesson plan. Notes were written about how the lessons were implemented, dates, and student performance. Work samples were collected from participants. The researcher recorded notes and reflected on the different parts of the study. The different parts of the study included implementing the four lesson Self-Advocacy Unit, collaborating with teachers, interviewing student participants and facilitating the focus group.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed on students' and general education teachers' thoughts and perceptions about the self-advocacy training in order to create themes (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The Student Social Validity Questionnaire data was read and re-read to derive key themes from the student perceptions to the effectiveness of the intervention training. Next, the student interview answers were read and reviewed for key findings in terms of changes made as a result from the training and strategies to improve self-advocacy from the points of views of student

participants. The Teacher Social Validity Questionnaire data was analyzed and notes were taken in regards to the teachers observations of student performance on the target skills. The teacher focus group data was analyzed for key findings on changes made after the training, ongoing challenges as observed in the general education setting and their strategies for self-advocacy improvement. After reviewing the data and organizing the key findings from both student and teacher participants, three themes emerged. The three themes from this research study in order to contribute to self-advocacy practice are 1) the positive changes made after the intervention, 2) ongoing challenges students face in self-advocacy behavior and 3) strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior for students with Learning Disabilities included in the general education classroom.

Limitations/Threats to Internal Validity

Although efforts were made to minimize threats to internal validity, there are still some potential threats that can limit the overall validity and usefulness of the findings. The purpose of Inductive Content Analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) is to analyze the data based on new practice after original data collection. Due to the time constraint there will be one person analyzing the data. There may be bias and misinterpretation of data, as the researcher will be the only person interpreting the data. The hope is that the findings can be beneficial towards planning a new practice in training self-advocacy for mild to moderate special education students. Nonetheless, a short project duration reduces the probability of other internal validity threats such as student maturation.

Summary

This thesis trained mild/moderate special education students to advocate for themselves in the general education classroom. One week after the training was completed, qualitative data

was collected from student and teacher participants. Data in the form of questionnaires, interviews, and a focus group were collected. Student participants shared their thoughts about the effectiveness of the self-advocacy training practiced in the general education classroom. Student participants also shared their feelings about how the intervention changed their ability to request and use classroom learning accommodations. Teacher participants shared their thoughts about the effectiveness of the training from an observational point of view. In addition, teacher participants shared their insights about mild/moderate special education students practicing self-advocacy skills in a real classroom setting. As a result from the data collection, key findings were produced in the form of themes. The three themes are 1) positive changes made after the intervention, 2) ongoing challenges students face in self-advocacy behavior and 3) strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior for students with Learning Disabilities included in the general education classroom.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

In this study, mild to moderate special education students participated in an intervention to teach them self-advocacy skills. They then practiced the self-advocacy skills for one week. The self-advocacy lesson was taught through direct, systematic instruction in a sheltered setting, while the skill was practiced in a general education academic required class. The participating teachers observed the students at the beginning of training all the way through the post-training phase. The participating teachers used a skills checklist to observe student performance. This research study collected qualitative data in the form of student/teacher participant questionnaires, student interviews and a teacher participant focus group discussion to answer the following research questions:

- How do mild/moderate special education students perceive a self-advocacy intervention in the general education classroom?

- How do general education teachers perceive mild/moderate special education students use of a self-advocacy intervention for inclusion in academic required classes?

Using Inductive Content Analysis approach (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), the qualitative data was analyzed and searched for themes pertaining to the perceptions of both students and teacher participants after the self-advocacy training. The themes were categorized and grouped to explain important aspects of the practice of self-advocacy by students with Learning Disabilities in the real class setting. Important aspects of real-life practice of self-advocacy were taken into account in order to provide outcomes that contribute to self-advocacy research. After creating exhausted categories and grouping of data, three themes emerged. The three themes from this research study in order to contribute to self-advocacy practice are 1) the positive changes made

after the intervention, 2) ongoing challenges students face in self-advocacy behavior and 3)

strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior for students with Learning Disabilities included in

the general education classroom. This chapter will list the theme results as perceived by student

and teacher participants.

Participant perceptions of the use of a self-advocacy intervention

After the training, the participating students completed both the Student Social Validity

Questionnaire and interview questions based on their experiences. The following are the student

perceptions for the three themes categorized during the data analysis. The three themes are

positive changes made after the interventions, ongoing challenges in self-advocacy training, and

strategies for self-advocacy improvement as perceived by the student participants.

Theme 1. Theme one are the positive changes made after the intervention as perceived

by student participants. Results from the student interviews showed that students liked learning

about accommodations and how to get help in their academic classes. Other results from the

student interview showed students taking more active roles after the self-advocacy training.

Some of these changes included making more eye contact, asking more questions and asking for

more accommodations. As a result from the questionnaire, students agreed that they know the

meaning of an accommodation and will continue to request accommodations in their general

education classes in the future.

Theme 2. Theme two are the ongoing challenges students continue to face as perceived

by student participants. Results from the questionnaire show that students only slightly agree that

they do better in their general education classes when they request accommodations. Students

need to see that requesting accommodations in class is of value to them. In addition, student

participants only slightly agree that they have a good understanding of what accommodations are

available in their general education classes. Results from the student interviews showed that the comfort level in communicating with teachers is an ongoing problem as well. One student didn't feel comfortable facing the teacher to request accommodations. Another student said role-playing was a problem when practicing the self-advocacy steps. Last, one student said the self-advocacy unit lesson was boring and too much work.

  Theme 3. Theme three are the strategies to improve self-advocacy as perceived by student participants. Results from the student interviews show that more practice would improve the self-advocacy behavior in students with Learning Disabilities. Student participants suggested that a couple more weeks of practice would help students get better at self-advocacy. Students also said that more practice is needed in the general education setting. Other student results were to have more fun and interesting activities in the self-advocacy unit lessons.

Teachers perception of the use of a self-advocacy intervention

  Participating general education teachers completed the Social Validity questionnaire and participated in a focus group one week after student post-training. The following results are based on the answers by the general education teacher participants. This section will describe themes one, two and three as perceived by teacher participants.

  Theme 1. Theme one are the positive changes after the intervention as perceived by teacher participants. Results from the teacher questionnaire showed teachers agreed they would like their students to continue to request accommodations as a result from the intervention. In addition they agreed that all students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations. Next, results from teacher participant focus group answers showed that students are more confident in class. According to teacher participant results, students made more eye contact, became more vocal and more confident in asking for help. Other results showed students

becoming more comfortable and joking with the teacher. Last, teachers were reminded to differentiate instruction in lessons as a result of the intervention.

Theme 2. Theme two are the ongoing challenges as perceived by teacher participants. Results from the question show teacher participants slightly disagreed that students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves. More training is needed for students after the training post-phase. Also, results from the questionnaire revealed that teachers only slightly agree that students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in the general education classes. Last, results from the focus group show that planning and implementing accommodations are continually problematic.

Theme 3. Theme three are the strategies to improve self-advocacy as perceived by teacher participants. Results from the focus group showed strategies for improvement in communication, instructional practice and tips for students. Some tips for students include to start class prepared with materials on a daily basis, ask for help and to be able to work with text that may be higher than their reading levels. Communication strategies include students being aware of their learning needs and communicating these needs to their teachers. Also, students would benefit when talking to their teachers on a one to one basis. General education teachers also reported they would like to be included in self-advocacy training. Self-advocacy behavior and requesting accommodations should be taught, re-taught and practiced. General education teachers suggested that students should see other classmates do it in order to improve. Last, students need repetition, practice in smaller settings, then work way up to larger groups.

Summary

Five students with Learning Disabilities participated in an intervention training for four weeks, then practiced the skill for one week. Four general education teacher participants

observed the self-advocacy student behavior as performed in their classrooms. Qualitative data

based on the participant experiences was collected. Data collection included questionnaires,

interviews, and a focus group discussion. The results were three themes based on Inductive

Content Analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The themes discovered in this study to help explain

important aspects of self-advocacy practice in a real-class setting were 1) the positive changes

made after the intervention, 2) ongoing challenges students face in self-advocacy behavior and 3)

strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior for students with Learning Disabilities included in

the general education classroom. The next section will further discuss the implications of the

findings of this research study as pertaining to improving self-advocacy behavior for students

with Learning Disabilities.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This action research study attempted to answer two research questions. The first question was how do mild/moderate special education students perceive a self-advocacy intervention in the general education classroom. The second question asked how general education teachers perceive mild/moderate special education students use of a self-advocacy intervention for inclusion in academic required classes. This study accomplished both. This chapter will discuss the implications of 1) the positive changes made after the interventions, 2) ongoing challenges and 3) strategies to improve self-advocacy. Last, limitations of the research and an action plan to improve self-advocacy behaviors in students with Learning Disabilities will be discussed.

Positive changes made after the intervention

Positive changes in the self-advocacy behavior of student participants were observed by both participants themselves as well as teacher observers. As a result from the student interviews, the most common theme for changes made after the training was students asking more questions in class after training. Even though asking more questions in class was the most common theme, other changes in self-advocacy behavior as reported by student participants were making more eye contact with the teacher and changing seat placement. Asking more questions in class is important because students are practicing taking active roles in the educational setting. One of the strategies to improve self-advocacy behavior in the general education setting as stated by a teacher was for students to "avoid being passive". Asking questions in class helps students take more control of their learning.

General education teachers also observed positive changes in the self-advocacy behavior as performed by student participants. The most common theme for observed changes in the

classroom was that students became more confident in the training. Students became less shy in

the classroom, made more eye contact, became more vocal and asked for more help. This result

is important because it is a result as observed by participating general education teachers.

