Featuring: Top ten books for learning support teachers – by Renée Jordan

*My mouth is a volcano* by Julia Cook and Carrie Hartman: An award winning book created to teach children about controlling their thoughts and expressing their ideas at an appropriate time. The book is written in friendly, witty verse that is accompanied by beautifully illustrated imagery. The story provides teachers a fun way to teach students to listen to others and wait their turn to speak.

*The way I feel* by Janan Cain: As with all of Janan Cain’s books, *The Way I Feel* is composed of beautiful illustrations to teach students about complex emotions such as pride, fear, pain, curiosity, anger and disappointment. The story also gives students a way to articulate the emotions they are feeling, and an understanding how one might act when feeling a particular way. The text uses bias-free language and vocabulary to give students a framework to express their feelings.

*Teamwork isn’t my thing, and I don’t like to share* by Julia Cook: A great team building book that uses humor to teach students the value of working together and sharing their resources. This book is part of Ms. Cook’s *Best Me I Can Be!* collection, which includes many other titles that are also worth exploring. The additional titles cover topics such as peer pressure, making friends, asking for help and receiving feedback.

*Sitting still like a frog* by Eline Snel: This book contains mindfulness exercises for children to help them gain control over their anxieties and focus their attention more reliably. It comes with a CD that dictates some exercises, and others exercises found in the book itself can be led by a teacher or parent. Many children find that mindfulness practices give them a sense of control over their thoughts and feelings.

*Times tables the fun way: Book for kids* by Judy Liautaud and Dave Rodriguez: *Times Tables the Fun Way* is a teaching tool that uses a pictorial method to help students who struggle with rote memorization to learn their math facts. This funny, engaging book helps students associate the math facts with vivid cartoons and a contextualizing story. For example, you have to be 16 to drive a 4x4.

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Thirty days has September: Cool ways to remember stuff by Chris Stevens: Thirty Days Has September which is published by Scholastic provides students with fun memory strategies to learn everything from math and spelling rules to tricky science, history, and geography facts. It is a great tool for students with learning disabilities that need extra support to learn many of their foundational grammar, spelling and mathematical concepts.

Universal design for learning in the classroom: Practical applications (what works for special-needs learners) by Dr. Tracey E. Hall, Dr. Anne Meyer and Dr. David H. Rose: This concrete resource describes the underlying principles of universal design for learning (UDL), as well as details tangible ways to use UDL to meet the needs of diverse students of all age levels. The text equips teachers with the skills required to develop classroom goals, assessments and learning materials that infuse UDL. The strategies are cross curricular and provides examples for reading, writing, science, mathematics, history, and the arts. http://voyager.library.uvic.ca/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=3028068

Assistive technology in the classroom: Enhancing the school experiences of students with disabilities by Amy G. Dell, Deborah Newton and Jerry G. Petroff: This text discusses how assistive technology can be used to achieve the ideals of universal design for learning and differentiated instruction. Furthermore, the authors do not focus on disability categories but rather reject one-sized fits all approaches by focusing on providing strategies and tools for specific needs. However, technology is changing rapidly and as such any book written about technology can become obsolete quickly. As such, one of the true merits of this resource is that the text comes with an accompanying website that the authors update with new tools and advancements in the latest research.

Smart but scattered: The revolutionary "executive skills" approach to helping kids reach their potential by Dr. Peg Dawson and Dr. Richard Guare: Often learners with special needs struggle with the important executive functioning skills required to sustain focus, follow directions, complete tasks and regulate their impulses. Smart but Scattered is a great resource for both parents and teachers to help children learn the important skills of organization, time management, problem solving and coping with their emotions. The book provides simple assessment tools to help evaluate your student’s strengths and challenges accompanied by activities and strategies to help build their deficient skills.

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The whole-brain child: 12 revolutionary strategies to nurture your child's developing mind by Dr. Daniel J. Siegel and Dr. Tina Payne Bryson: Although traditionally a parenting book the principles of The Whole Brain Child are equally as valuable for teachers who support diverse learners. This simple, practical resource features twelve strategies for helping kids thrive in the face of common childhood challenges. The text hinges on the current medical and psychological understanding of child cognitive development and describes how a child’s brain is wired. Dr. Diegel and Dr. Bryson also publish the The Whole-Brain Child Workbook: Practical Exercises, Worksheets and Activities to Nurture Developing Minds to help educators and parents deploy the twelve strategies.

This book list was created by Renée Jordan

Renée Jordan is a BC certified teacher from SD 61 in Victoria, who is currently living and working in New York City as a Learning Specialist. Renée holds a Bachelor of Education in Elementary Education from the University of Victoria, and a Master of Arts in Special Education from Columbia University. For more information she can be found at www.thejordanproject.ca or on twitter: @missus_jayliterature.

A note from the Curriculum Library

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We would like to thank Renée Jordan for sharing her top ten book list with us!

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