



# Making Inclusion Work With Co-Teaching

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*Mrs. Cataldo, a first-year special education teacher, was recently assigned to support several of the students on her caseload through co-teaching in a third-grade inclusive classroom. Mrs. Cataldo is excited and eager to talk with her co-teacher, Mr. Smith, about the various ways that they can deliver instruction. However, Mr. Smith has been teaching for 15 years, and he has not had much experience with implementing co-teaching. He tells Mrs. Cataldo that she can best support in the classroom by working with students one-on-one or by pulling small groups of students to a side table to help them with independent work. To make matters more challenging, Mrs. Cataldo teaches students in her resource room during Mr. Smith's planning time, so they will have little extended time to discuss or plan for collaboration. Mrs. Cataldo knows that there are several ways co-teachers can work together to benefit all students and especially to provide individualized and intensive support for students with disabilities, but she is not sure how to approach the issue with Mr. Smith. She does not want to offend a veteran teacher, yet she is confident there are more effective ways for them to collaborate.*

Beginning special education teachers today are highly likely to be asked to co-teach with general education teachers at some point in their career. The challenges faced by Mrs. Cataldo and Mr. Smith are common for many teachers, but they can be especially daunting for new special education teachers who do not have years of experience or success stories to share with their new teaching partners. Besides supporting their students, new special education teachers may be tasked with persuading their colleagues to try out both new methods of collaboration and unfamiliar models of instructional delivery.

Although it might be challenging to elicit buy-in from some co-teaching partners, the idea of co-teaching to support students with disabilities is not new. Approaches to team teaching were described in the 1960s (Beggs, 1964), and co-teaching formally emerged about 40 years later in response to federal laws.

Specific policies and legislation (e.g., Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) have included mandates—such as serving students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment in which their needs can be met and providing access to the general curriculum and highly qualified teachers—that set the conditions for which the logic of co-teaching was a perfect match. Students with disabilities could receive services primarily, if not exclusively, in the general education classroom, where they would have full access to the general curriculum and highly qualified content-area teachers yet also receive supports appropriate to their special educational needs from a special education teacher. Thus, schools began arranging for special and general educators to work together, sometimes within a single classroom, in order to meet the needs of all students while

students with special education needs, as time and circumstances permitted. Various models of co-teaching that rely on both teachers taking an active role in the classroom have been proposed over the years (e.g., L. Cook & Friend, 1995), but co-teachers continue to report concerns about unequal partnerships. Therefore many teachers, and especially new special education teachers, can benefit from important information about how to effectively implement co-teaching.

### Promising Practices for Co-Teaching

For co-teaching to be truly effective, several substantive changes may be necessary in the general education classroom. Although co-teaching introduces two skilled teachers to a single classroom—which cuts the student-teacher ratio in half and in

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simultaneously providing individualized supports to students with disabilities (Will, 1986). Heightened efforts to include students with disabilities in general education classes has created a need for a new level of collaboration among general and special educators.

In spite of the overall generally positive attitudes toward inclusion and co-teaching, and a degree of support for its effectiveness, certain problems remain that need to be addressed in any co-teaching arrangement. In their review of qualitative studies describing over 400 co-taught classrooms, Scruggs, Mastropieri, and McDuffie (2007) reported that the most common overall model of co-teaching, by far, was that of a general education teacher in charge of a traditionally taught classroom, using whole-class methods, with the special education teacher in a subordinate role, providing support for classroom routines (e.g., passing out papers) and task-specific support (e.g., assistance on a particular worksheet problem) for

theory increases the amount of attention and instruction each student receives—co-teaching unto itself is not an intervention. Rather, it is a service delivery model, or a framework for providing specialized services to students with disabilities, in a general education context. It is *what* the two teachers do and *how* they do it that can make co-teaching effective for students with disabilities.