Another benefit of students practicing self-advocacy behavior in class as stated by general

education teacher participants is that differentiation of instruction is facilitated.

Ongoing challenges

Themes for ongoing challenges were discovered from both questionnaires and teacher

focus group responses. The main theme for ongoing challenges as discovered from the focus

group responses was how to provide and implement the accommodations needed. In addition,

one teacher also stated how it is "easier to implement an accommodation when students

communicate". Next, communication is a problem if students do not have a good understanding

of their academic needs. In order for students to have an understanding of their academic needs,

they need to be aware of academic weaknesses. One teacher stated that "students need to be self-

aware, know their strengths, know their learning styles and know what's best for them to

achieve." These observations present not one challenge, but many. The challenges discovered in

this dialogue include communication, implementation, and student self-awareness. The

challenges as presented in the self-awareness of students with Learning Disabilities is similar to

the findings by Lee et al., (2008).

Challenges were also discovered from the questionnaires. From student questionnaires,

student participants slightly agreed that they do better in general education classes when they

request accommodations. Overall, these student participants need to see the benefits of

requesting learning accommodations in the general education setting. The next challenge as

discovered through participant questionnaires is that there is a discrepancy between students'

perception as to their ability of self-advocacy behavior and reality. Student participants agreed that they know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation, but in reality, teacher observers did not agree. According to teacher observers, students did not demonstrate the ability to advocate for themselves. Last, student participants had an unclear understanding of accommodations available in their general education classes. In the student questionnaire, students slightly agreed to the statement "I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes." This is another area of an ongoing challenge.

Strategies to improve self-advocacy

One important feature is that this study included both the special education teacher and general education teachers as participants. The special education teacher provided the intervention training and the general education teachers observed the students' performance in the general education environment. After the general education teachers observed the students' performance, they participated in a focus group and discussed strategies to improve self-advocacy skills. General education perspective on improvement strategies is important because as stated by Roberts et al. (2014) only 2 out of 18 peer reviewed studies included both the general education and special education teachers as participants. Hopefully this study will lead to future progress in self-advocacy practices.

An important finding of this study, were the strategies for self-advocacy improvement as provided by student participants themselves. Student participant feedback is important because they are the target beneficiaries of the intervention. After participating in the intervention and practicing in the real classroom setting, students suggested that they receive "more practice in the general education class" and to "practice a couple more weeks". These findings are significant

because they reinforce the findings by Fiedler and Danneker (2007) that self-advocacy needs to be taught in a systematic structure where students have repeated opportunities to practice in a classroom setting.

Another strategy as stated during the focus group discussion is worth mentioning: peers modeling self-advocacy behavior to each other in order to increase self-advocacy skills. One teacher stated in the focus group that "students should see other classmates do it." Due to social cognitive theory (Bandera, 2001) this is possible and should be considered as a self-advocacy strategy. During the intervention lessons four and five, students participated in role-playing activities. Even though role-playing practice occurred, there was no reference as to having strong peers showing or modeling to others. This strategy is sensible, however, more data needs to take place about using this strategy.

In a practical classroom setting, many strategies were shared from the teacher focus group discussion that would help in a practical classroom setting. Some strategies as provided in the teacher focus group were to have more fun activities, focus on student self-awareness of academic needs, have more opportunity for practice and training, include general education teachers on the training, and to start class prepared. One general education teacher said, "If I know what they are practicing I can also coach them in my class." Implications for having a general education teacher also training students with Learning Disabilities is that the student would receive double the training, one from the special education teacher and the other from the general education teacher.

Limitations

There were limitations to the findings of this study. The first limitation is due to the subjectivity in self-advocacy. This was evident in the student interview answers. When students

gave their answers as to what they liked least about the training, answers were different. Different answers are actually expected due to student's thoughts and opinions. One student wrote that they liked the role-playing the least. At the same time, role-playing was one answer as presented by another student for the part they liked best about the self-advocacy training. This is a limitation because in order for training to be improved as stated by student perspective, one student would need more support in the role-playing, whereas the other student would not need support. The difference in support in role-playing is subjective depending on the student.

Individual students have different strengths and weaknesses. Some students may need to work on different skills in the academic class for remediation. Some students may need remediation in math skills, whereas others may need remediation in reading comprehension. While the steps to requesting accommodations may be the same for both students, the part of the self-advocacy unit where students need to reflect on learning needs will be different. In Lesson 2, students completed the "Skills I Know" and "Skills I Need to Know" worksheets. Students completed an academic skills checklist, however, the skills checklist alone may not be enough for students to get a good idea as to their academic areas of strength and weakness.

In addition to students having different strengths and weaknesses, there was no available pre-test or post-test for the self-advocacy unit. A pre-test and post-test would have been helpful to measure change and growth in specific target skills. Once again, observed changes in student self-advocacy behavior was presented through the focus group discussion without quantitative data. Not only would a pre-test and post-test help collect quantitative data, it would help drive instruction for students and determine which students would benefit with instruction and which students would not. This finding is also similar to the findings as reported by Dipeolu et al. (2012).

Qualitative data is general. There was no quantitative data in this study to measure specific changes in target skills. The target skills in this study were to identify classroom accommodations needed, request the accommodation, face the teacher, maintain eye contact, state the reason the accommodation was needed, thank the teacher and ultimately use the accommodation. Even though the student interview and teacher focus group stated changes perceived and observed after training, there is no numerical data to support the answers.

The training and post-training time were short. This time frame could influence a student's ability to learn, re-learn, and practice target skills. In addition, there was no time for students to reflect and create new action plan for improvement as suggested per (SDLMI; Agran et al., 2000). Students did have the opportunity to suggest ideas for training improvement when answering the interview question #4. Even though ideas for training improvement were stated by student participants, these ideas were not put into place during the time frame of the study.

The self-advocacy skill building could come from different factors. As observed from the focus group data and the "strategies to improve self-advocacy" theme, teachers stated suggestions to improve self-advocacy in the general education classroom. Some of the different factors include student self-awareness, communicating on a one to one basis, starting class prepared and opportunity for repetition. Even though there was a most common theme for improvement, other factors deserve recognition as contributing factors as well. With many factors being provided by teacher participants, it is difficult to focus on a single factor as a responsible indicator for self-advocacy behavior change. This study did not collect quantitative data and was not equipped to take into account measuring the effect on student self-advocacy behavior as caused by many variable factors.

Action Plan

As a review, the theoretical model for students learning self-advocacy skills is an inter-connection of social cognitive theory (Bander, 2001), self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012) and self-advocacy theory (Fiedler & Danneker, 2007). Social cognition happens when students learn skills through observing others, self-determination happens when students make changes to take control of their lives, and self-advocacy happens as students gain experience advocating for themselves.

One idea to improve self-advocacy behavior in students with Learning Disabilities is to get the general education teachers more involved. This serves two purposes. This helps to break the ice with the student participants, and students can be trained in both sheltered and large classroom settings. As stated in the focus group discussion by one general education teacher, "If I know what they are practicing I can also coach them in my class." This teacher showed a willingness to coach self-advocacy. In addition, as stated by Roberts et al., (2014), there needs to be rigorous research in self-advocacy programs that benefit students with Learning Disabilities including programs in which both special education teacher and general education teacher are participants. The self-advocacy intervention Unit would stay the same, however, include one more activity. The activity would be continued monthly practice where the general education teacher practices the self-advocacy skills in a sheltered setting in order to produce more self-advocacy behavior. It is recommended that the next research study be a mixed methods with both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitatively, the skills from the checklist should be compared between baseline, training, and post-training phases. However, it is suggested that the post training phase continue with ongoing training in the form of regular scheduled trainings between the student and general education teacher in a sheltered environment. Hopefully, the inclusion of

the general education teacher in the training will help break the ice, make the student more comfortable at communication and help students to understand which accommodations are available in the general education setting.

Summary/Conclusion

Important outcomes of this thesis project were the positive changes these students made after the intervention, the ongoing challenges students continue to face and strategies for self-advocacy improvement. One of the positive changes made after the intervention as provided by the student participants was asking more questions in the classroom. This is significant in that students can get the academic help they need when they ask questions. Next, teachers reported that students became more confident as a result of the self-advocacy training. Specifically students asked for more help, made more eye contact, produced more class work, became more vocal, and showed to be less shy. Another positive outcome from students practicing self-advocacy behavior in the classroom were teachers remembering to differentiate instruction and help accommodate the different learning styles in the classroom.

Ongoing challenges for students with Learning Disabilities included having an accurate self-awareness and planning and implementing learning accommodations in the classroom. Self-awareness has already been a target skill as presented in previous research (Lee et. al, 2008), and the findings in this study confirm that the better a student with Learning Disabilities are self-aware, the better the student can practice self-advocacy.

Last, the results of this study showed that practice is important. Wehmeyer et al., (2000) stated that persons with Disabilities learn self-advocacy through experience. The results of this study support that idea. Students stated that self-advocacy training can be improved if students "have more practice" in the general education class and to "Practice a couple more weeks.

Students would get better at it." In future studies, the opportunity for more practice in self-advocacy should be highly considered because student participants themselves stated it would help. The thoughts and reflections as discovered from students with Learning Disabilities in this study should be used to help other students with Learning Disabilities in the real-classroom setting.

References

Agran M., Blanchard C., & Wehmeyer M.L. (2000). Promoting transition goals and

    self-determination through student self-directed learning: The self-determined learning

    model of instruction. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental*

    Disabilities. 35(4). 351-364.

