

## **Book Review**

**Title:** *Student-Directed Learning*

**Author:** Martin Agran, Margaret King-Sears, Michael Wehmeyer, & Susan Copeland

**Publisher:** Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 2003

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**Reviewer:** Rhonda S. Black

For far too long, students, especially those with disabilities, have been viewed as passive recipients in teacher-led classrooms. The authors of *Student-Directed Learning* are making strides in changing “who holds the chalk?” by providing practical strategies for changing classroom environments into more collaborative communities.

*Student-Directed Learning* is one of five books in the *Teachers’ Guides to Inclusive Practices* Series, available from Brookes Publishing. Other books in the series include *Behavioral Support*, *Collaborative Teaming*, *Modifying Schoolwork*, and *Social Relationships and Peer Support*. This book is practitioner-friendly while being based on solid research findings. Most notable are the visual icons, text boxes, and other organizational features that make information easy to find and follow. For example, the first chapter begins with four student snapshots, each with an icon of a camera, a bold heading, italicized writing, and plenty of white space. An introductory paragraph follows explaining how student-directed learning strategies would benefit the students in the snapshots. Next, a text-box section defines differences between teacher-mediated, student-mediated, peer-mediated and technology-mediated instructional strategies. Each strategy has a different picture icon to help illustrate the point (teacher at chalkboard for teacher-mediated, peers working together for peer-mediated and so forth). This section is followed by a discussion of various student-directed learning strategies clearly marked with headings and brief but thorough explanations. The next section highlights advantages of student-directed learning, again with subheadings, nice spacing and concise, yet thorough, explanations. Finally, there are two textboxes, one titled “What the Research Says” which summarizes two meta-analytic studies of self-management in a simple bullet list accessible to practitioners, parents and researchers; the second summarizing student involvement in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The remaining chapters, *Antecedent Cue Regulation and Picture Cues*, *Self-Instruction*, *Self-Monitoring*, *Self-Evaluation and Self-Reinforcement*, and *Success in the Inclusive Classroom and Access to the General Curriculum* follow a similar format. Each chapter includes student snapshots, visual examples and step-by-step guides to implementing the concept discussed. Each chapter also includes easy-to-read “What the Research Says” bullet-list summaries of the research, and “Voices from the Classroom” textboxes providing advice from classroom teachers. Numerous flow charts, checklists, and self-evaluation forms are provided throughout the book to bridge the research to practice divide.

This text would be a good resource for school personnel in general or special education, elementary or secondary schools, and college classes in general or special education.