Identifying optimal roles to best meet the needs of students with disabilities within the context of a co-taught classroom is the key to effective co-teaching. However, the general education teacher is responsible mostly for content and curriculum planning and instruction, whereas the special education teacher is mostly responsible for evaluating problems in classroom learning and social behavior and providing strategies and interventions for addressing these problems. Managing these responsibilities while collaborating seamlessly in a single classroom for a

diverse group of students can require a great deal of skill, commitment, and trust—it is no surprise that the idea of a co-teaching relationship has been compared to a “dance” (Murawski & Dieker, 2013) or even a “marriage” (Murawski, 2009). Although there are many co-teaching skills and practices to learn, new special education teachers may benefit most from focusing on (a) engaging in effective collaboration with their co-teachers and (b) providing explicit instruction to students with disabilities.

### Practice 1: Effective Collaboration

Although co-teaching can carry a negative connotation, teacher attitudes about co-teaching have actually been generally positive over time. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) summarized 28 surveys of over 10,000 general education teachers and other personnel conducted between 1958 and 1995 and reported that over all these surveys, about two thirds of teachers supported the concept of inclusion. These teachers also reported they needed more personnel and administrative support, suggesting they may be supportive of co-teaching. Scruggs

Mastropieri et al., 2005). More specifically, special education teachers can increase the success of their co-teaching experiences by communicating effectively, maximizing their planning time, and mastering content knowledge.

**Communication.** Good communication skills are required to develop and maintain an effective co-teaching relationship. Teachers must be able to listen to their co-teaching partner as well as to communicate their own views and suggestions, especially during planning time together. Mastropieri and Scruggs (in press; see also Gordon, 2003) discussed the necessary elements of good communication:

- active listening, by taking an active interest in what the co-teaching partner has to say;
- depersonalizing situations, by avoiding personal commentary and focusing on the task;
- finding common goals that are stated clearly and precisely;
- brainstorming possible solutions, at first without evaluation and later prioritized;

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et al. (2007) summarized the findings of 32 descriptive studies of co-teaching and reported that teachers overall reported positive attitudes toward this practice. Although there is limited quantitative evidence about how to best engage in co-teaching (B. Cook, McDuffie-Landrum, Oshita, & Cook, 2011), there is qualitative information available about what general and special education teachers report to be the most important factors in creating and maintaining a successful co-teaching relationship (e.g.,

- summarizing goals and solutions together, perhaps in writing when needed; and
- following up to monitor progress and determine whether goals have been met.

Active listening is an important key to achieving and maintaining a productive co-teaching partnership during which planning and teaching will benefit. If effective communication is established early and maintained,

many potential problems can be overcome.

**Planning.** The special education and general education teacher must be able to plan together so that they can successfully execute effective instruction in a co-taught classroom. Ideally, both teachers would share common planning times throughout the course of a week. However, lack of common planning time, like that Mrs. Cataldo and Mr. Smith experienced, has been reported by teachers as one of the biggest barriers to successful co-teaching (Scruggs et al., 2007), and it is a variable over which teachers have very little control.

Because co-teachers may have limited time to plan together, it is important that they maximize the time they have together. Technology may be especially helpful for improving the efficiency of co-planning. For example, web-based shared documents make it simple for teachers to make notes, plan ahead, and communicate about important concerns on a single document at different times in the day. At any time, either teacher can open the document to see each other's notes and add their own. For example, Google Docs (<http://docs.google.com>) could be used by Mrs. Cataldo and Mr. Smith for co-planning (e.g., planning lessons; see Figure 1).