Bandura, Albert. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change.

    Psychological Review. 84(2). 191-215.

Bandura, Albert. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective**.** *Annual Review of*

    *Psychology**. (**52**)**.* 1-26

Bolt, S., Decker, D.M., Lloyd, M., & Morlock, L. (2011). Students' perceptions of

    accommodations in high school and college. *Career Development for Exceptional*

    *Children. 34(*3). 165–175.

Bouck, E. C. (2014). The postschool outcomes of students with mild intellectual

    disability: does it get better with time? *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 58(6),

    534-548.

Carr, M. (2011). Young children reflecting on their learning: teachers' conversation

    strategies. *Early Years. 31*(3), 253-270.

Denney, S. C, & Daviso, A. W. (2012). Self-determination: A critical component of

    education. *American Secondary Education. 40*(2), 43-50.

Deci, E., & Ryan, R. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation,

    development, and health. *Canadian Psychology, 49*(3), 182-185.

Defur, S. H. (2003). IEP transition planning-from compliance to quality. *Exceptionality: A*

    Special Education Journal, 11(2), 115-28.

Dipeolu A. O., Hargrave S, Sniatecki J.L., & Donaldson J. (2012). Improving prediction

of significant career-related constructs for high school students with learning disabilities.

The Career Development Quarterly, 60, 207-220.

Durlak, C., Rose E., & Bursuck W. D. (1994). Preparing high school students with

learning disabilities for the transition to postsecondary education: Teaching the skills of

self-determination. *Journal of Learning Disabilities. 27*(1), 51-59.

Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced

Nursing*, *62*(1), 107-115.

Fiedler, C. R., & Danneker, J. E. (2007). Self-advocacy instruction: Bridging the research to

practice gap. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 39(*8), 1-20.

Hammer, M.R. (2004). Using the self-advocacy strategy to increase student participation

in IEP conferences. *Intervention in School and Clinic. 39*(5), 295-300.

Johnson, D. R., Emanuel, E. J., Mack, M., Stodden, R. A., & Luecking, R. (2002). Current

challenges facing secondary education and transition services: What research tells

us. *Exceptional children. 68(*4), 519-531.

Konrad, M., Fowler, C. H., Walker, A. R., Test, D.W., & Wood, W. M. (2007). Effects of

self-determination interventions on the academic skills of students with learning

disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *30*(2), 89-113

Lee. S-H, Wehmeyer, M. L., Palmer, S. B., Soukup, J.H., & Little, T. D. (2008). Self-

determination and access to the general education curriculum. *The Journal of Special

Education. 42*(2), 91-107.

Mason, C. Y., McGahee-Kovac, M., Johnson, L., & Stillerman, S. (2002). Implementing

    student-led IEPs: student participation and student and teacher reactions. *Career*

    Development For Exceptional Individuals, 25(2)*,* 171-92.

Mithaug, D. E., Campeau, P. L., & Wolman, J. M. (2003). Assessing self-determination

    prospects among students with and without disabilities. Mithaug, M., Mithaugh, M.,

    Agran M., Martin J. (Eds.), *Self-Determined Learning Theory: Construction,*

    Verification, and Evaluation (61-76). Location: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Nevala, N., Pehkonen, I., Koskela, I., Ruusuvuori, J., & Anttila, H. (2014). Workplace

    accommodation among persons with disabilities: A systematic review of its

    effectiveness and barriers or facilitators. *Journal of occupational rehabilitation*, 1-17.

Reid R., Trout A. L., & Schartz M. (2005). Self-regulation interventions for children

    with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Council for Exceptional Children, 71*(4),

    361-377.

Roberts, E. L., Ju, S., & Zhang, D. (2014). Review of practices that promote self-advocacy for

    students with disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 1-12.

    doi:10.1177/1044207314540213.jdps.sagepub.com

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning*

    Disabilities. (Unpublished master's thesis)*.* Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah,

    United States.

Thoma, C. A., Pannozzo, G. M., Fritton, S. C., & Bartholomew, C. C. (2008). A qualitative

    study of preservice teachers' understanding of self-determination for students with

    significant disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 31*(2), 94-105

Wehmeyer, M., Bersani, H., & Gagne, R. (2000). Riding the third wave self-determination and self-advocacy in the 21st Century. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, *15*(2), 106-115.

Whitt, J. D., Cawley, B. D., Yonker, J. E., & Polage, D. C. (2014). The value of virtue: An organizational approach to the challenges of workplace disabilities. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *7*(02), 265-269.

Appendix A

Lessons/Handouts

Lesson one:

What is an accommodation?

1. **Give an advance organizer.**
    a. **State the purpose of this lesson.** *"For the next 20 minutes or so we"re going to talk about self-advocacy. The more knowledge you have about self-advocacy the more power and control you will have over what you learn in school."*
    b. **Define "control" and "power"** (write control and power on the board) *"Does anyone know what control and power mean?" (write responses on board) "That"s right control means to be in charge of and power means strength. Today we will discuss how you can be in charge of your education through a position of strength. We will talk about how you can take more control over what you learn and do in and out of school."*
    c. **Define "self-advocacy."** (write self-advocacy on the board) *"One way to gain power and take control is to advocate for yourself. Does anyone know what it means to advocate?" (Elicit responses) "That"s right. To advocate is to speak up for a cause or to try to persuade others that the cause is right. To advocate for yourself means to speak up and ask for what you need. Self-advocacy helps you take charge of your life and be more independent. Over the next few weeks you will have the opportunity to learn more about self-advocacy and how advocating for yourself can help you in your life."*
    d. **Check for understanding.** *"Who can tell me what self-advocacy means?" "Why is it important that we advocate for ourselves?"*
    e. **Specify expectations.** *"In order for you to get the most out of this lesson, please listen and participate in the discussion."* (write "Listen" and "Participate" on the board)
    f. **Provide examples of how students often react to teacher or adult decisions about learning and development activities.** *"Think of a class you"ve had where you thought the teacher made all the decisions about what you had to learn or do. It should be a class where you had very little chance to talk about or help decide what was important for you to learn or how you were going to learn." "What was the situation and how did you feel?"* (Elicit responses)

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

g. *"Many students who feel upset or bored with what they have to learn and how they are made to learn become frustrated and upset. Students in this situation may think that their teacher won"t listen to what they say. Some students either because they are shy or don"t know what to say won"t talk to their teachers about their concerns. The fact is, most teachers are willing to listen to and talk with students about their schoolwork." "Raise your hand if you"ve ever felt uncomfortable talking to a teacher about your schoolwork."*

h. *"One way to get help in school is through accommodations. What are accommodations?"* (elicit responses) *"Those are good answers. Accommodations are changes that can be made that will help you succeed or reach your goals. For example, you may work very slowly on tests. You know the information and would do pretty well if you were given more time to finish a test. An accommodation you might need is more time on tests. If you have difficulty with calculation on math problems, you might be more successful if you could use a calculator. This would be another reasonable accommodation. Can you think of some accommodations that would be important for you?"* (elicit responses and write on board)

i. **Check for understanding**. *"Who can tell me what an accommodation is?" "How can an accommodation help you be more successful in school?"*

j. *"Here is a list of accommodations that have been helpful for other students. Let"s look over them and add the accommodations that you have discussed to the list."* (hand out accommodation menu and show poster, then read the list of accommodations)

k. *"Knowing what accommodations you need and communicating that information to others is important. For example, if you know you need more time on tests, but you don"t tell your teachers, then they won"t have the opportunity to offer you that accommodation. Look at the list of accommodations and think which ones are really important for you to be successful. Let"s take a minute to discuss each accommodation."* Don't worry about the codes right now those will become important in lesson three.

l. **Read the directions**. *"If you are unable to read the directions on a test or assignment, you need to ask the teacher to read the directions for you. If you try to complete a test or assignment without understanding the directions, it will be more difficult for you to be successful on that test or assignment. Who can tell me why it is important to ask the teacher to read directions on tests and assignments?"*

m. **Read the questions**. *"If you have trouble reading and making sense of questions on tests or assignments, you can ask the teacher to read this out loud to you. If*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

you do this you will have an increased chance of obtaining a higher score on the test or assignment. "Who can tell me why it is important to ask for help reading tests or assignments if you are unable to do so?"

