

---

## Editor's Note

Readers should be alerted to what is happening to the eligibility process for children with learning disabilities. Drastic changes were recommended in the Senate Bill 1248 and the House Bill 1350. These Bills are the proposals that will be brought to the full Congress concerning the reauthorization of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Senate Bill 1248 recommended that in determining eligibility for children with learning disabilities

- schools are not required to take into consideration whether the child has a discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability, and
- schools may use a process that determines if a child responds to scientific, research-based reading interventions,

The Learning Disabilities Association of America, along with some other learning disability organizations worked extremely hard to recommend substitute language in the Senate Bill, but the results were disappointing. The Senate Committee voted on the bill in 11 minutes by a unanimous 22-0 vote on June 25, 2003 without any of changes recommended by the Learning Disabilities Association and other disabilities organizations.

Among the concerns for S.1248 for children with learning disabilities are:

- There is no scientific research to validate responsiveness to intervention as a criterion to identify a learning disability
- Individualized instruction cannot occur with measures of cognitive ability and academic achievement to determine the child's strengths and weakness and guide individualized instruction.
- Responsiveness to intervention models are directed at early basic reading skills but children with learning disabilities have difficulties in upper grades and in other areas – such as mathematics, speaking, thinking, listening, and writing.
- Responsiveness to intervention models cannot distinguish between learning disabilities and mental retardation. Cognitive ability and achievement measures can.

It is hoped that those of us concerned about the future of children with learning disabilities will meet with other concerned parents and educators and contact their Congressional Representatives before the Bill is brought to the full Congress for a vote. The lives of children with learning disabilities are at stake.

## The Articles in This Issue

*The Relationship Between Learning Difficulties in Foreign Language and Math in a Sample of College Students* by Frances Prevatt and Briley Proctor. This study investigated 204 college students who had difficulties in both foreign language and math (FLD/MD), only math difficulties (MD), and only foreign language difficulties (FLD). Analysis showed that the mixed group (FLD/MD) was qualitatively different from the FLD group.

*Reasoning and Self Advocacy for Postsecondary Students with Learning Disabilities* by Carol A. Layton and Robin H. Lock. This study examined three groups of postsecondary students using the LDDI Reasoning Scale to determine if there were significant differences in their self-reported reasoning behaviors. Significant differences were found between the populations with disabilities and the non-disabled populations, suggesting that postsecondary students with learning disabilities may have increased intrinsic processing weaknesses in reasoning in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

*School Psychologists' Perceptions of Instructional Adaptations in Inclusive Settings* by William G. Masten, Lindy Henry, Harvetta M. Robertson, Billie R. Priest, Barbara Scott, James Stacks, Christine Massey, Daniel C. Miller, and Sander Martin. This study assessed the perceptions of school psychologists toward effectiveness and use of instructional adaptations in inclu-

*continued on next page*

---

sive classrooms using the Adaptation Evaluation Instrument. The sample included 59 regular members of the Texas Association of School Psychologists.

*The Use of Theatre as an Instructional Strategy in the Content Areas for Students with Reading and Learning Disabilities* by Sandra D. Beyda. Theatre is a powerful tool for organizing one's experiences. It is an instructional technique that motivates students as they seek to understand and communicate their learning. This article provides a foundation for using theatre as a learning strategy in the content areas for students with reading-learning disabilities, using metacognition as an important factor.

*New Era: The Sacrifice of Individual Differences to the False Claim of "Scientifically-Based Instruction"* by Miriam Cherkas-Julkowski. This article addresses a controversial issue, the report of the President's Commission on Excellence for Special Education. The article questions the Commission's Report for not considering individual differences.

We hope you enjoy these timely articles.

Janet Lerner  
Editor-in-Chief