*Mrs. Cataldo was concerned that she and Mr. Smith were having difficulty finding time to meet to discuss their plans. Despite lacking a common planning time, the two teachers agreed it was important to find a way to work together. Mrs. Cataldo created a Google Doc they could use to plan their co-taught lessons. Mrs. Cataldo suggested this forum because it allows both teachers to work simultaneously or at different times. Both teachers were able to complete their respective parts of their lesson plans and use the comment feature to pose questions, ideas, and concerns to each other.*

It is important that co-teachers identify areas to work on, using steps such as the following:

1. Have both teachers self-assess their current collaboration (see Figure 2).



**Figure 1. Sample Co-Teaching Lesson Plan**

Co-Teaching Lesson Plan		
<b>Lesson focus:</b> Clouds and weather		
<b>Learning target:</b> Learn about and present information of different types of clouds and weather		
<b>Materials:</b> Science textbook on clouds and weather; websites on clouds and weather		
Lesson activities		
Activity	General education teacher role	Special education teacher role
Introduce topic—activate prior knowledge and make connections	Lead role. <i>Think about the last few times you have seen clouds in the sky. Think about what those clouds looked like and what type of weather was happening. What size? What shape? What color?</i>	Supportive role; provide assistance with individuals as needed.
Next (main lesson, interaction with students)	Lead role. <i>Take out your textbooks and iPads. Open book to chapter on clouds and weather and open link to website on clouds and weather.</i>	Supportive role; provide assistance with materials when needed.
Next (mnemonic strategy, peer-mediated activity)	Supportive role; provide assistance as needed.	Lead role. <i>Now we will break into groups with our partners and practice reviewing the important information on types of clouds and weather with our partners.</i>
Formative assessment	Supportive role; provide assistance as needed.	Lead role. <i>Next, everyone will describe three types of clouds with typical weather. You have a choice of writing or saying your responses. First partners will go first, while second partners listen and evaluate responses.</i>
Other		
<b>Common student errors/challenges to look for:</b> Mixing up the names of types of clouds and respective weather patterns; forgetting the names of types of clouds		
<b>Students who may need extra support:</b> Provide additional strategies for retrieving names and definitions of types of clouds. Provide additional opportunities for practicing new content		
<b>Additional strategies to incorporate when appropriate:</b> Provide some vocabulary sheets describing and showing clouds different clouds and typical weather		

2. Compare and discuss self-assessment results, especially highlighting differences or growth areas.
3. Set goals for new structures or roles or practices to implement together.
4. Implement steps to achieve goals.
5. Monitor and evaluate, meeting frequently to discuss and adjust instruction.

**Content mastery.** Perhaps the greatest barrier to a fully collaborative relationship between general and special education teachers is knowledge of the content being taught (Scruggs et al., 2007). This is likely due to the fact that traditional preservice training for special education teachers is focused on strategy instruction and intense interventions for students in

the areas of language arts and mathematics. Although this problem exists at all grade levels, the content knowledge gap appears particularly pronounced in secondary content classes. The special education teacher must also have knowledge of the content being taught in order to understand how to evaluate learning problems with respect to this content

**Figure 2. Co-teaching self-assessment**

<i>Instructions: Both co-teaching partners should complete this checklist...then discuss...highlight common areas/strengths to build on...identify some growth areas...make a plan/set goal...</i>	
I listen actively to my teaching partner.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
I depersonalize situations and focus on the task at hand.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
I work together with my teacher partner to identify common goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
I work together with my teaching partner to brainstorm and identify possible solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
I work together with my teaching partner to identify goals and plans.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
I follow-up on goals and plans with my teaching partner to monitor and evaluate progress.	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time <input type="checkbox"/> None of the time
Two goals I have for our co-teaching include:	
1.  2.	

and to plan and implement instructional techniques to address these problems.

Clearly, mastering content knowledge—especially across multiple content areas for those who co-teach a variety of classes—takes time and intentional effort. Special education teachers looking to enhance their content knowledge may benefit from the following:

- Acquiring a curriculum map from the general education teacher that outlines what content will be taught throughout the school year.
- Selecting a few standards, concepts, or skills to focus on learning in advance. It may be especially helpful to work with the general education teacher to choose areas that students have struggled with in the past to be more prepared to offer individualized support.
- Accessing available resources that can aid in learning the content. This may be as simple as using the student textbook to learn about the content or accessing web-based instructional resources, such as Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)), which provides step-by-step video lessons about a wide variety of content. Professional websites may also have helpful guides, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics website ([www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org)), which includes such resources as math lesson plans, practice guides, practitioner journal articles, and prerecorded webinars.