n. **Help find answers in the book.** *"Many times teachers will give assignments that include using a textbook to find the answers. If you struggle with reading, or reading comprehension this task can be very difficult. If you are in a general education class and you need help finding the answer in the book, you can ask the teacher to show you what page, paragraph, or sentence the answer is in. This way you will still be responsible for finding the answer, but the task will not seem too impossible. "What should you do if you are asked to find the answer to a question in a textbook?" "How can this accommodation help you be more successful in your classes?"*

o. **Help with spelling.** **"***Spelling is important because it is vital for teachers to be able to read your assignments and understand your responses. If you misspell too many words your teachers might not be able to give you the grade you deserve. If you are completing a test or assignment and you need help with spelling you can ask you teacher to help you spell the word you are struggling with." "Who can tell me when it is appropriate to ask for spelling help on tests or assignments?"*

p. **Take test in an alternate location.** *"Students often feel overwhelmed and rushed when they are taking tests in large groups. Many students find it less stressful and more comfortable to take tests in a different room.   At our school you have the opportunity to take tests in Jeri Carter"s office. You can also take the test in my classroom, as there are fewer students to distract you. If you need your test read aloud, it is a good idea to also take the test in an alternate location, so the test can be read out loud without disrupting the other students." "Who can tell me when you should ask to take a test in an alternate location?"*

q. **Extended Time.** *"If you read at a slower pace, it may take longer for you to complete some tests and assignments. As long as you are always doing you best, it is understandable to need extra time to complete difficult tests or assignments. If you know that you are capable of completing a test or assignment, but you need extra time in order to do the best job possible, then you can request extended time on your test or assignment. This accommodation is not meant to be exploited by requesting more time but then procrastinating your tests or assignment until the end of the term. It is only to be used if you know you will be able to do a better job, if you are given more time. Who can tell me when it not appropriate to request extended time as an accommodation? Who can tell me when it is appropriate to request extended time as an accommodation for an assignment or test?"*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

r.   **Special seating arrangement with minimal distractions.** *"Some students work better in the front row where they can see and hear the teacher without being distracted by the other students. Other students work better away from the window so they are not distracted by the people walking by. Other students need to be placed away from the door to avoid the temptation to wave or holler to friends walking by. Once you have determined where you need to sit in the classroom in order to be the most successful, you need to talk to your teacher about being moved. This should be the first accommodation that you request in your classes. By requesting this accommodation, you will be placed in the classroom where you know you will be the most successful. Also, this request shows your teacher that you are responsible and ready to learn." "Who can tell me where they need to sit in order to avoid distractions or disruptions in the classroom?"*

s.   **Adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments.** "*In many classes students become overwhelmed by the amount of work assigned and feel immediately discouraged. This discouragement often turns into frustration when the work is not completed on time. This is usually when students start falling behind in school. If you feel like you do not have the skills necessary to complete the amount of work given, or if you know you can do the work but that it is going to be very difficult for you to complete the amount of work, you can request that the assignment be shortened. You may ask the teacher if you can write a two-page paper instead of a five-page paper. Or perhaps you request to complete the even problems on your math assignment. It is important that you have the teacher help you decide what part of the assignment is the most important. This is probably not an accommodation that you need to use on a daily basis; however, it can be very useful in helping you be successful on your tests and assignments. Who can tell me when this accommodation would not be appropriate to request? Who can tell me when this accommodation would be helpful?"*

t.   **Review.** *"You have now learned several new words. The first word you learned was self-advocacy. Let"s all read the definition of self-advocacy together"* (read together). *"The second word we learned was accommodation. Who can tell me what an accommodation is?" (*Wait for a response.*) "Yes, accommodations are changes that can be made that will help you succeed or reach your goals."*

u.   **Model.** *"We are now going to try to remember the eight accommodations that we learned today." "Let"s use the codes to help us remember the accommodations. As you can see on our accommodations chart the code is listed next to the accommodation. RD is reading directions. What is RD? (Wait for response. If*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

the whole class does not respond, repeat previous directions.) Great job, let"s try the next one. RQ is reading questions. What is RQ?" (wait for response) Use the same procedures with the rest of the accommodations.

v. **Guided Practice.** Remove the accommodation poster. Write only the codes on the board. *"I am going to point to a code, and I would like all of you to tell me what accommodation this code stands for. After I point to the code, I will count to three. When I say three, all of you need to respond at once. Let"s try one together (point to RD.) One, two, three (say the response with the class.) Read Directions."* If students do not respond together, repeat that example. Follow the same procedure until all the accommodations have been removed. Continue to practice the accommodations until the students have a good understanding of each accommodation.

w. **Independent Practice.** *"Now I am going to hand you a card. On the left side of the card, all eight of the accommodations are listed. On the right side, all of the accommodation codes are listed. You need to match the code with the appropriate accommodation. I will give you five minutes.* (Hand out paper and have students complete the assignment. If they need more time, allow a few more minutes.)

x. **Correction and feedback.** Correct the independent practice and offer corrective feedback to students who did not receive 100 percent. For those students who did not receive 100 percent, give the independent practice assignment again.

y. **Conclusion.** *"Today I have taught you eight accommodations that can be used in your general education classes. Next time we will learn how to identify when an accommodation is needed."*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Self-Advocacy:

To speak up and ask for what

you need

Self-Advocacy helps you take

charge of your life and be more

independent

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Accommodation:

Changes that can be made that

will help you succeed or reach

your goals.

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Accommodations Card

Accommodations	Code
1. Read the directions	RD
2. Read the questions	RQ
3. Help find the answers in the book	HA
4. Help with spelling	HS
5. Take test in an alternate location	TA
6. Extended time	ET
7. Special seating arrangement with minimal distractions	SS
8. Adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments	AW

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Accommodations
Independent practice

Directions: Draw a line to match the accommodations with the correct code.

Accommodations	Code
1. Read the directions	TA
2. Read the questions	ET
3. Help find the answers in the book	SS
4. Help with spelling	RQ
5. Take test in an alternate location	HA
6. Extended time	HS
7. Special seating arrangement with minimal distractions	AW
8. Adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignment	RD

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Lesson two

When is an accommodation needed?

1. **Give advanced organizer.**
   a. **State the purpose of this lesson**. *"For the next 20 minutes or so we"re going to talk more about self-advocacy and accommodations. Remember that the more knowledge you have about self-advocacy the more power and control you will have over what you learn in school."*
2. **Review.**
   a. (write self-advocacy on the board) *"Who can tell me what self-advocacy means?"* (elicit student responses) *"That"s right, self-advocacy means to speak up and ask for what you need.*
   b. (write accommodation on the board) *"Who can tell me what an accommodation is?"* (elicit responses) *"Great job; accommodations are changes that can be made that will help you succeed or reach your goals."*
   c. (write the eight accommodation codes on the board) *"Who can tell me what accommodations these codes stand for?"* (Elicit responses) *"Yes, great job!! RD is read the directions, RQ is read the questions, HA is help find answers in the book, HS is help with spelling, TA is take test in alternate location, ET is extended time, SS special seating arrangement with minimal distractions, AW is adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments."*
3. **Academic strengths.**
   a. **Introduction. "***Every person has strengths and weaknesses. We all have things that we are good at and things that we need to work on, or things that we need help with. It is important to identify things that we are good at so we can practice those things and become even better. I am good at typing. I am able to type really fast. Who can tell me one thing they are good at*? (elicit responses from a few students and write them on the board) *We are not all good at everything, but we are all good at some things."*
   b. **Model.** *"Before we can use an accommodation, we first need to identify when an accommodation is needed. To do that we are going to identify our strengths and limitations. First, we are going to identify our academic strengths, or the things that we are good at. Look at the skills inventory list. I will read the questions out loud. If this is something that you do well, circle Y, if you are not able to do the*

skill circle the letter N." (Hand out the skills inventory list; read each question out loud and have the students circle the correct response. Walk around the room to ensure that the students understand the directions and are completing the inventory accurately.) "*Number one says „Can you spell most words correctly?" Because I cannot spell most words correctly I am going to circle the letter N. Now you circle the answer that pertains to you.*"(Complete the rest of the sheet and read all of the questions aloud.)

    c. **Independent practice**. "*Now I am going to hand you another sheet called „Skills I know." Please write down all the skills from the inventory list that you answered Y to. For example, if I circled Y for "Spelled most words correctly" I would write that on the first line of my skills I know sheet.*" (Pass out the skills to know sheet and have the students write their strengths on the sheet. Monitor all students to make sure they are doing this.)

    d. "*The skills you have listed on this paper are your academic strengths. These are skills that will be helpful in all of your school classes.*"

    e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around to room to check all students' papers to ensure that they have filled out the skills inventory worksheet correctly. If students did not understand the directions, repeat the instructions and help students on an individual basis.)

4. **Academic weaknesses.**

    a. **Introduction.** "*Just like we are all good at some things, we all have areas that we need help in, or areas of limitation that we need to improve. I am good at typing, but I am not good at drawing. This is an area that I would like to improve, and it is an area that I often need help in. When I need to draw a picture for something, I usually ask one of my students who is good at art and likes to draw to help me. Everybody has areas that are weaknesses that they need help in.*"

    b. **Model.** "*Now we need to identify the areas that we have difficulty in. These areas are called academic limitations. Take a look at your skills inventory list. The questions that you answered No to are your academic limitations. If I am looking at my skills inventory sheet, I see that I answered "no" to "spell most words correctly." I know this is an area that I need help in.*"

    c. **Guided practice.** "*Now I am going to hand out a sheet called "Skills I need to know" On this paper, you need to write the areas that you circled N. On my paper, I am going to write "spell most words correctly" because this is a skill I answered "no" to. Everyone write down the first skill that you answered "no" to.*" (check that all students did this)

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

      d. **Independent practice.** "*Now I want to you to finish filling out the „skills to know‟ sheet. Please raise your hand if you have any questions."*

      e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around the room to check students' papers to ensure that they have filled out the "skills I need to know sheet" if students did not understand the directions, repeat the instructions and help students on an individual basis.)

