

# NATIONAL CENTER ON ACCESSING THE GENERAL CURRICULUM

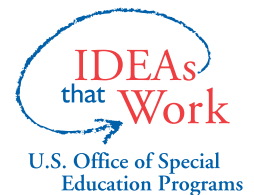
**NCAC**

## A Glimpse at Current Teaching Practices with Preliminary Survey Results

---

***Teacher Practice Report***

This report was written with support from the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum (NCAC), a cooperative agreement between CAST and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Cooperative Agreement No. H324H990004. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, and no official endorsement by the Department should be inferred.



## **A Glimpse at Current Teaching Practices with Preliminary Survey Results**

*Prepared by Richard Jackson, Kevin Koziol and Lisa Rudowitz from the Teaching Practices Group at the Lynch School of Education, Boston College with the editorial assistance of Nicole Strangman, CAST*

Increased access to the general curriculum is intended to improve results for students with disabilities as they transition into adulthood and independent living. But getting into and working with the curriculum requires the identification and application of valid teaching practices, flexible technology, media and materials, fair and equitable assessment procedures, sound policies and a commitment to shared responsibility and shared accountability on the part of both general and special educators. Efforts to implement valid teaching practices, however, have been thwarted by a host of conditions confronting schools today, not the least of which pertains to inaccessible and inconsiderate media and materials.

As we move toward an increasingly digital curriculum – one that students with disabilities can access, manipulate and respond to – there will certainly be many implications for the ways in which teachers carry out their roles. For example, in the future teachers will be able to locate, acquire and incorporate into their lessons, materials that previously were not obtainable in a timely manner or materials that previously required substantial alteration. But the digital curriculum is yet to arrive and the standards for ensuring its accessibility are yet to be agreed upon. In the meantime, we need to have a solid grasp of what practices are ongoing in schools across America. As more and more resources for learning are introduced in digital form, we will need to understand how these new media serve to support and enhance teaching practices, making the task of reaching all students more feasible.

The general curriculum refers to what schools ordinarily offer students at taxpayers' expense to prepare them to assume independent and productive roles as adult citizens. As we turn to the third millennium, educators are challenged to meet Congress' mandate that students with disabilities must gain access to, participate in, and make progress within the general curriculum (IDEA '97). Implicit in IDEA '97 is the proposition that no child with a disability will be denied opportunity to progress as deeply as possible into the curriculum. Earlier notions of "zero reject" emphasized the child's right to an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. This was a special education designed by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals and individually tailored to address disability-specific needs. Thus, children who were presumed not to derive benefit from the general curriculum could not be excluded from an education that was targeted at their diagnosed special needs.

Traditional education, therefore, was considered inappropriate for many students with disabilities because it was designed to move classes of students through an age-related, graded system according to criteria of efficiency. The pace of instruction, the mode of presentation, the design of activities, the response modes for students, the format of materials, and the assessment of results were all standardized to allow the majority of learners to succeed. At the same time, traditional education allowed a minority of students to fail. A separate system of special education had to emerge to provide for students with disabilities who could not access or participate in traditional classroom instruction. As our student population became more diverse

with students from poor families and students from families where English is not spoken in the home, the apparent futility of traditional education spawned a host of reform efforts. Thus, for nearly two decades, teachers have been attempting to respond to diversity in a variety of ways. Many of these efforts have opened doors for students with disabilities.

This report outlines current trends in teaching practices in American classrooms. Appended to this report are the results of a preliminary survey conducted on a convenience sample of general educators from the metropolitan Boston area. While quite limited, the survey results served to ground some of the findings reviewed below from more broad scale investigations of teaching practices.

### **What does the typical American classroom look like?**

As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, educational communities in America are united by a common characteristic – change. General enrollment has risen to the extent that approximately 50 million people, or one out of every six Americans, currently attend our nation’s public schools (Conditions of Education, 1999). This increase in the absolute number of public school students is occurring concomitantly with a disproportionate increase in students’ cultural and linguistic diversity (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). We are also identifying greater numbers of students with disabilities or who are otherwise at risk for failure. Within the special education field alone, the number of students receiving specialized services has risen steadily since the 1970’s from 3.75 million to 5 million (Hallahan & Kaufman, 2000). The diversity of our students, in all its forms, requires teachers to operate in a dynamic and challenging classroom context.

Heightened accountability measures challenge teachers to address learning standards and still continue to create a learning environment sensitive to diverse needs. Moreover, teachers must adjust to technology, which is changing the way we gather, represent, and evaluate information.