Most teachers—and, perhaps especially, new teachers—may have very limited time for such activities, but by choosing just a few areas to focus on each semester, they can

**Table 1. Common Challenges Faced by Co-Teachers**

Challenge	Possible solutions
Co-teachers lack a common planning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use technology to support collaborative activities</li> <li>• Identify other potential meeting times, such as open time in the morning before school begins or release time from faculty meetings</li> </ul>
Special education teacher lacks content knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special education teacher acquires curriculum map from general education teacher</li> <li>• Select prioritized standards, concepts, or skills to focus on learning in advance</li> <li>• Access available content, e.g., text and teacher materials, web-based resources</li> <li>• Regular meetings, discussions with general education teacher whenever possible</li> <li>• Arrange professional development time</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Identify common goals</li> <li>• Monitor progress toward meeting goals</li> <li>• Establish target person for each goal</li> </ul>
Control or “turf” issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use effective communication strategies</li> <li>• Agree to shared responsibility for all students; promote input from administrators as needed</li> <li>• Look for and identify common ground</li> <li>• Establish what is in the best interest of all students, including those with special needs</li> <li>• Identify responsibilities to be shared as well as individual responsibilities</li> </ul>
Differences in teaching philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use effective communication strategies</li> <li>• Identify common teaching and learning goals</li> <li>• Use formative evaluation and data-based decision making; agree to evaluate the appropriateness of individual instructional strategies or techniques with respect to learning outcomes</li> <li>• Encourage all teachers to participate in IEP meetings</li> </ul>
Disagreements about discipline and behavior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use effective communication strategies; look for common ground.</li> <li>• Use formative evaluation and agree to support strategies that are associated with positive behavior change</li> <li>• Examine and implement schoolwide behavior management strategies</li> </ul>

*Note.* IEP = individualized education program.

acquire deeper content knowledge over time that will help them to better support their students and collaborate with their general education colleagues.

Table 1 provides a list of challenges faced by co-teachers, such as the content knowledge acquisition, and lists some possible solutions to these challenges.

### **Practice 2: Explicit Instruction**

Given that co-teaching is a service delivery model, as opposed to an intervention, it allows teachers to plan lessons that are grounded in the cycle of direct and explicit instruction. Special education teachers can collaborate with their general education co-teacher to (a) identify critical elements of background

knowledge that will need to be primed, (b) choose the new skills that will likely need to be modeled, (b) create meaningful opportunities for guided practice, (d) structure opportunities for independent practice, and (e) provide immediate and corrective feedback and specific praise. When planning for and providing explicit instruction, the general education teacher can provide the special

education teacher with the subject matter and learning targets that are covered in the general curriculum. Then, the special education teacher can pair that information with the teacher's specific knowledge of individual student needs and strategies that are likely to support students with specific disabilities while also ensuring that accommodations in each student's individualized educational program are delivered.

**PASS variables.** Effective, explicit teaching strategies are essential to maximizing learning in inclusive classrooms (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Mastropieri and Scruggs (in press) referred to what they termed the PASS variables: *prioritize* objectives; *adapt* the environment, materials, instruction, and evaluation; *systematically* teach; and *systematically* evaluate. First, special education co-teachers can work with general education teachers to identify and prioritize the most important objectives, so that teaching of these objectives can be emphasized. Then, special education teachers can suggest and implement adaptations to help ensure these objectives are met. Next, both teachers can use the following principles of effective instruction to deliver content in the most effective method possible: structure, clarity, redundancy, enthusiasm, appropriate rate of instruction, and maximized learner engagement.

Finally, special education teachers can take a leading role in evaluating the outcomes of instruction, not only determining how progress is being made but identifying problem areas in need of further corrective action. Table 2 provides a listing of problem areas commonly encountered in inclusive classrooms and possible roles associated with general education and special education teachers in collaborating to address these problem areas. Figure 1 provides a sample lesson plan, with roles for each component associated with general education and special education teachers.