5. **Identify accommodations specific to academic limitations.**

      a. **Introduction. "***Now that we know what our academic strengths and limitations are, we can identify what accommodations we might need to help us be successful in all classes."*

      b. **Model.** "*Everyone, take out your accommodations card: this card should be in your folders. Next, I want you put your accommodations card next to your academic limitation. Look at each academic limitation and identify one or two accommodations that will help with this limitation. For example, when I look at my academic limitation sheet I see that my first limitation is "spell most words correctly." When I look over at my accommodations card I see that one accommodation is help with spelling. On my things to work on sheet. next to spell most words correctly I am going to write HS so I remember what accommodation will help me with this limitation."*

      c. **Guided practice.** *"Now I want you to look at your first academic limitation: Choose one accommodation that will help with this limitation and write it next to the academic limitation."* (Walk around the room to ensure that all students are able to identify an accommodation to go along with the limitation.)

      d. **Independent practice.** "*Go ahead with the rest of your academic limitations. Be sure the accommodation you choose will help with your academic limitation."* (Give students a few minutes to do this.)

      e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around the room to check students' papers to ensure that they have filled out the "skills I need to know sheet", if students did not understand the directions, repeat the instructions and help students on an individual basis.)

6. ***Conclusion. "****We learned how to identify when an accommodation is needed. We identified our academic limitations and selected an accommodation that will help with that limitation. Next time we will learn the steps to requesting an accommodation.*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Skills Inventory List

1. Can you spell most words correctly? Y   N

2. Can you write complete sentences? Y   N

3. Can you take and complete notes?   Y   N

4. Can you use punctuate sentences correctly?   Y   N

5. Can you find the main ideas in a piece of writing?   Y   N

6. Can you identify the sequence of a story or an event?   Y   N

7. Can you ask yourself questions about what you have read?   Y   N

8. Can you remember the meaning of new vocabulary words?   Y   N

9. Can you use the table of contents and index of a book?   Y   N

10. Can you use the glossary of a text book?   Y   N

11. Can you write a paragraph using a topic sentence?   Y   N

12. Can you write paragraphs that have topic, detail, and conclusion? Y   N

13. Can you organize your ideas for a five-paragraph essay?   Y   N

14. Can you correct capitalization errors?   Y   N

15. Can you type? Y   N

16. Can you prepare and bring your materials to class each day? Y   N

17. Can you complete all assignments given on time? Y   N

18. Can you identify the main idea of an oral lecture? Y   N

19. Can you carefully read test/assignment directions? Y   N

20. Can you find the answers on a worksheet from a textbook? Y   N

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.*
(Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Name_____

Date_____

Class period_____

Skills I know

Reading:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Study Skills:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Writing:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Test taking skills:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Organization

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Name_____

Date_____

Class period_____

Skills I need to know

Reading:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Study Skills:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Writing:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Test Taking:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Organization _____

_____
_____
_____

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Lesson three

Steps to Requesting an Accommodation

1. **Give an advanced organizer.**
   a. **State the purpose of this lesson.** "*For the next 20 minutes or so we"re going to talk more about self-advocacy and accommodations. Remember that the more knowledge you have about self-advocacy, the more power and control you will have over what you learn in school.*
2. **Review.**
   a. (Write accommodation on the board) "*Who can tell me what an accommodation is?*"(Elicit responses) "*Great job; accommodations are changes that can be made that will help you succeed or reach your goals*."

      (Write the eight accommodation codes on the board) "*I am going to pass the marker to one person. That person will write the accommodation next to the code, then that person will pass the marker onto someone else until all of the accommodations are listed on the board.*" (Give one student a marker, offer help where needed.) "*Great job*" RD is read the directions, RQ is read the questions, HA is help find answers in the book, HS is help with spelling, TA is take test in alternate location, ET is extended time, SS special seating arrangement with minimal distractions, AW is adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments.*"
   b. "*Who can tell me what an academic strength is?*" (Elicit responses) "*Exactly academic strengths are things that we are good at that help us do well in school. Who would be willing to share one of their academic strengths?*" (elicit response) "*Thank you*"
   c. "*Now let"s review academic limitation. Remember, an academic limitation is an area that we have difficulty in. Academic limitation can make school more difficult for us. Who remembers what one of my academic limitations is.*" (elicit responses) "*Great job, my academic limitation is I have difficulty spelling.*"
   d. "*How would I know when to ask for an accommodation?*" (elicit responses) "*Yes, good job. You match an accommodation with an academic weakness.*" "*Who can tell me what accommodation I should request to help with my academic limitation?*" (wait for a response) "*Yes, I would choose HS, which stands for help with spelling.*"
3. **Step one.**
   a. **Introduction.** "*Now that we know when an accommodation is needed, we need to learn how to appropriately ask for the accommodation. Today we are*

going to learn five steps to appropriately ask for an accommodation. We are going to use the word FESTA to help us remember what the behaviors are. The F stands for „Face the teacher".”

b. **Model.** “*If I am talking to someone and I am turned the other direction or to the side, the person I am talking to might think I"m not interested in the conversation. Let me show you what I mean.”* (Demonstrate talking to someone without looking at them; turn the other way and do not face the person.) *“Does this look like I am interested in the other person, or do I look like I am not interested in this conversation.” “If I want to show that I am interested in the conversation, then I need to face them”* (Demonstrate how to correctly face the person you are talking to.)

c. **Guided practice.** *“I need a volunteer who would like to practice step one with me”* (have a volunteer come to the front of the room) *“I want you to tell me about your favorite class while you practice the first step.”* (Guide student through this process correct where needed) *“Great Job!!”*

d. **Independent practice.** *“Now I want you to turn to your neighbor. I want you to face the person appropriately and take turns telling each other about your favorite holiday.”*

e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

f. **Conclusion.** Who *can tell me what the F in FESTA stands for?”* (elicit responses) *“Yes, you are exactly right; F stands for „Face the teachers". Face the teacher is the first step when asking for an accommodation.”*

4. **Step two.**

a. **Introduction.** *“Now that we know the first step, let"s move onto step number two. The E in FESTA stands for, „maintain eye contact". If I am facing the teacher but looking at the teacher"s feet or at another person in the room, the teacher may not take me seriously. When I do not maintain eye contact, the person I am talking to might think I am not confident. In order to show the teacher that you are confident in your request and also to show them you are interested, you must maintain eye contact.”*

b. **Model.** *“If I am talking to someone and I am looking at their feet or looking away, the person might not think I am confident or not serious about the conversation. Let"s have another volunteer come to the front and I will demonstrate this skill for you”* (Have a student come to the front and demonstrate for them how to talk and maintain eye contact.)

c. **Guided Practice.** *“I need a volunteer who would like to practice step two with me.”* (Have a volunteer come to the front of the room) *“I want you to tell me what you ate for dinner last night; remember to maintain eye contact while you practice the second step,”* (Guide student through this process correct where needed) *“Great Job!!”*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

d. **Independent practice.** *"Now I want you to turn to your neighbor. I want you to face the person appropriately, maintain eye contact, and take turns telling each other about your favorite thing to do when you are not at school."*

e. **Feedback/error correction.** *(*Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

f. **Conclusion.** *Who can tell me what the E in FESTA stands for*? (elicit responses) *"Yes, you are exactly right; E stands for „maintain eye contact." Maintain eye contact is the second step when asking for an accommodation."*

5. **Step three.**

a. **Introduction. "***Now that we know the first and second steps, let's move onto step number three. The S in FESTA stands for „state the accommodation and reason." If I don't" tell the teacher what I need, I can't expect them to help me. Teachers have many students and it is difficult for them to keep everyone straight. It is so important that you advocate for yourself and tell the teacher what you need and why."*

b. **Model.** *"When I am telling a teacher what I need and why I need it I must be clear. Remember how my academic limitation is spelling most words correctly. If I needed to request an accommodation to help with this limitation, what accommodation would I request (elicit responses) Yes, great job; I would ask for HS, help with spelling. To request this accommodation, I would face the teacher, maintain eye contact, and ask for help with my spelling. I need someone to pretend that they are a teacher; who would like to do that? (Have volunteer come up to the front of the room. Have them pretend to be a teacher) "Excuse me Mr./Mrs._____, I need help with my spelling because I don't know how to spell this word."* (Say to student) *"Did I follow the first three steps accurately?" (*have students respond*)*

c. **Guided Practice.** *"I need someone who has not come up yet to help me with step three.* (Have volunteer come up to the front of the room) *"I want you to pretend that your academic limitation is difficulty spelling. I want you to pretend that I am the teacher, and I want you to ask me for an appropriate accommodation following the first three steps.*" (Have student practice, help where needed)

d. **Independent practice. "***Now I want you to turn to your neighbor. I want you to face the person appropriately, maintain eye contact, state what accommodation is needed, and give the reason. For this purpose let's all pretend that our academic limitation is not being able to spell all words correctly. If you need help remembering what accommodation you would choose, you can look at your accommodation check list. Go ahead."*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis)*.* Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

    e. **Feedback/error correction.** *(Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)*

    f. **Conclusion.** **"***Who can tell me what the S in FESTA stands for?" (elicit responses) "Yes, you are exactly right; S stands for State the accommodation and reason. State the accommodation and the reason it is needed."*