These are just parts of an ever-changing, multi-faceted educational environment. One of the most common approaches teachers are using to deal with this constant change is the cultivation of learning through a host of instructional methods and assessment procedures. We now turn to these instructional methods and procedures.

### **What are Teachers and Students Doing in American Classrooms?**

The diverse learning needs of students in America present teachers with many intricate instructional challenges. On a daily basis, teachers are called on to create a learning environment that positions each and every student to reach his/her full potential. This vital task requires teachers to structure an environment that is flexible, sensitive, and welcoming to the countless forms in which learning potential might be expressed. By varying both the instruction itself and the context in which the instruction is provided, our teachers successfully create avenues for learning that address the numerous needs of the students they serve. This is by no means a simple task. Rather, a rich and productive learning environment evolves as the result of teachers’ careful consideration of an abundance of questions concerning the learning needs of each student in relation to the learning needs of every student. We will look at some of these questions now.

Walk into any public school classroom in America and you may notice learning occurring in a variety of formats. Teachers are teaching to large and small groups of learners, as well as to

individual students (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). Within small groups, teachers often provide opportunities for students to take an active part in their education through the use of cooperative learning strategies and peer-tutoring opportunities (Daniels, Zimelman & Bizar, 1999; Johnson, 1998; Mayer 1998). Through these learner-centered approaches, teachers encourage students to generate questions and lead discussions that complement and enhance traditional lecture and teacher-led discussion formats (De la Paz, 1998; Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). As these new instructional formats are developed, teachers must decide which ones to choose, modify, or synthesize in order to meet the needs of their students. Which of my students benefits from cooperative learning? Who needs lecture approaches for more concrete and definitive content delivery? What students are willing to go beyond classroom lessons and would benefit from structured discovery learning? Which students can benefit from tutoring their peers? Who can benefit from being tutored? How can these formats be combined into a workable pedagogy for my students?

Varying instructional group sizes and formats are only part of the complexity of today's classrooms. Once teachers have chosen a mode and context of instruction, they must then choose exactly what teaching techniques will comprise the instruction. Nested within questions of instructional format are questions of instructional technique. What can I reasonably expect my students to learn in their cooperative groups? What group activities provide the greatest opportunities for students to learn? When should I use lecturing to reinforce group learning? What type of instruction should I use in the lecture to meet the needs of my students? Is modeling more effective than using manipulatives? How can the two approaches be synthesized? How do I ensure that the content that I convey is received? Teachers use a variety of specific instructional strategies both to deliver and reinforce lesson content. Examples include modeling, guided practice, modality approaches, discovery learning, and rote memorization (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1995; Harrison and Treagust, 1998). In any given instructional situation, teachers must consider many questions and many potential ways of answering. The answers that they provide must then be organized into a framework for a learning environment that is sensitive to the needs of each student.

The complexity of teaching in today's classrooms does not stop here, though. Once teachers have chosen the format and means of instruction, they must turn their attention to questions concerning the efficacy of the instruction. How do I evaluate the extent to which my instructional decisions have had a positive impact on a student's learning? How do I provide students with a way to apply what they have learned to other situations? How can I use what I learn about the successes of my students to further enhance my future instructional practices? These types of questions add further complexity to the work of today's teachers. Mnemonic strategies, summarization strategies (e.g., guided notes), and response cards are examples of the types of tools that teachers use to help students command what they have learned (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1998; Munk et al., 1998; Swanson & De la Paz, 1998). Once students have tools for increasing their own access to what they have learned, the teacher must consider appropriate ways of assessment. The evaluation techniques that teachers use provide ways for students to successfully demonstrate their abilities and for teachers to gather information that will provide more specific answers to the instructional questions posed earlier. These outcomes are the product of teachers' thoughtful consideration of the vast complexities of instructional decision-making in the context of students' diverse needs.

## **What materials are students and teachers using?**

New standards and goals for education have required many teachers to return to the textbook as a source of instruction. According to Henke, Chen and Goldman (1999), over seventy percent of teachers use textbook and/or supplementary printed materials in class at least once a week. Two-thirds of these teachers include workbooks for either class work or homework. The National Center for Accessing the General Curriculum (NCAC) created a survey, which asked teachers in the metropolitan Boston area about their teaching strategies. Their results support the NCES report in that the majority of these teachers use a lot of print materials; whether it be textbooks, worksheets, homework sheets, or specially designed review sheets (NCAC Survey, 2000).