**Peer-mediated instruction.** In addition to providing explicit

instruction in content area material, special education teachers can provide explicit instruction in peer-mediated learning, which is an evidence-based practice for many students with disabilities. In fact, peer mediation is one of the most successful inclusion strategies, one that can benefit the entire class as much as individual students in areas including reading, math, English learning, social behavior, and content area learning (Harris & Meltzer, 2015; Mastropieri & Scruggs, in press, chap. 9; Regan, Evmenova, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2015). Among the most successful strategies are peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS) and classwide peer tutoring (CWPT; e.g., Fuchs & Fuchs, 2005; Greenwood, 1997).

Although PALS and CWPT are different forms of intensive instruction that require several weeks to implement in full, they share similar features that make them especially beneficial for a classroom where co-teaching is implemented. To summarize, all students with and without disabilities are divided into tutoring dyads and taught to (a) practice important content with each other and (b) monitor their progress. Co-teaching partners can work collaboratively in planning and implementing cooperative learning activities, with the special education teacher providing the lead if he or she is more familiar with the procedures. More specifically, co-teachers identify prioritized content, develop and adapt materials, and monitor the implementation of the tutoring process.

Co-teachers might find it helpful to divide responsibility for these tasks. For example, because Mrs. Cataldo is trained in strategies that are specifically helpful for students with disabilities, she might take the lead on preparing materials needed for peer-mediated instruction (e.g., progress-monitoring forms) and teaching the students, and Mr. Smith, the procedures for a particular strategy. Realizing that she does not have the same level of content area expertise and knowledge of the general curriculum as her co-teacher, Mrs. Cataldo might ask Mr. Smith to

identify pertinent content and share the materials he would typically use in a given lesson. Then, she could assume responsibility for modifying information and adapting materials as needed. Once Mr. Smith is comfortable with using peer-mediated instruction, both teachers can assume responsibility for monitoring implementation of peer-mediated learning. These methods have been demonstrated repeatedly to improve the learning of the entire class; in some instances, students with disabilities have improved more, so that their performance is more similar to that of students without disabilities after tutoring (Scruggs, 2012).

## Reliable Resources

As co-teachers progress in their ability to collaborate well and deliver explicit instruction, they will naturally need additional resources. The IRIS Center of Vanderbilt University (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>) provides some excellent resources, including modules and videos, on the practice of co-teaching. *TEACHING Exceptional Children* also has printed many useful articles on co-teaching, on a variety of topics. For example, Fenty, McDuffie-Landrum, and Fisher (2012) described the use of a question-and-answer strategy during co-teaching in literacy classes.

## Final Thoughts

After reviewing detailed descriptive research on the practice of co-teaching in classrooms across the country, Scruggs and colleagues (2007) concluded that "classroom instruction has generally continued as whole class and lecture driven, and special education co-teachers have generally attempted to fit within this model." (p. 214). Further, effective special education practices (e.g., strategy instruction, self-monitoring and organizational skills training, study skills training) were only rarely observed. Research published since that time suggests these are still important issues to be addressed in co-taught classes (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011; Takacs, 2015).

