

## **Book Review**

**Title:** *Quick Guides to Inclusion: Ideas for Educating Students with Disabilities*

**Authors:** Michael Giangreco & Mary Beth Doyle (Eds.)

**Publisher:** Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 2007

**Paper, ISBN:** 978-1-55766-897-4, 352 pages

**Cost:** \$39.95 USD

**Reviewer:** Megan A. Conway

I opened *Quick Guides to Inclusion* fully expecting not to like it. I had just been in a conversation with a colleague about the lack of representation of disability history, culture, and perspectives in teacher education and was ready to be critical. However, as I thumbed through the pages of *Quick Guides* and saw sections devoted to stereotypes, authentic engagement, universal design, cultural diversity, and “what students want teachers to know,” I realized there may still be hope. While the book does not take the huge step of discussing disability studies and culture (darn!), it does put forth very current concepts related to students with disabilities in the classroom. The book is an excellent resource for both practicing teachers and pre-service teachers.

*Quick Guides* has an easy-to-follow format. Sections such as “Foundational Ideas,” “Curriculum and Instruction,” and “Relationships and Self-Determination” are comprised of one-page “quick guides” that speak to specific strategies or topics. Other sections are devoted to communication, literacy and numeracy, transition, and personnel and administration. The language of the quick guides is easy to understand, but there are also additional references at the end of each section for the more academically-minded. The book has a nice, easy-to-read font, which I appreciate, being nearly blind, but which also lends itself to being user-friendly.

Some of the sections I liked best: One of the first topics in the book urges teachers to “be the teacher for all of your students” (p. 8), and discusses how teachers need to avoid being just “hosts” and start being teachers to students with disabilities (because teachers feel that paraprofessionals and special education teachers are the “real” teachers for these students). Another section talks about how disability-based stereotypes are (wrongly) considered to be acceptable, where race-based and gender-based stereotypes are not. Many of the quick guides talk about how stigmatizing it can be for students to have paraprofessionals trailing along behind them. An entire section is devoted to “Listen to Me, What Students Want Teachers to Know” (p. 75), which is an interesting and important section, although the authors (Mary Schuh, Frank Sgambati and Carol Tashie) seem to focus more on the “thoughts” of students with intellectual and emotional difficulties than on students with other types of disabilities.

Other sections give teachers practical suggestions for maximizing the participation of students with disabilities in their classrooms, such as through the use of Universal Design for Learning, assistive technology, and just plain, good teaching strategies. The emphasis is on treating a student's disability as a diverse learning need rather than as a "big problem," which is a step in the right direction as far as I am concerned.

I was still looking for something I did not find in *Quick Guides to Inclusion*, a discussion of disability studies, history, and culture. One section did talk about integrating famous people with disabilities into the curriculum, but that was the end of being radical. Perhaps the next edition will speak to recognizing the importance of the disability experience as an essential component of working successfully with students with disabilities in the classroom.

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