The NCAC survey found that teachers also use a variety of manipulatives to aid students in learning. Concrete materials that supplement texts are now available. In mathematics, alone, there are many types of manipulatives available to help students learn, including geometric figures, geoboards, and base ten blocks. Teachers use these supplementary materials as often as the primary textbooks, particularly in the elementary grades (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999).

With today's technology, instructional materials are available in many other new formats. According to The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), electronic technologies have become more common in today's schools ( Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). In addition to calculators, which are helpful tools to learn (NCTM, 1989) and can be used to assist students in larger problem solving situations, Videos, tape players, and DVDs are seen in both primary and secondary classrooms and used to supplement the textbook. Tape players are often used by small groups of students to read books aloud (NCAC Survey, 2000). OSEP's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Report to Congress suggests that video presentations should be supplemented by verbal descriptions. Video captioning and audio tape players are also used to simplify the textbook for students who need such adaptation (Schumm & Vaughn, 1994).

Computers have become an integral part of classrooms as well, but the manner in which they are integrated into the classroom varies. Some teachers use the computer to reinforce skills taught in class. Others incorporate the computer into the actual lesson presentation (Ertmer, Addison, Lane, Ross, & Woods, 1999). Software has been developed that allows students to learn concepts and skills by doing electronic experiments or simulations, and the World Wide Web allows teachers to communicate around the world (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). The actual amount of materials is endless, but this section covered some of the basic materials seen in classrooms.

## **How are teachers assessing student learning?**

Innovative assessment measures have been created by classroom teachers as they become aware of the changing state standards and the growing diversity in their classrooms. There is much debate surrounding the types of assessments children should receive. Although many favor authentic assessment, others question whether these alternate assessments offer the same validity as standardized tests. This section is designed to inform teachers of the kinds of assessment being performed.

High-stakes standardized testing has been strongly debated by researchers but widely used by school systems around the country. In fact, as of 1991, forty-five states implemented a statewide testing program to assess both student knowledge and teacher instructional effectiveness

(Madaus, 1991). Proponents of these tests feel that they will compel teachers to better focus instruction on the standards dictated by the state and that the assessments will help teachers and students create reasonable goals (Madaus, 1991). Critics feel that these tests limit the creativity of instruction and narrow the curriculum so that teachers spend the majority of their time “teaching to the test” (Gordon & Reese, 1997). Although the majority of teachers have expressed anxiety and their dislike of high-stakes testing (Gordon & Reese, 1997; Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000; Jones, Jones, Hardin, Capman, Yarbrough & Davis, 1999), many public policy makers believe the tests show the quality of statewide schooling (Popham, 1991). Both republican and democratic presidential candidates assumed a positive stance on testing in their 2000 campaigns, thus ensuring that standards-based assessment will be around in the foreseeable future.

Grades have been and continue to be an important part of assessment for teachers. Grades serve many purposes, including feedback to parents via report cards, and a basis for course placement and acceptance into universities. Teachers calculate grades in different ways. Some use only achievement, while others consider effort and improvement. NCES surveyed teachers in 1994-1995 to find out what instructional practices and assessment measures were being used in the classroom. Ninety-seven percent of teachers felt that effort was important in determining grades (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999).

Many teachers are currently going beyond traditional forms of assessment such as multiple choice and short answer tests. According to the Henke, Chen and Goldman (1999), many teachers are using portfolios in addition to grades. Forty-nine percent of teachers felt that portfolios were very important. Teachers include a variety of items in these portfolios, including: homework, tests, quizzes, worksheets, projects, and self-evaluations. Primary teachers were almost thirty percent more likely than secondary teachers to consider portfolio items as possible grades (Henke, Chen, & Goldman, 1999). Many teachers use rubrics to assess the work in the portfolios (NCAC Survey, 2000). Standards are set up and scaled onto a rubric. Students’ work is then evaluated on these measures. The rubrics and the work samples in these portfolios are used to show the student’s progress but can be used in other ways as well. For example, teachers can use them to make decisions about student placement or graduation or to encourage students to self-reflect and set goals for themselves. Other teachers use portfolios as a way to judge their own teaching and set teaching goals in response.