**Table 2. Possible General and Special Education Teacher Roles in Common Target Areas**

Target area	Description	General education teacher role	Special education teacher role
Content learning	Problems involving learning the curriculum sufficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish curriculum objectives and prioritize those objectives to maximize learning for the entire class.</li> <li>Design and direct curriculum and instruction for the whole class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support prioritized objectives to help ensure students focus on most important objectives.</li> </ul>
Pace of learning	Problems learning the curriculum in the amount of time allocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on most significant content first; reorganize curriculum to address pace issues.</li> <li>Direct classroom instruction so that appropriate pace is maintained to maximize learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support pace of learning; help arrange additional time in or out of class when needed to help maintain pace of learning.</li> <li>Arrange more intensive learning strategies; design peer mediation.</li> </ul>
Language	Problems with key vocabulary and other language-based aspects of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify most important vocabulary; support special education teacher.</li> <li>Identify when language strategies would benefit the entire class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement direct instruction; design and develop experiential activities, vocabulary cards or word walls, peer tutoring with flash cards; teach root words and word families.</li> <li>Design mnemonic strategies, vocabulary practice activities to take home; implement progress monitoring.</li> </ul>
Factual learning	Problems acquiring important factual information in allocated time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize and identify most important factual information; support special education teacher.</li> <li>Identify when learning strategies would benefit the whole class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide drill and practice with prioritized factual learning objectives; design classwide peer tutoring activities with “fact sheets.”</li> <li>Design visual-spatial learning strategies and illustrations; use mnemonics and other elaborative learning strategies.</li> </ul>
Concept learning	Problems acquiring relevant concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce new concepts to whole class; check for understanding.</li> <li>Use experiential learning, video and technology support when needed.</li> <li>Support special education teacher.</li> <li>Identify when concept learning strategies would benefit the entire class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement direct teaching and feedback, discrimination learning, provision of relevant rules, multiple examples, instances and noninstances, manipulatives, exercises and activities.</li> </ul>
Literacy	Literacy problems relevant to grade-level textbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan instruction that places less emphasis on independent reading from text.</li> <li>Support special education teacher.</li> <li>Identify when literacy or comprehension strategies would benefit the entire class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement text-to-speech readers or audio text; use speech-to-text for written responses; read text with small groups; arrange resource room support; implement peer tutoring or assistance; teach comprehension and self-monitoring strategies.</li> </ul>

(continued)



**Table 2. (continued)**

Target area	Description	General education teacher role	Special education teacher role
Study skills	Problems with effective study of classroom content and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help students identify important information during lecture and activities and provide suggestions to entire class for note taking, highlighting, and outlining.</li> <li>• Support special education teacher.</li> <li>• Identify when study strategies would benefit the entire class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach note taking, highlighting, and outlining strategies, and use of guided notes and partial outlines.</li> <li>• Teach use of graphic organizers for complicated content; teach use of self-monitoring sheets for study strategies; teach test-taking skills.</li> <li>• Design tutoring pairs for study and review of course content.</li> </ul>
Social behavior	Problems with classroom behavior or sustaining attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement classroom behavior management strategies; identify students in need of behavior management.</li> <li>• Support special education teacher; identify when behavior management strategies would benefit the entire class.</li> <li>• Support the implementation of schoolwide behavior management systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use behavior management strategies, such as physical proximity, to target students; direct appeals; individual point sheets with rewards for good behavior; and self-monitoring sheets for attention problems.</li> <li>• Maintain communication with parents, develop individual contracts, and oversee possible temporary removal from classroom activities.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Research support for the practices described in this table is provided in Mastropieri and Scruggs (in press).

Given these challenges, what concrete steps can beginning (and experienced) special educators take? Effective co-teaching depends on co-teachers engaging in a true partnership, in which the special education teacher helps design and implement the validated strategies known to be effective with students with disabilities and other special educational needs. Collaborating with general education teachers and administrators, and demonstrating the utility of the skills special educators can bring, can help improve the process. Special education teachers also can play more active and equal roles in co-taught arrangements if they become more familiar with the content of instruction in co-taught classrooms. The true expertise they bring to co-teaching lies in their ability to adapt instruction and effectively plan strategies for promoting learning of the content by students with disabilities and other special needs—and, indeed, any student who may struggle with a

particular content area or skill. The most effective special education co-teachers are accomplished in identifying specific problem areas with respect to the specific content being taught and curriculum being proposed. They also serve as effective advocates for students with special needs and are able to recommend changes in curriculum and classroom procedures that do not threaten the general education teacher but will lead directly to a more successful co-taught classroom for all students.

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