6. **Step four.**

    a. **Introduction.** *"Now that we know the first, second, and third steps, let's move onto step number four. The T in FESTA stands for Thank the teacher. Whenever you ask for something it is very good manners to thank the person.***"**

    b. **Model.** *"Whenever I ask for something, I need to remember to thank the person that I am talking to. I need a volunteer to be the teacher and I am going to be the student. I am going to practice the first four steps."* (Have student come to the front of the room) *"Excuse me Mr./Ms. _____ , I need help with my spelling because I don"t know how to spell this word.*(Have student help spell a simple word) *"Thank you"* (Ask student) *"Did I follow the first four steps?" "Did I Face the teacher?"* (Let the students respond) *"Did I maintain eye contact?"* (Let the students respond) *"Did I state the accommodation and the reason the accommodation as needed?"* (Student response) *"Did I thank the teacher? It looks like I followed the first four steps when appropriately asking for an accommodation. Now let's practice one together."*

    c. **Guided Practice.** *"I need two volunteers. I want one volunteer to be the teacher and one to be the student* (assign roles to each student). *I want you to practice requesting an accommodation following the first four steps. I need the rest of the class to watch and make sure these students follow the first four steps."* (watch students and help where needed)

    d. **Independent practice.** *"Now I want you to turn your neighbor. Each of you will take a turn requesting an accommodation by following the first four steps. I want you to face the person appropriately, maintain eye contact state what accommodation is needed and give the reason. Then thank the person. For this purpose, let's all pretend that our academic limitation is not being able to spell all words correctly. If you need help remembering what accommodation you would choose, you can look at your accommodation check list. Go ahead."*

    e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

    f. **Conclusion.** *"Who can tell me what the T in FESTA stands for?"* (elicit responses) *"Yes, you are right; T stands for Thank the teacher."*

7. **Step five.**

    a. **Introduction.** *"You all are doing such a great job learning and practicing the steps. We are now going to learn the last step. The A in FESTA stands for*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

       Accommodation was used. If you need an accommodation and you ask for an accommodation, you must use the accommodation for it to be helpful. Otherwise the accommodation won"t help you with your academic limitation."

  b. **Model.** *"If I wanted to implement help with spelling I would write down each letter of the word I needed help with as the teacher said it to me. For example, if I needed help with the word „Encyclopedia," I would write down each letter as the teacher said it to me. As the teacher said (Show students how to do this by writing the word as you say it on the white board) ENCYCLOPEDIA"*

  c. **Guided practice.** *"I am going to show you how I would implement the accommodation of Help with Spelling. If I asked the teacher for help with spelling. I would make sure to write down the word that the teacher helped me spell. For example, if I asked the teacher how to spell accommodation, I would write down the word accommodation as the teacher spelled it to me. Let"s all implement the accommodation of Help with Spelling. I will tell you all how to spell accommodation and I want you to write it down. Ready* (give students a few seconds to get ready) *A-C-C-O-M-M-O-D-A-T-I-O-N* (spell the word for the students nice and slow) *"Raise your hand if you wrote down the word accommodation. If you raised your hand then you all implemented the accommodation."*

  d. **Independent Practice.** *"Now I want you to turn to your neighbor. Each of you will take a turn requesting an accommodation by following all five of the steps. You will face the person appropriately, maintain eye contact, state what accommodation is needed and give the reason, thank the person, and then implement the accommodation. If you are acting as the teacher, you will spell a word for them. For this practice the word can be simple. Decide who is going to be the teacher and who is going to be the student first. Get ready, go ahead and practice."* (when students finish with round one, instruct them to complete the steps again, but switch places, the student is now the teacher and the teacher is now the student.)

  e. **Feedback/error correction. (**Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

  f. **Conclusion. "***Who can tell me what the A stands for in FESTA?"*

8. **Lesson Conclusion.** *"We learned how to identify when an accommodation is needed. We learned the steps to appropriately requesting an accommodation. What word did we use to help us remember the steps to requesting an accommodation appropriately (FESTA). F stands for _____, E stands for _____, S stands for _____, T stands for _____, and A stands for _____ . Great job!! Next time we will learn how to implement all of the accommodations we learned and also how to document that we followed the right procedures.*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Steps to Requesting an Accommodation

F=Face the teacher

E= Maintain eye contact

S= State the accommodation and the reason

T= Thank the teacher

A= Accommodation was used

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Lesson four

Implementation of an Accommodation

1. **Give an advanced organizer.**
2. **State the purpose of this lesson.** "*For the next 20 minutes or so we"re going to talk more about self-advocacy and accommodations. Remember that the more knowledge you have about self-advocacy, the more power and control you will have over what you learn in school.*
3. **Review.**
   a. "*Who can tell me what an academic strength is?"* (elicit responses*) "Exactly. Academic strengths are things that we are good at that help us do well in school."*
   b. "*Now let"s review academic weaknesses. Remember, an academic limitation is an area that we have difficulty in. Academic weaknesses can make school more difficult for us. Who remembers what one of my academic limitations is?"* (Elicit responses)
   c. *"Who can tell me what the letters in FESTA stand for?"* (wait for response) *"Great job, you are right. F stands for Face the teacher, E stands for Maintain eye contact, S stands for State the reason and accommodation, T stands for thank the teacher, and A means to Implement the accommodation.*
   d. *"How would I know when to request an accommodation?"* (elicit responses) *"Yes, exactly; you match an accommodation with an academic weakness."*
   e. *Who would like to demonstrate requesting an accommodation?* (Choose student to follow the steps and request an accommodation. Correct where needed.)
   f. *"Let"s review the accommodations"* (write the accommodation codes on the board RD, RQ, HA, HS, TA, ET, SS, AW) *"When I point to an accommodation code, I want everyone to shout out what accommodation this code stands for. Ready? RD (read directions), RQ (read questions), HA (Help find answers in the book), HS (help with spelling), TA (take test in alternate location), ET (extended time), SS (special seating), TA (take test in alternate location,) and ET (extended time)."*
4. **Introduction.** *"Now that we know when an accommodation is needed and how to ask for an accommodation, we need to make sure we know how to use the accommodations appropriately. Each accommodation can be very useful to help us overcome our academic limitation, but if the accommodation is not used correctly it will do little to help us. Let"s take a look at each accommodation to make sure we know how to appropriately use the accommodation."*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

a. **Accommodation one: RD.** *"If your academic limitation is difficulty with reading, you might choose to use the reading directions accommodations. To use this accommodation, you will raise your hand, wait for the teacher to come to you, and then, following the FESTA steps, request that accommodation. You will listen carefully while the teacher is reading the directions to you. Once he or she have finished, you will thank the teacher. What should you do if you don"t understand the directions?"* (elicit response) *"Great; you should ask them to repeat or explain the directions. In order to use this accommodation, all you have to do is listen to the teacher read the directions."*

b. **Accommodation two: RQ.** *"Just like reading the directions, if you have difficulty with reading, you might choose to use the reading questions accommodation. This accommodation can be used on a test or assignment. If you begin a test or assignment and need an accommodation, you should raise your hand and let the teacher know that you need to have the questions read aloud to you. You need to make sure you follow the FESTA steps when you request this accommodation. To use this accommodation, you will listen as the teacher reads the questions and you will answer the questions to the best of your ability. Don"t forget to thank the teacher for reading the question to you."*

c. **Accommodation three: HA.** *"If your academic limitation is difficulty with reading you might have a hard time finding answers in a text book. You should try to find the answers on your own first, but if you are unable to do this, you may need to use this accommodation. You will need to raise your hand and request this accommodation using the FESTA steps. Once the teacher shows you the page, paragraph, or sentence that the answer is in, you will need to locate the answer and write it down. Remember to thank the teacher. Once the teacher has shown you where the answer is, if you still can"t find the answer you need to ask for this accommodation again and have the teacher help you find the answer in the book."*

d. **Accommodation four: HS.** *"If your academic limitation is difficulty with spelling, you might have to request help with spelling as an accommodation. To do this, you will use the FESTA steps. As the teacher spells the word for you, you need to listen carefully and write down each letter. If you don"t get the whole word written down, you may need to ask the teacher to spell the word for you again. To use this accommodation, all you have to do is write down the word. Don"t forget to thank the teacher."*

e. **Accommodation five: TA.** *"If you have the academic limitation of being able to concentrate, you may want to use this accommodation. Also, if you need your test read aloud you may also want to use this accommodation. You can take your test in an alternate location and have Jeri Carter or me read it to*

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

you. To use this accommodation you might want to make arrangements with the teacher before class. Anytime you want to take the test in an alternate location, you can go into Jeri Carter"s office or you can come into my room. Don"t forget to thank the teacher."

f. **Accommodation six: ET.** *"If you are working on an assignment or test that is difficult for you, you may need extra time to work on the test or assignment in order to do your best. To use this accommodation you need to use the FESTA steps to request the accommodation. Then you need to take the assignment or test home, or stay in the classroom with the teacher. Don"t forget to what?* _____ (elicit students to say "Thank the Teacher")

g. **Accommodation seven: SS.** *"If you are easily distracted and need to sit in a different place in the classroom, you might want to request special seating. To do this you will use the FESTA steps. You will let the teacher know where you want to sit in order to concentrate and stay on task. Once the teacher has assigned you the new seat, you will quietly move there and continue to do your work.***"**

h. **Accommodation eight: AW.** *"Sometimes, although you are capable of doing the work, it may take you a very long time. Or you might feel like you would be more successful if the assignment was shortened. To use the accommodation of adjust the amount of work required for school assignments, you might need to do explain why you need this accommodation in more detail than the other accommodations. For example, if I had difficulty in writing and I was assigned to write a five page paper, I might feel overwhelmed and discouraged. This would be a good time to use this accommodation. I would use the skills in the FESTA steps to request this accommodation. I would explain to the teacher that I did not think I could complete a five-page paper, but I knew I could complete a two-page paper. When using this accommodation, it is a good idea to let the teacher know what you can do. In order to use this accommodation, I need to make sure I do what I told the teacher I could do. So if I told the teacher I was going to write a two-page paper, then I need to make sure I write a two-page paper. Let"s practice this one together.*"

    i. **Model.** "*I need a volunteer. (Have student come to the front of the room.) I need you to pretend like you are the teacher and I will be the student. I want the rest of you to watch and make sure I am following the FESTA steps. Hi Mr./Ms.* _____. *I don"t think I can write a good five-page paper, but I know I can write a good two-page paper. Can I write a two-page paper instead of a five-page paper?* (Let student respond.) *Thank you. Remember, if I was going to use this accommodation I would do my best to write a two page paper.*"