In addition to grades and portfolios many informal measures are used to assess student knowledge. Teachers surveyed in the Boston area survey said that they used oral inquiry to assess student knowledge during a lesson (NCAC Survey, 2000). Other teachers use hands on activities like creating electromagnets or building an ecosystem to see if skills have been mastered (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & Boon, 1998). Some teachers are encouraging kids to use a strategy called ‘self-questioning’ to check their own knowledge. Teachers are asking students to draw pictures, give oral responses, use hands-on enactments, and take performance based tests when traditional assessment measures appear to inadequately show what students have learned.

## **Conclusion**

This report has attempted to provide a snapshot of the classrooms of today with a heavy emphasis on the kinds of decisions teachers must make to address the needs of diverse learners,

including students with disabilities. As a subordinate theme, we also tried to illustrate how teacher questioning is employed to shape and refine practice.

We believe that solutions to the many challenges confronting educators today must be explored in the contexts of classrooms and schools. Teachers are now reflecting critically on their practice. Many are assuming a stance of teacher inquiry where theory informs practice and practice in turn informs theory. Critical inquiry occurs independently and in formal and informal teams at the level of the school. As we probe new ways of increasing access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities, we will need to remain mindful of how teachers carry out their practices in real life contexts. Through such understandings, we can move ahead in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

## References

- Arreaga-Mayer, C. (1998). Increasing active student responding and improving academic performance through classwide peer tutoring. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 34*(2), 89-94.
- Barkdale-Ladd, M.A. & Thomas, K. F. (2000). What's at stake in high-stakes testing: Teachers and parents speak out. *Journal of Teacher Education, 51*(5), 384-397.
- Daniels, H., Zemelman, S., & Bizar, M. (1999). Whole language works: Sixty years of research. *Educational Leadership, 57*(2), 32-37.
- Ertmer, P.A., Addison, P., Lane, M., Ross, E., & Woods, D. (1999) Examining teacher's beliefs about the role of technology in the elementary classroom. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education, 32*(1), 54-72.
- Gordon, S. P. & Reese, M. (1997). High-stakes testing: Worth the price? *Journal of School Leadership, 7*, 345-368.
- Hallahan, D.P. & Kauffman, J.M. (2000). *Exceptional learners*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Harrison, A.G. & Treagust, D.F. (1998). Modeling in science lessons: Are there better ways to learn with models? *School Science and Mathematics, 98*(8), 420-429.
- Henke, R.R., Chen, X., & Goldman, G. (1999). *What happens in classrooms? Instructional practices in elementary and secondary schools, 1994-95*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Johnson, G.M. (1998). Principles of instruction for at-risk learners. *Preventing School Failure, 42*(4), 167-174.
- Jones, J. G., Jones, B. D., Hardin, B., Chapman, L., Yarbrought, T., & Davis, M. (1999). The impact of high-stakes testing on teachers and student in North Carolina. *Childhood Education, 67*(3), 131-142.

- Madaus, G. F. (1991). The effects of important tests on students. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73(3), 226-231.
- Mastropieri, M.A. & Scruggs T.E. (1998). Enhancing school success with mnemonic strategies. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 33(4), 201-208.
- Munk, D. D., Brukert, J., Call, D.T., Stoehramann, T., & Radant, E. (1998). Strategies for enhancing the performance of students with LD in inclusive science classes. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 34(2), 73-78.
- NCAC Survey (2000), *Survey of teachers in the metropolitan Boston area*. Peabody, MA: Center for Applied Special Technology, Inc.
- Popham, W. J. (1991). Appropriateness of teachers' test-preparation practices. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 10(4), 12-15.
- Schum, J.S. & Vaughn, S. (1994). Assisting students with difficult textbooks: Teacher perceptions and practices. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 34(1), 39-56.
- Scruggs, T.E., Mastropieri, M.A., & Boon, R. (1998) Science education for students with disabilities: A review of recent research studies in science education. *Leeds* (32), p.21.
- Swanson, P.N., & De La Paz, S. (1998). Teaching effective comprehension strategies to students with learning and reading disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 33(4), 209-218.
- U.S. Department of Education. (1999). *The twenty-first annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2000). *The condition of education, 2000*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

## **Appendix**

## Survey of General Educator Teaching Practices to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners' Goals

Using a convenience sample of teachers primarily from the metropolitan Boston area, we conducted a survey to determine the types of adaptations, accommodations, or customizations that teachers make in general practice to meet the needs of their diverse learners. Current practitioners' perspectives on teaching practice that increases access to the general curriculum provide information useful for:

- Comparisons of local teaching practices to existing research in order to develop ways of synthesizing both into feasible practice models
- Further revision and development of research instruments that allow us to gather relevant data on teaching practices that increase access to the general curriculum

The data on teaching practices reported below were taken from a larger survey (also appended here) that investigated curriculum modifications, classroom management approaches and classroom evaluation. As the classroom environment is dynamic and complex, there is much overlap in the information gathered in each category. Nonetheless, these data provide preliminary information about the specific practices that teachers are using to increase curriculum access for all learners. We will continue to revise and focus our investigation on the ways that teachers synthesize curricular accommodations, management decisions, assessment, instructional methodology, and other aspects of pedagogy into context-specific practice that facilitates curriculum access for each student.

### Method

We distributed paper surveys to teachers across a variety of districts, schools, and grade levels in the metropolitan Boston area. The teachers were asked to return surveys in sealed envelopes (to protect confidentiality) to a local school representative connected with the project or to mail them back in stamped, addressed envelopes. A substantial proportion of the responses were received from one particular school district.

### Sample

The sample included 34 teachers, one of whom did not include demographic information. All but one of the teachers were from Massachusetts, and the vast majority were female. Teaching experience of the respondents ranged from 1 to 37 years. Teachers from all but two grade levels were represented in the sample (see Table 2 below). A summary of the similarities and variation within the sample is provided in Table 1. Table 3 displays the grade level taught by each survey respondent and his or her extent of experience.

**Table 1: Sample summary (total sample size =34, with one respondent not reporting demographic information)**

Similarities within sample	Variation within sample
School location (97% from MA)	Range of experience (1 to 37 years)
School type (81.8% suburban)	Range of grade levels (K-5, 8-12, Special Ed.)
Class type (84.8% general education)	Range of subjects taught (Biology, science, English, history, psychology, sociology, social studies, mathematics, literacy)
Teacher gender (90% female)	

**Table 2: Grade levels represented in the sample (total sample size = 34, with one respondent not reporting demographic information)**

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP
Percent of teachers in sample	7.1	11.9	7.1	9.5	7.1	11.9	0	0	2.4	7.1	9.5	9.5	7.1	9.5

**Table 3: Grade levels taught and extent of experience for each survey respondent**

Novice (N) = 1-3 years

Experienced (E) = 4 – 10 years

Very Experienced (V) = 11+ years

#	Grade Level Taught															Experience		
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Sp	N	E	V	
1										X	X	X			X			
2		X													X			
3						X										X		
4											X	X					X	
5					X											X		
6			X												X			
7											X		X		X			
8										X	X	X				X		
9													X				X	
10		X													X			
11										X	X	X	X		X			
12					X												X	
13	X															X		
14				X											X			
15						X										X		
16				X													X	
17		X															X	
18						X										X		
19	X															X		
20						X										X		
21														X	X			
22														X			X	
23						X											X	
24																		
25		X															X	
26	X															X		
27				X											X			
28				X												X		
29		X	X														X	
30			X													X		
31														X		X		
32					X												X	
33														X		X		
34									X								X	

## Findings

Teachers reported that they typically adapt, accommodate, or customize their general classroom teaching practices for between 10 and 100% of their students. Respondents answers to the prompt, "Please list the most common adaptations, changes, or customizations you make to your teaching practice," were coded and then aggregated into five categories: 1) Multi-dimensional instruction/organization; 2) Assessment/feedback practice; 3) Instructional pace practice; 4) Grouping practice; 5) Classroom management practice. Table 4 below shows the number of survey respondents who reported specific types of practices within each category. A further breakdown of responses follows in Table 5 (practice by grade level) and Table 6 (practice by level of experience).

**Table 4: Adaptations, accommodations, and customizations used by teachers in sample (total sample size = 34 teachers)**

### Category 1: Multi-dimensional Instruction/Organization

Practice Modification	Number of teachers reporting use	Grade level primarily used with	Experience of teachers reporting use
Multicultural instruction/materials	1	primary	very experienced
Discussions	2	high	novice
Multiple teaching styles	5	primary and high grades	all levels
Multiple learning contexts	4	primary and high grades	novice and very experienced
Repetition/rephrasing/review	11	primary and high grades	all levels
Multiple presentations of content/activities/directions	11	primary	all levels
Collaboration with RSP/SPED teachers	1	high	very experienced
Guided/structured classroom activities	5	primary	all levels
Matching content to ability (curriculum adaptation)	2	primary	novice and experienced
One-to-one instruction/goal development/support	9	primary	experienced and very experienced
Modeling/demonstration			
Manipulatives	1	primary	very experienced
Student involvement in determining instructional focus	1	primary	experienced
Discrete trials	1	special	novice
Accommodations/adaptations of assignments/content	5	primary	all levels
Self-esteem boosting	1	high	novice
Cognitive strategies/organizers	2	primary	novice and experienced
Prompting/cuing			

