



# THE IRIS CENTER

[iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu)  
or [iriscenter.com](http://iriscenter.com)

Serving:

Higher Education Faculty • PD Providers • Practicing Educators

*Supporting the preparation of effective educators to improve outcomes for all children, especially those with disabilities, birth through age 21*

# IRIS CENTER

## WHAT IS THE IRIS CENTER?

### Who We Are

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the IRIS Center is headquartered at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. Our primary objective is to create and infuse resources about evidence-based practices into preservice preparation and professional development programs. To facilitate this process, IRIS disseminates and offers trainings on those resources.

Developed in collaboration with nationally recognized researchers and education experts, IRIS resources are designed to address instructional and classroom issues of great importance to today's educators, issues like response to intervention (RTI), classroom behavior management, and early childhood instruction, among many, many more. IRIS resources are used in college instruction, professional development activities, and independent learning opportunities for practicing educators.

### What We Do

Among our primary goals, the IRIS Center seeks to:

- Develop free, online resources about working with children with disabilities (birth through age 21) and their families
- Provide technical assistance, dissemination, and training activities geared toward college and university faculty, professional development providers, and practicing educators
- Improve pre-service and professional development training and improve opportunities for independent learning
- Improve the awareness, knowledge, and skills of current and future service providers and educators



### Topic Areas

The IRIS Website 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, information briefs, research summaries, video vignettes, and more.

IRIS materials address topics such as:

- Accommodations
- Assessment
- Assistive Technology
- Behavior & Classroom Management
- Collaboration
- Content Instruction
- Differentiated Instruction
- Disability
- Diversity
- Early Intervention/Early Childhood
- Learning Strategies
- Mathematics
- Reading, Literacy, and Language Arts
- Related Services
- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- School Improvement/Leadership
- Transition



# IRIS RESOURCES

## ★ STAR Legacy Modules



The IRIS Center's signature interactive modules apply the *How People Learn* theory developed by Dr. John Bransford and his colleagues, and are based on cognitive science research. The modules deliver information through the *STAR Legacy Cycle*, an award-winning teaching approach.

Modules begin with a realistic **Challenge** intended to capture the user's attention. **Initial Thoughts** questions allow users to explore and consider what they currently know about the scenario presented in the Challenge. **Perspectives & Resources** pages present users with nuggets of information (e.g., audio interviews, video clips, activities) to actively engage them in learning the module's main content. The **Wrap Up** asks users to review a summary of the module's content. The **Assessment** offers module users an opportunity to gauge their learning.

## 📖 Case Studies

Covering a wide variety of topics, IRIS Case Study Units include three levels of difficulty for a given topic, with subsequent levels requiring more advanced analysis and understanding. (Instructor's guides are available upon request.)

## 🚀 Activities

Activities are perfect as independent assignments or as a means to promote discussion. The activities are organized into a number of categories, including "Books," "Class Discussion," and "Independent," among others.

## 📄 Information Briefs

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

## 🎤 Interviews

Key researchers offer their perspectives on a variety of important issues in the field of special education, including diversity, evidence-based practices, and response to intervention.

## 📺 Video Vignettes

This collection of videos about individuals with disabilities, their families, advocates, teachers, and service providers also contains depictions of the application of evidence-based practices in educational settings.

## 📋 Sample Syllabi Collection

This collection is designed to assist new and experienced college and university faculty in the development or revision of existing syllabi through the provision of carefully selected models.

## 🔄 Sample Wrap-Around Concept Maps

These diagrams can help users—college faculty and professional development providers, as well as independent learners—to extend and deepen the information included in our modules and case study units through the use of supporting materials available on the IRIS Website.



## Enhancement Materials

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