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

      ii. **Guided practice.** "*Now I need a volunteer that will practice requesting this accommodation* (have volunteer come to the front of the room). *Now I want you to request the accommodation of adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments. Remember to follow the FESTA steps.*" (Guide students through this process.)

      iii. **Independent practice.** "*Now I would like you to turn to a partner and practice requesting this accommodation.*"

      iv. **Feedback/error correction. (**Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

      v. **Conclusion.** "*Who can tell me how we would use this accommodation?* (Elicit responses*.) Great job! We would do what we told the teacher we were going to do. In this case, we said that we were going to write a two-page paper instead of a five-page paper so we need to write a great two-page paper.*"

5. **Data collection sheet.**
   a. **Introduction.** "*In order to advocate for ourselves we need to practice. We also need to take data in order to document our abilities to ask for accommodations. It is important that we remember to follow the FESTA steps. I am going to show you how to complete a data collection shee, so we can take data on your ability to request accommodations.*"
   b. **Model.** (show transparency data collection sheet) "*Look at the data collection sheet. Each day in one of your general education classes you will fill this sheet out. Remember to write your name at the top. Always write the date and then complete the checklist. Put a check mark if the answer is yes; you will put a zero if the answer is no and you will leave it blank if it does not apply to you. Sometimes during one class period you might have to request more than one accommodation. Other times you will not need to request an accommodation at all. Remember, you will request an accommodation when you are having difficulty because of your academic limitation. (Introduce first role-plays) For the next several minutes we are going to practice filling out the accommodation data sheet through the use of role-plays. A role-play is a pretend situation that you will read with a partner. As you read the role play you need to fill out the accommodation data sheet. I need a volunteer to help me with role-play one*" (read role-play being the student and have the student volunteer be the teacher.) "*Show the students how to appropriately fill out the data collection sheet.*"
   c. **Guided practice.** (Now have a few students come to the front and practice being the student, using a role-play, guide them through the use of the data sheet) "*Now I need a few volunteers to practice this with me.*" (Have students come to the front of the room) "*I want you to be the student and I will be the*

        teacher. As you read the role-play practice filling out the accommodations data sheet." (Follow this process with a few different students.

    d. **Independent practice.** *"I am going to put you in groups of two. I will give each of you two role plays. During role play one, one person will be the teacher and the other will be the student. Then you will switch places. As you practice the role play you will practice filling out the data collections sheet."*

    e. **Feedback/error correction.** (Walk around the room to give corrections where needed.)

    f. **Conclusion.** *"I am going to give each of you two data collection sheets. I want you to practice requesting accommodations. Remember to follow the FESTA steps when requesting accommodations*."

6. **Lessons conclusion.** Remember, self-advocacy is having the ability to speak up and ask for what you want. Self-advocacy helps you take charge of your life and be more independent. When you request accommodations in your general education classes, you are speaking up and asking for what you want

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

ROLE-PLAY 1:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms. _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I am having difficulty spelling the word ENCYCLOPEDIA. Can you spell that word

for me?

Teacher: Yes, I would love to. E-N-C-Y-C-L-O-P-E-D-I-A

Student: Thank you! (Student writes down word)

ROLE-PLAY 2:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes_____ (Student name)

Student: I am having difficulty reading this assignment. Can you help me read this assignment?

Teacher: Yes, I would be happy to. (teacher reads article to student)

Student: Thank you!

ROLE-PLAY 3:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms_____

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Teacher: Yes _____(Student name)

Student: I need to go take the test with Miss Smith or Mrs. Carter

Teacher: Yes, that would be great!

Student: Thank you!!

ROLE-PLAY 4:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I am having trouble finding this answer in the text book. Will you help me locate the

answer?

Teacher: Yes _____(Student name)

Student: Thank you!!

ROLE-PLAY 5:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I know I can finish this assignment, but I need more time. Can I have extra time to

finish this assignment?

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.*
(Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Teacher: Absolutely

Student: Thank you!!

ROLE-PLAY 6:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I am having trouble reading this test. Can you read the questions for me?

Teacher: Sure, I would love to.

Student: Thank you!!

ROLE-PLAY 7:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I am having trouble concentrating sitting by the window. Can I move to the front of the room?

Teacher: Yes, move right over here.

Student: Thank you!!

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

ROLE-PLAY 8:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I don't understand the directions. Will you read the directions for me?

Teacher: I would love to.

Student: Thank you!!

ROLE-PLAY 9:

Student: Excuse me, Mr./Ms _____

Teacher: Yes _____ (Student name)

Student: I don't think I can write a five-page paper, but I know I can write a two-page paper.

Can I have the assignment shortened and write a good two-page paper, instead of a five-page

paper.

Teacher: That would be fine.

Student: Thank you

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Appendix B

Student Checklist

Student Checklist

Student Name:

Date:

Class:

X = yes

0 = no

Blank = not applicable

	Accommodation 1	Accommodation 2	Accommodation 3
Do I need an accommodation?			
Did I request an accommodation?			
Did I face the teacher?			
Did I maintain eye contact?			
Did I state the reason an accommodation was needed?			
Did I thank the teacher?			
Did I use the accommodation?			

Accommodation Menu

Accommodation	Code
Read the directions	RD
Read the questions	RQ
Help find the answers in the book	HA
Help with spelling	HS
Take test in an alternate location	TA
Extended time	ET
Special seating arrangement with minimal distractions	SS
Adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments	AW

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Student/Teacher Checklist

Teacher Checklist

Observer Name:

Date:

Student Name:

Second Observer:

X = yes

0 = no

Blank = not applicable

	Accommodation 1	Accommodation 2	Accommodation 3
Accommodation needed			
Student requested accommodation			
Student faced the teacher			
Student maintained eye contact			
Student stated the reason accommodation was needed			
Student thanked the teacher			
Accommodation was used			

Accommodation Menu

Accommodation	Code
Read the directions	RD
Read the questions	RQ
Help find the answers in the book	HA
Help with spelling	HS
Take test in an alternate location	TA
Extended time	ET
Special seating arrangement with minimal distractions	SS
Adjustments in the amount of work required for school assignments	AW

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Appendix C

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.						
2. I know what an accommodation is.						
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.						
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.						
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations						
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.						
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.						

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis)*.* Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name:_ _____   MAY 4, 2015

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.				X		
2. I know what an accommodation is.						X
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.						X
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.					X	
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations					X	
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.				X		
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.						X

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.				✓		
2. I know what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.				✓		
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.						✓
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations					✓	
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.		✓				
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.				✓		

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name:_____   _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.						✓
2. I know what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.				✓		
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.					✓	
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations					✓	
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.						✓
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.					✓	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name:___.   _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.					✓	
2. I know what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.					✓	
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.					✓	
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations					✓	
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.					✓	
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.					✓	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Students

Name: _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have the skills to self-advocate in my general education classes.					X	
2. I know what an accommodation is.					X	
3. I have a good understanding of what accommodations are available to me in my general education classes.				X		
4. I know how to appropriately ask for an accommodation.					X	
5. I know how to use classroom accommodations						X
6. I do better in my general education classes when I request accommodations.				X		
7. I will continue to request accommodations in my general education classes when necessary.					X	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Appendix D

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes?

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?

5. What do you need to do better in requesting classroom accommodations? Overall, what do you need to be better in your general education classes?

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes?

    Yes   I ask more
                                 questions

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?

    The end of unit
    because I want to learn
    more

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?

    The begining of the unit

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?

    all of the lessons questions   Nothing iris already
                                                          better.

5. Overall, what do you need to do better in your general education classes?

    ask more questions.

What do you need to do better in requesting
classroom accommodations?
Just to focus in what the teacher
is saying, and Practice to get better

#2

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes? The accommodations was change when having eye contact with the teacher
   I asked more accommodation after the training

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?
   I like doing a student check list.
   To keep me on track to do all the skills

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?
   I didn't like to part that I had to face the teacher because it make's me uncomfortable.

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?
   To have more practise acting in General ed class.

5. Overall, what do you need to do better in your general education classes?
   for me to stay focused
   be responsible
   make sure to have a accomodation.

#3

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes?

    Yes
    Being nice to my teachers.
    Because my teachers are more nice

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?

    helping me out with everything
    and asking for accommodation

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?

    I like all the PWD

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?

    Practice couple more weeks
    they would get better at it

5. Overall, what do you need to do better in your general education classes?

    Pay attention more in lectures.

#4

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes?

   Yes   I asked more
          questions?

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?

   That t we finished and had some fun
   too learning more

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?

   That we had to it. then student check list
   role playing

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?

   Nothing, It's good the way it is

5. Overall, what do you need to do better in your general education classes?

   I need to ask for help aac when I need it

#5

Interview questions

1. Did you see a change in your ability to request accommodations before and after the training? What were the changes?

   yes
   • I changed my seet to a better place

2. What did you like best about the self-advocacy training?

   The ending part
   the roleplay
       we get to practice

3. What did you like least about the self-advocacy training?

   Skills I know and skills I need to know
   It was boring and to much work

4. What would you change about the self-advocacy training to make it better?

   more activieties on the second part
   To make it more fun, interesting

5. What do you need to do better in requesting classroom accommodations? Overall, what do you need to be better in your general education classes?

   use the acomidations when I need them
   it will be helpfull to talk to my teachers
   finish all my assingments

Appendix E

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.						
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.						
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.						
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.						
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.						
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.						
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.						
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.						