**Category 2: Assessment/Feedback Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Number of teachers reporting use</b>	<b>Grade level primarily used with</b>	<b>Experience of teachers reporting use</b>
Evaluating one student as representative of group (dipsticking)	3	primary and high grades	all levels
Student meetings/help sessions	2	high and special	experienced
Alternative assessment	1	high	experienced
Assessment accommodations	2	primary and high grades	novice and experienced

**Category 3: Instructional Pace Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Number of teachers reporting use</b>	<b>Grade level primarily used with</b>	<b>Experience of teachers reporting use</b>
Breaking lessons down into smaller units	5	primary and high grades	all levels
Speaking slowly/use of wait time	3	primary and high grades	all levels
Shortening/slowing presentations/assignments	2	primary and special	novice and experienced

**Category 4: Grouping Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Number of teachers reporting use</b>	<b>Grade level primarily used with</b>	<b>Experience of teachers reporting use</b>
Small/large group instruction/support to remediate or enrich	10	primary	all levels
Cooperative learning	3	primary and high grades	novice and very experienced
Learning centers	1	primary	novice
Peer tutoring (pairs or groups)	6	primary	experienced and very experienced
Ability grouping	1	primary	very experienced

**Category 5: Classroom Management Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Number of teachers reporting use</b>	<b>Grade level primarily used with</b>	<b>Experience of teachers reporting use</b>
Proximity	2	middle and high	very experienced
Seating arrangements	3	primary and high grades	novice and experienced

**Table 5: Adaptations, accommodations, and customizations used by teachers according to grade level taught (total sample size = 34 teachers)**

**Category 1: Multi-dimensional Instruction/Organization**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Special</b>
Multicultural instruction/materials	12			
Discussions			11, 7	
Multiple teaching styles	30, 16, 15		4, 1	
Multiple learning contexts	25, 17		7, 1	
Repetition/rephrasing/review	27, 23, 19, 17, 15, 13		11, 9, 7, 4	31
Multiple presentations of content/activities/directions	29, 28, 26, 25, 23, 20, 14, 10, 3		8, 4	
Collaboration with RSP/SPED teachers			4	
Guided/structured classroom activities	29, 14, 6, 5		7	
Matching content to ability (curriculum adaptation)	6, 5			
One-to-one instruction/goal development/support	32, 29, 23, 20, 17, 6, 3	34		31
Modeling/demonstration	26, 25, 19, 15, 13			33
Manipulatives	25,			
Student involvement in determining instructional focus	18			
Discrete trials				21
Accommodations/adaptations of assignments/content	23, 6, 5, 18			33
Self-esteem boosting			11	
Cognitive strategies/organizers	28, 14			
Prompting/cuing	17			

**Category 2: Assessment/Feedback Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Special</b>
Evaluating one student as representative of group (dipsticking)	28		9, 7	
Student meetings/help sessions			8	33
Alternative assessment			8	
Assessment accommodations	27		8	

**Category 3: Instructional Pace Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Special</b>
Breaking lessons down into smaller units	29, 19		9, 4, 1	
Speaking slowly/use of wait time	19, 17		11	
Shortening/slowing presentations/assignments	27			31

**Category 4: Grouping Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Special</b>
Small/large group instruction/support to remediate or enrich	32, 30, 29, 23, 20, 12, 10, 3			33, 24
Cooperative learning	32		9, 1	
Learning centers	6			
Peer tutoring (pairs or groups)	28, 26, 17, 5	34	4	
Ability grouping	25			

**Category 5: Classroom Management Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Special</b>
Proximity		34	9	
Seating arrangements	26		11, 8	
Structured lesson routine				

**Table 6: Adaptations, accommodations, and customizations used by teachers according to level of experience (total sample size = 34 teachers)**

