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# THE IRIS CENTER



<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

Serving:  
College and University Faculty  
Professional Development Providers

General Education • Educational Leadership  
Special Education • Related Services

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# IRIS

## IDEA '04 AND RESEARCH FOR INCLUSIVE SETTINGS

### OVERVIEW

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the IRIS Center develops training enhancement materials to be used by faculty and professional development providers for the preparation of current and future school personnel. The Center works with experts from across the nation to create challenge-based interactive modules, case study units, and a variety of activities, the purpose of which is to provide research-validated information about working with students with disabilities in inclusive settings. All IRIS materials are available free of charge through the IRIS Web site (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>).



### THE IRIS PROCESS

Through the collection and utilization of input and feedback, the IRIS Center is able to make available high-quality products and services. Two of the major components of this process are focus groups and needs assessments.

- Focus groups consist of institutions of higher education (IHE) faculty, practitioners, preservice trainees, the parents of students with disabilities, and professional development providers.
- Needs assessments include two distinct sources: textbook analyses and surveys.

With this information in hand, the IRIS staff—assisted by the advisory board and in collaboration with OSEP—prioritizes and selects specific topics for product development. Next, modules, case studies, activities, and other materials are created. IRIS personnel translate the researched-based content from experts in the selected topic area into practice. IRIS personnel supplement this content with additional research and resources. Finally, the materials are reviewed by experts in the field and field-tested by college faculty.

## THE IRIS ARRAY OF ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS

### ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS

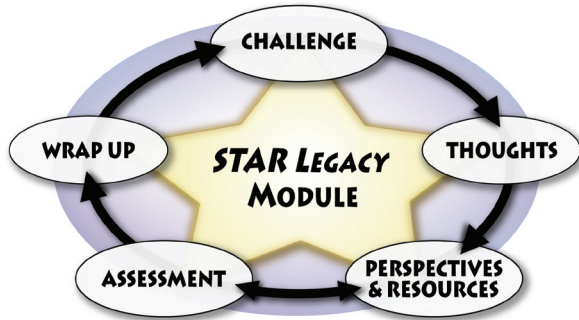
The IRIS Web site offers a broad array of enhancement materials for faculty and professional development providers to use to supplement their classes and trainings. These materials include interactive challenge-based modules, case studies, activities, and information briefs. In addition, the Web site features four searchable databases: Web Resource Directory, Online Dictionary, Film Search Tool, and Module Media Search Tool.

IRIS materials address topics such as:

- Accommodations
- Assessment
- Behavior
- Collaboration
- Differentiated Instruction
- Disability
- Diversity
- Learning Strategies
- Math
- Reading, Literacy, and Language Arts
- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- School Improvement

# CHALLENGE-BASED MODULES

## STAR LEGACY MODULES



IRIS interactive online modules apply the How People Learn theory developed by John Bransford (University of Washington, Seattle) and his colleagues, and are based on cognitive science research. The modules deliver information through the *STAR Legacy* cycle, an award-winning teaching approach designed to help users learn about the needs of students with disabilities. The interactive modules begin with realistic challenges intended to capture the user's attention. The *Thoughts* questions that follow allow users to explore and consider what they currently know about the scenario presented in the *Challenge*. Then, in *Perspectives and Resources*, users draw on nuggets of information (e.g., audio interviews, movies, activities) in order to actively engage in learning the modules' main content. Next, in the *Assessment*, users gauge their learning, before moving to the *Wrap Up* to review a summary of the module content. To find out more about the learning theory and inquiry cycle that form the underlying structure of IRIS Modules, view the module "How People Learn: Presenting the Learning Theory and Inquiry Cycle on Which the IRIS Modules Are Built."

This handout highlights four IRIS modules (below). To view these and other IRIS modules in their entirety, please visit the IRIS Web site.

### SAMPLE TOPICS

#### RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)



In this series of modules, learn about RTI with the education professionals at Rosa Parks Elementary School. Discover how universal screening, progress monitoring, and multi-tiered

interventions provide early intervening to prevent years of school failure for students struggling with reading. Understand how students with learning disabilities are identified through traditional methods and through the RTI process.

#### BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Meet Ms. Rollison, a first-year general education teacher, in this series of modules highlighting the principles of behavior management. In it, Ms. Rollison learns about the components of a comprehensive behavior management plan, about developing a classroom plan, and about implementing individualized programs for students with disabilities.



#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT



Ms. Flores, a principal at Wilbur Valley Middle School, is puzzled by year-end assessment results. Join her in a series of three modules as she learns about the importance of

testing students with disabilities, conditions that promote access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities, and collaboration between general education and special education teachers to create high expectations for all students.