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____ _____ _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.				✓		
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.					✓	
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.					✓	
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.				✓		
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.					✓	
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.					✓	
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.					✓	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____   _____   _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.		✓				
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.			✓			
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.				✓		
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.					✓	
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.					✓	
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.					✓	
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.					✓	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.		✓				
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.				✓		
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.					✓	
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.					✓	
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.					✓	
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.					✓	
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.					✓	
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.				✓		

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.					✓	
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.					✓	
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.					✓	
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.						✓
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.					✓	
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.						✓
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.						✓
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.				✓		

He had started this behavior earlier, but he
now seems more confident & comfortable
in asking for help.

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.					X	
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.				X		
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.				X		
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.				X		
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.					X	
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.						X
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.						X
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.					X	

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Social Validity Questionnaire

Social Validity Scale: Teachers

Name:_____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The students demonstrated the ability to advocate for themselves.		X				
2. The students had a clear understanding of what an accommodation is.		X				
3. The students have a good understanding of the accommodations available to them in their general education classes.		X				
4. The students were able to appropriately request accommodations.		X				
5. The students were more successful when they requested an accommodation.			X			
6. All students should learn how to appropriately request accommodations.						X
7. I would like my students to continue to request accommodations.						X
8. The students benefited from the self-advocacy training.				X		

Smith, A. R. (2011). *Self-Advocacy Training in Secondary Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, United States.

Appendix F

Focus Group Questions

1. What are your thoughts about self-advocacy for all students?

2. What skills should special education students have in general education classes?

3. What changes did you see the students make through the self-advocacy training process?

4. How important is it for special education students to request accommodations independently in your classes?

5. What are some of the benefits of implementing learning accommodations in the classroom? How about challenges?

Transcript

Teacher Focus Group

Focus Group Discussion Answers

1. **What are your thoughts about self-advocacy for all students?**

Teacher #1 "Something I think I have always encouraged in students regardless if they are special education or not is always to talk to teachers before it is too late. I encourage all students to talk to your teachers on a one to one basis. For the special education student that I observed his comfort level increased during the training".

Teacher #2 "Some students struggle and avoid the teacher and what happens is a self-fulfilling prophecy where students say if they ask for help in class then it is obvious that I don't know what to do and I want to avoid the teacher and it becomes a perpetual problem. Personally, I didn't get help or feel comfortable talking to teachers until I was in college. The earlier students talk to their teachers the better, the earlier you let yourself be known to the teacher the better. It is also important to have a relationship with the teacher, even if the teacher doesn't agree to certain accommodations the conversation is open to which accommodation can help. Not only should special education students request classroom accommodations, but all students should."

Teacher #1 "For the student who requests accommodations in a large classroom, the students gets a relationship with the teacher. The teacher knows this students cares about learning and then in general, teachers are more willing to say okay, what can I do to help make this student more successful."

Teacher #3 "One of the most important things for students to do is take responsibility and not be passive. Students need to be self-aware, know their strengths, know their learning styles and know what's best for them to achieve given a certain teaching style. The key is to take the stigma away from different styles of learning taking place in the classroom. Students need to speak up for themselves and say this is what I need to be successful."

2. **What skills should special education students have in general education classes?**

Teacher #4 "They should know what to bring to class and be prepared. They should bring their pencils, tools, materials, and assignments."

Teacher #2 "Special education students should start class prepared and not start behind. Being prepared gives confidence."

Teacher #1 "Special education students need literacy skills to work with text that may be higher than their reading levels."

Teacher #2 "Special education students need frustration coping mechanisms. Special education students may exhibit and emotional response to a problem where teacher and student have a run-in. There can be a problem when students act out in class to mask they don't know how to complete an assignment."

Teacher #3 "When special education students are honest in class, it helps the teacher. It is important for a special education student to say in class, hey I have a reading problem the text in this assignment is overwhelming, I need help."

Teacher #2 "Perseverance for special education students is huge."

3.   **What changes did you see the students make through self-advocacy training process?**

Teacher #4 "I saw marginal gains, not huge, but the student was more vocal. He is a work avoidance student, however, now he makes more eye contact with me and is trying more in class."

Teacher #2 "The student I observed needed some coaxing to request accommodations. Because I knew of the training I stood by her and said do you have something to ask me. Two days later after she saw that she had some success she asked to sit up in front of class. Truthfully, I would have put her in lower level math class, but not from lack of effort, but because of her math skills. After this training it is hard to see gains in actual grades, but the confidence raised after the training is good enough for the student. Socialization skills are important and this training helped her social skills. After the self-advocacy training, she did a lot better in class and she got over her shyness. Now she is not afraid to joke around with the teacher."

Teacher #1 "Before, the student had been asking for help but did it very quietly. Now he is more confident in asking for help."

Teacher #3 "I have seen a slight difference in my first student, now she makes more eye contact compared to before. She hasn't requested many accommodations in class, but I noticed that she does produce more class work."

Teacher #3" My other student is an interesting guy, he doesn't carry stigmatization about his situation in life or his learning disability. The difference now is he asks for more help in class. As a matter of fact, today he said can you help me find where that topic sentence is on an assignment."

4. **How important is it for special education students to request accommodations independently in your classes?**

Teacher #4 "If students can communicate it is easier to implement an accommodation, it is hard to accommodate all students."

Teacher #2 "Requesting accommodations independently is important for students. If one kid comes and says this will help me out, then it is salient and lets me make sure the student has what they need."

Teacher #1 "Before I had nineteen to twenty students in class and now I have forty students in my class. Sometimes it is difficult to bounce around to everyone. Having students being aware what they need and communicating it is huge."

Teacher #3 "Being reminded of special education accommodations is important. Designing assessments helped me as a teacher in last year's co-teaching experience. My old former tests were text dense, for somebody who is dyslexic the test can be too much. I think that is useful to remember the accommodations needed for students with special needs. Now I am aware and change the way students in my classroom are assessed. For their own sake, it is good for special education student to realize when they are struggling and communicate with the teacher."

Teacher #2 "I have the subject that everybody has the underlining fright for and that is math. A lot of people need help in math that. When students say they can't do it then they have already failed. Confidence is big. Confidence will help to understand math."

Teacher #1 "I have a story about a student from my high school class that already graduated and was in college. She came back to visit me and told me how she was failing out of her class in college. She said the teacher won't answer questions. I replied, what did teacher say when you told him you were deaf? She said I haven't told him. I told the student she needs to talk to her instructor right away and let him know that you need to sit in a place where you can read lips. The student came back a week later. She

was now earning a B plus. If students don't tell the teacher, then the teacher doesn't know what the students need."

5. What are some of the benefits of implementing learning accommodations in the classroom? How about challenges?

Teacher #4 "The benefits are going to be student learning. Challenges are recognizing what students need and providing skills to help them with that."

Teacher #2 "Providing extra time on tests, where are they getting extra time from? Lunch, tutorial, when? Where? It is sometimes challenging to plan how students receive extended time. Good teaching is good teaching in a way. Chunk up work to help students understand, use more visuals and kids benefit from that. One of the benefits of implementing learning accommodations in class is remembering that students need to see the material in different ways."

Teacher #3 "Having special education students in the classroom makes the teacher use different teaching styles. As a teacher I remember to be clear in my lessons, review information, set up systems that all students can follow. I also try in class to keep stress low for all students. For cognitively challenge kids, when they reach plateaus where they don't increase for a while in their reading levels that can be frustrating. However, to help I keep in mind that all students make progress but at different rates. Also some of my cognitively challenging kids are good in other areas where others can learn from them.

Teacher #1 "It is challenging in large academic classes to cover depth or breadth of content even when some students are behind and the class needs to move on. But I find as long as special education students put in effort in class, they will be okay.   Actually, all the special education students in my class who try do very well in class."

Teacher #2 "Sometimes with math it can gets abstract for students and that is a problem.   No matter how abstract a math problem is, it can be chunked into smaller parts for understanding. But even though math can still be hard, students need to ask for help. This will make them a better student. Because they learn to not make excuses. One big problem for special education students is task avoidance."

Teacher #3 "Using accommodations can become another tool for task-avoidance. It is important to not let that happen."

Teacher #2 "In this training I wanted to be supportive of the student when they are practicing requesting accommodations. For me it was helpful to know the skills the students were practicing and also coach them in my class. Students needs to be mature enough to give it a chance. Students needs to learn to help themselves as opposed to being passive and doing nothing."

Teacher #3 "This training intervention was a great idea, it should be incorporated in the special education curriculum. Requesting accommodations and self-advocacy should be taught, re-taught and practiced. All kids need to use it. When students see other classmates do it, that in itself will make a difference."

Teacher #2 "As teachers we sit here and give advice but in actuality, I learned these lessons until I was at college. Students may not take the advice of self-advocacy right away. The training may not immediately be seen in the short term, but may pay off down the line."

Principal- "The self-advocacy training in the classroom will continue to pay off in the future. What you are doing in the classroom continues to pay. I see students 10 years later, and they remember what was taught to them at school. They use these skills when they are raising their own children. Self-advocacy depends on level of maturity of students. Students all have gifts. We have to be mindful of repetition, learn how to advocate, show what it looks like, and for shy students ask in smaller settings to practice then work way up to larger group."

Teacher #2 "Students will use self-advocacy more in life than the quadratic formula."