**Category 1: Multi-dimensional Instruction/Organization**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>Very Experienced</b>
Multicultural instruction/materials			12
Discussions	11, 7		
Multiple teaching styles	1	30, 15	16, 4
Multiple learning contexts	7, 1		25, 17
Repetition/rephrasing/review	27, 11, 7	19, 15, 13, 31	23, 17, 9, 4
Multiple presentations of content/activities/directions	20, 14, 10	28, 26, 3, 8	29, 25, 23, 4
Collaboration with RSP/SPED teachers			4
Guided/structured classroom activities	14, 6, 7	5	29
Matching content to ability (curriculum adaptation)	6	5	
One-to-one instruction/goal development/support	6	20, 3, 31	32, 29, 23, 17, 34
Modeling/demonstration		26, 19, 15, 13, 33	25
Manipulatives			25
Student involvement in determining instructional focus		18	
Discrete trials	21		
Accommodations/adaptations of assignments/content	6	5, 33, 18	23
Self-esteem boosting	11		
Cognitive strategies/organizers	14	28	
Prompting/cuing			17

**Category 2: Assessment/Feedback Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>Very Experienced</b>
Evaluating one student as representative of group (dipsticking)	7	28	9
Student meetings/help sessions		8, 33	
Alternative assessment		8	
Assessment accommodations	27	8	

**Category 3: Instructional Pace Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>Very Experienced</b>
Breaking lessons down into smaller units	1	29, 19	9, 4
Speaking slowly/use of wait time	11	19	17
Shortening/slowing presentations/assignments	27	31	

**Category 4: Grouping Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>Very Experienced</b>
Small/large group instruction/support to remediate or enrich	10	33, 30, 20, 3	32, 29, 23, 12
Cooperative learning	1		32, 9
Learning centers	6		
Peer tutoring (pairs or groups)		28, 26, 5	34, 17, 4
Ability grouping			25

**Category 5: Classroom Management Practice**

<b>Practice Modification</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>Very Experienced</b>
Proximity			9, 34
Seating arrangements	11	26, 8	

Dear Teachers:

We are a team of researchers at Boston College's Department of Teacher Education and CAST, a not-for-profit educational research and development organization located in Peabody, MA. We are part of the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs.

We are interested in gathering information from classroom teachers regarding teaching practices and curriculum resources currently in use. We recognize that there is diversity in nearly every classroom across America, and we ultimately want to be in a position to talk about the most effective teaching practices and curricular applications. While we are familiar with much of the professional literature on these subjects, we feel a need to ground our thinking in what actually happens in classroom environments.

As one who meets the daily challenges of educating America's children, please take a few minutes to tell us about your practices and curriculum adjustments by completing the enclosed teacher survey.

We are not employing any sophisticated sampling technique or survey validation procedure, so our research at this time is preliminary. You may be asked to participate in an informal interview subsequent to our data analysis. In any case, we want to assure you that your individual responses will not be reported to your employer or to the general public. Data obtained will be aggregated across respondents for summary purposes without the identity of individual respondents.

We hope that you will take the time to complete this survey. We will be happy to share our findings with you.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

Carla Ramos  
CAST  
39 Cross Street  
Peabody, MA 01960  
(978) 531-8555  
cramos@cast.org

Thank you.

Please sign your name and date in the space below indicating that you are willing to complete the survey and that you are aware of the purpose of the survey and the procedures in place to maintain confidentiality of your individual responses. We may contact you if we have any questions about the survey, or to invite interested parties to participate in some special focus group discussions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender (circle):      Male              Female

How many years of teaching experience do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

Current grade taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Current subject taught (if specialized): \_\_\_\_\_

Is your current school (circle):      Urban              Suburban              Rural

Is your current class (circle): General Ed      Special Ed      Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

State and country of current school: \_\_\_\_\_

When you think of planning to accommodate the full range of diversity in your classroom, what is the proportion of students out of a class for whom you typically customize, change, alter, or adapt instruction?

Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ students out of a class of \_\_\_\_\_ students

Please list the most common adaptations, changes, or customizations you make to:  
Your curriculum materials

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

Your teaching practice

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

(cont'd.) Please list the most common adaptations, changes, or customizations you make to:  
Your classroom management

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

Your evaluation of student progress

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

e. \_\_\_\_\_

Of the materials and/or teaching tips or guidelines designed to accommodate diversity in your classroom that are provided you by publishers, which do you typically use (if any)?

If you had more resources (e.g., time, materials, money, training, personnel), what adaptations would you make to:

Your curriculum materials

Your teaching practice

Your classroom management

Your evaluation of student progress

Thank you very much for your responses.