

# Teaching Expressive Writing to Students with Learning Disabilities



EXPRESSIVE WRITING IS A WAY TO EXPAND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHING TO INCLUDE ACTIVITIES BOTH COGNITIVELY DEMANDING AND INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATING



- GERSTEN, R., & BAKER, S. (2001)

## 1. Teaching



- IF WRITING INSTRUCTION FOCUSED MORE ON CONTENT THAN MECHANICS, STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES' ACADEMIC STRENGTHS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ELICITED.
- UNDERSTANDING HOW TEXTS ARE STRUCTURED IN WRITING INSTRUCTION ALSO FACILITATES STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT.
- EXPRESSIVE WRITING CAN ALLOW TEACHERS TO BETTER ASSESS STUDENTS' LITERACY SKILLS THAN READING COMPREHENSION.

## 2. The Study

THIS STUDY IS A META-ANALYSIS ON WRITING INTERVENTIONS IN EXPRESSIVE WRITING FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICES ARE DISCUSSED. EXPRESSIVE WRITING IS DEFINED AS WRITING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISPLAYING KNOWLEDGE OR SUPPORTING SELF-EXPRESSION (GRAHAM & HARRIS, 1989), INCLUDING JOURNAL WRITING, PERSONAL NARRATIVES, STORIES, AND SO ON.



## 3. Findings

- TEACHING COGNITIVE STRATEGIES CAN BENEFIT STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES GREATLY.
- WRITING INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES ARE EFFECTIVE AND FEASIBLE.
- WRITING INTERVENTIONS ALSO ENHANCE STUDENTS' SENSE OF EFFICACY.



## 4. Additional Findings

- VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE INTERVENTIONS WERE COMPRISED OF SEVERAL COMPONENTS:
  - \*EXPLICITLY TEACHING OF THE CRITICAL STEPS IN THE WRITING PROCESS (PLANNING, WRITING, AND REVISING.)
  - \*EXPLICIT TEACHING OF THE CONVENTIONS OF A WRITING GENRE.
  - \*GUIDED FEEDBACK FROM EITHER TEACHERS OR PEERS.



Reference: Gersten, R., & Baker, S. (2001). Teaching expressive writing to students with learning disabilities: A meta-analysis. *The elementary school journal*, 101(3), 251-272.