#### LEARNING STRATEGIES

In "Using Learning Strategies: Instruction to Enhance Learning," Mr. Carter, a middle-school general education teacher, is concerned about several of his students who perform inconsistently on academic tasks. Follow along with Mr. Carter as he learns about the benefits of implementing strategies and about the six steps required to effectively implement instructional strategies.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF OTHER IRIS RESOURCES

## CASE STUDIES

Each case study includes three levels of difficulty for a given topic, with each subsequent level requiring more advanced analysis and understanding from students. Each case study includes school-based scenarios, content pages called STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheets, and an instructor's guide (available upon request). Case studies cover topics such as:

- Room Arrangement
- Behavior
- Student Accountability
- Classroom Norms and Expectations
- Reading Strategies



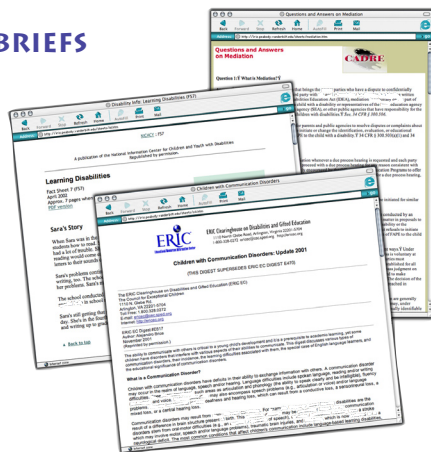
## ACTIVITIES

A large number of activities are included on the Web site to use as independent assignments or to promote discussion. The activities have been categorized as follows:

- Books
- Case-Based
- Class Discussion
- Independent
- Movies
- Online Game
- Small Group
- Web Site

## INFORMATION BRIEFS

These informational resources are gathered from a number of sources and are included on the IRIS Web site as supplemental materials.



## WEB RESOURCE DIRECTORY

The Web Resource Directory is a searchable database that helps users locate information about special education and disability-related topics available through other Web sites. Each site is accompanied by a brief annotation. This directory is searchable by the following categories:

- Agencies and Organizations
- Federally Sponsored Projects and Centers
- IRIS Partners



## ONLINE DICTIONARY

Comprising more than 600 terms, the Online Dictionary offers a quick and easy way to look up definitions related to special education.

## FILM SEARCH TOOL

The Film Search Tool includes hundreds of searchable and annotated descriptions of motion pictures having to do with, featuring, or including people with disabilities. These films portray persons with disabilities in a variety of ways as a means of encouraging discussions concerning popular images of disabilities and those who have them.

## MODULE MEDIA SEARCH TOOL

The Module Media Search Tool allows visitors to quickly search IRIS Modules for specific audio clips, movies, and activities.

# IRIS PARTNERS

## INFORMED BY PARTNERS AND ADVISORS

The IRIS Center is supported in its efforts through partnerships with professional and community organizations, public agencies, and universities. These provide integral involvement for assessing the needs of college faculty and professional development providers and for determining specific topics for enhancement materials. The IRIS Center's partners are also instrumental in validating materials and in disseminating information about the Center's work. The list below highlights some of those already established:

### IRIS Partners

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- Center for Improving Teacher Quality, Council of Chief State School Officers
- Federal Resource Center, Academy for Educational Development
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education
- National Education Association
- National Center for Special Education Personnel and Related Service Providers
- Region V Equity Assistance Center, University of Michigan
- Student CEC, Council for Exceptional Children
- Teacher Education Division, Council for Exceptional Children
- Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers, PACER Center

## VISIT US

<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>

IRIS materials explore research-validated practices and key elements necessary to provide students with disabilities greater access to the general education curriculum. With greater access, students with disabilities achieve at high academic levels, are appropriately included in high-stakes assessments, and receive high-quality educational services in inclusive settings.



### Executive Committee of Related Service Providers

- American School Counselor Association
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- American Occupational Therapy Association
- American Physical Therapy Association
- Assistive Technology
- National Association of School Nurses
- National Association of School Psychologists

### Steering Committee on Implementation and Design

- Alfredo Artiles, Arizona State University
- John Bransford, University of Washington
- John Copenhaver, Mountain Plains RRC
- Candace Cortiella, The Advocacy Institute
- Jim Green, Tribal College Liaison
- Dan Hopkins, Rocky Mountain TA Center
- Virginia Lanigan, Allyn & Bacon Publishers
- Chuck Salzberg, Utah State University
- Kathy Strunk, TN State Improvement Grant
- Beverly Young, CSU Chancellor's Office

### Technical Advisors

- John Bransford, University of Washington
- Sean Brophy, Purdue University
- Hank Clark, University of Washington
- Kristine Neuber, George Mason University
- Dan Schwartz, Stanford University
- Nancy Vye, University of Washington

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IRIS-CENTRAL • MODULES AND MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT • NAOMI C. TYLER, PH.D. • CO-DIRECTOR  
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY PHONE: (615) 343-6006 • (800) 831-6134 • FAX: (615) 343-5611  
EMAIL: [IRIS@VANDERBILT.EDU](mailto:IRIS@VANDERBILT.EDU)

IRIS-WEST • TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING • DEBORAH D. SMITH, Ed.D. • CO-DIRECTOR  
CLAREMONT GRADUATE UNIVERSITY PHONE: (909) 607-8982 • (866) 626-IRIS [4747]  
FAX: (909) 607-0959 • EMAIL: [IRIS@CGU.EDU](mailto:IRIS@CGU.EDU)

IRIS-EAST • PARTNERSHIPS AND CONSUMER INPUT • JUDY SMITH-DAVIS, PH.D.  
WASHINGTON, DC, PHONE: (703) 239-1557 • EMAIL: [JUDYS@COX.NET](mailto:JUDYS@COX.NET)

