



Renew a Teaching License

by Professional Learning Board



ONLINE LRC: Understanding Special Learning Populations

“As a gifted and talented teacher, I was very pleased to see all of the correct information on gifted learners in this course. I learned a lot more about the ADHD students, and will be able to recognize twice-exceptional learners more.”

- Syndy R.

As teachers, we all face situations where we accommodate students with special needs in our classrooms. In such situations, how can we modulate our teaching to ensure that we reach each and every child? This integrated course, *Understanding Special Learning Populations* is designed to help teachers encourage and maximize each child's potential.

Terms like Autism, ADHD, learning disability and gifted learners are being constantly used. What is it? What makes these children unique? And most importantly, how as an educator can you enhance their learning ability? These are questions that are answered in this course.



The integrated course has three parts, each one dedicating to a particular special population, namely *Introduction to Autism, Understanding ADHD and Differentiation for Gifted learners in the Classroom*. The course presents various strategies, adaptations and modifications to the environment and the mode of instruction that help teachers accommodate and teach students with these conditions. Along with enhancing an educator's skills, the course is rich and filled with ideas and suggestions that promote your confidence in handling children of differing abilities.

Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Each online self-study LRC course includes:

- **Convenient access** anytime, anywhere, any device
- Interactive **online** textbook
- Implement **practical resources and tools** in your classroom
- Demonstrate comprehension with quizzes and checks for understanding
- Align with your **Professional Learning Plan**
- Course Action Plan Survey
- **Official Transcript** from the ISEA



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Course Outline

SECTION A: *Introduction to Autism*

LESSON 1: Overview

- The definition and symptoms of autism
- The autism spectrum and primary conditions within this spectrum
- Other similar conditions, including Rett's syndrome and Fragile X syndrome
- Primary management for autism
- Functioning of the brain in autism and the cause for deficits

LESSON 2: Social Interactions

- Theory of mind and how best a teacher can interact with a student at each level
- Language and communication in autism
- Ways in which students with autism understand language and express themselves, and learn strategies that can be used to strengthen comprehension and expression in the classroom
- Social development and how teachers can help promote social development

LESSON 3: Expressions of Autism

- Sensory issues seen in autism and how teachers can work with students who may be struggling with these issues
- Other symptoms that affect a child's ability to learn including splintered development, perseveration, deficits in imitation and repetitive behavior
- Motivation and how students with autism may be motivated

LESSON 4: Autism in School

- Classroom organization and management strategies that will help accommodate a child with autism in school
- Strategies that may be used to adapt the classroom environment, classroom schedules and teaching materials in order to promote learning
- Behavior issues that may be seen in a student with autism and learning to respond to these issues
- Working along with the parents and the team in the treatment and education of a student with autism



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SECTION B: *Differentiation of Gifted Learners in the Classroom*

LESSON 1: Characteristics

- Who gifted learners are
- Types of gifted learners including academic, linguistic, and artistic learners
- Qualities of gifted learners

LESSON 2: Personal, Social and Cognitive Needs

- Needs of gifted learners, especially personal, social and intellectual needs
- Differentiation and how it can be implemented including aspects process and assessment
- Independent learning and curriculum compacting and how these can be used for gifted learners

LESSON 3: Special Populations

- Twice exceptional students and how these students require additional support
- Indicators of twice exceptionality and strategies that can be used to teach this special population

LESSON 4: Practical Strategies

- Several practical strategies that can be used while working with gifted learners and special populations
- Pre-assessment in teaching gifted learners
- Strategies such as H.O.T.S, Morning Minute, Learning contracts and tiered instruction



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SECTION C: *Understanding ADHD*

LESSON 1: Introduction

- Definition of and challenges in ADHD
- Causes of ADHD
- Strengths of students with ADHD
- Prognosis and treatment of ADHD

LESSON 2: Core Issues in ADHD

- The brain in ADHD and how the changes in the brain cause deficits
- Challenges in ADHD and strategies that may be used to overcome these, especially in the areas of attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity
- Strategies that are useful in working with students with ADHD including instruction sheets, classroom seating, movement breaks and rules
- Dealing with anger and addictive behavior in students with ADHD

LESSON 3: Associated Issues in ADHD

- Issues seen in ADHD including issues in organization, motivation and social skills
- How teachers may help students to organize their schoolwork and complete it
- How students with ADHD may be motivated
- How students with ADHD may be supported so that they build positive friendships in the classroom

LESSON 4: Accommodations

- Classroom accommodations that can help a student with ADHD to learn and perform well
- Modified seating and lighting
- How a classroom schedule and organization can support learning
- Adapting homework, visual aids and assessments in order to help a child with ADHD cope with the curriculum