Whose Future Is It?

instructor's guide

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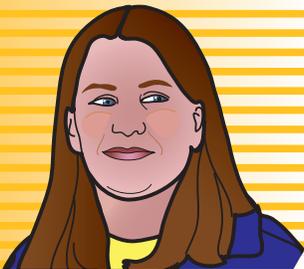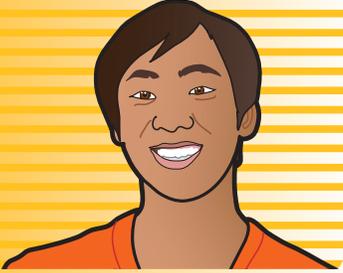
Introduction

Introduction

Whose Future Is It? is a research-based, student-directed transition planning curriculum. It is designed to help students with disabilities explore self-awareness while mastering the following skills: problem-solving, decision-making, goal-setting, and small-group communication. By following the process outlined here, students learn how to be meaningfully involved in their transition planning program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires transition services to be based on student preferences, needs, and interests. But student involvement is more than just a legal mandate. It's also good educational practice. **Whose Future Is It?** is based on these convictions: (1) students involved in planning for their future through transition meetings are more likely to benefit from the process; (2) students who have the skills and believe that their voice will be heard are more likely to participate in the planning process.

The curriculum is designed for any middle, high school, or transition student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), including transition services. The end-users of the materials are youth with significant disabilities, mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, and other developmental disabilities. Instruction can occur in large or small group formats. The text is written at about a fourth-grade level. Students who have difficulty with the level of text can have it read to them as a feature of the Whose Future software. Students can read it themselves or have it read to them via the software; or the instructor can read it aloud or use the software feature to read it to a group of students using Smart Board technology.

Research-Based

Research demonstrates that students who use **Whose Future Is It?** have a better understanding of transition planning. In a randomized trial with a placebo control group of 493 middle, high school, and transition students receiving special education services across multiple-disabilities, Whose Future was shown to have a causal, positive effect on student self-determination. Students who received instruction from teachers using Whose Future showed improved self-determination and transition knowledge and skills (Wehmeyer, M.L. et al., 2011). In a second study with 168 middle school students using Whose Future, results demonstrated that self-determination, self-efficacy, and outcome expectancy for education planning improved for students, and even more so with students who used technology in the experimental group (Lee, Y. et al., 2011). In a third study,

field testing of 53 students at three high schools found significant differences between pre- and post-intervention scores in self-efficacy and outcome expectancy, before and after using the Whose Future Is It? curriculum (Wehmeyer, M. and Lawrence, M, 1995). A full research summary is located in Appendix B.

Course Instruction

Whose Future Is It? is divided into 17 Chapters designed to instruct students across the course of one academic year. Most will benefit from early and repeated use of the materials beyond a single year. Student responses within Whose Future are unique and individualized, just like an IEP. And it is expected that student responses will change over time with repeated exposure to questions asked.

Depending on the strengths and abilities of individual students, some may be able to pick up Whose Future materials and work through them without adult support. However, other students may work one-to-one with instructors, or in groups, as they progress through modified lessons.

Components

Whose Future Is It? has three components:

- **Student Reader** – Book or Software, or both
- **Student Workbook**
- **Instructor's Guide**

The **Student Reader** text is designed to methodically teach the IEP process to students while immersing them in it. It educates each student about IEP components and shows them directly how to apply this information to their own futures. At the end of each Student Reader chapter, the student is directed to complete that chapter's activities in the Workbook. A PDF of the Student Reader is available on the **Attainment HUB**; instructions for **HUB** access can be found on the inside cover of this guide. The PDF can be displayed in a multimedia format with its pages projected from a computer to the group for class instruction.
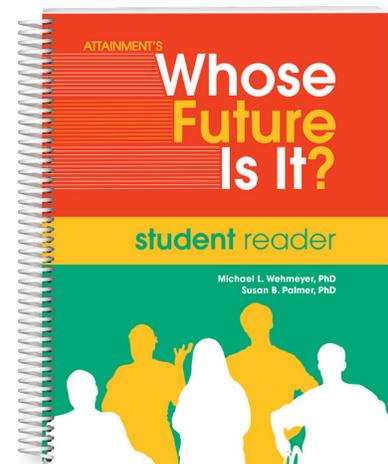
The **Student Reader Software** is included with both the Introductory and Classroom Packages. The software reads Student Reader text out loud as narrated by actors to students. If necessary, earphones are advised for individual computer use within a classroom. For group instruction when using the software, a Smart Board allows you to teach an entire class or a group of students. The text can be read paragraph by paragraph, or word by word. It can be repeated as frequently as needed. Vocabulary words are marked in bold font. Selecting a vocabulary word provides the definition for that word. Quiz questions are read aloud to the student and corrected by the computer. Quiz scores are provided to the student and are available for the teacher to review later. Use the access code provided for the **Attainment HUB** (see inside cover of this guide) to download the software installers for your Windows or Mac computer. Software instructions are provided in the User Guide PDF file in a computer folder (once installed), or by using the Help function when accessing the software.
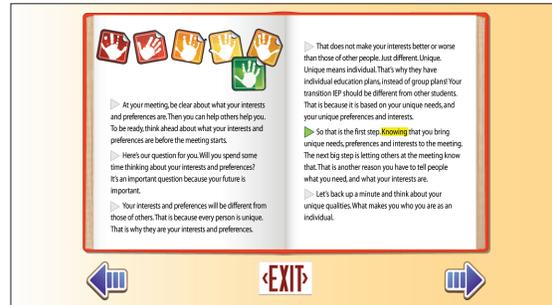
The **Student Workbook** features activities that match Student Reader Chapter content. In some activities, students learn IEP and transition related skills important to their future. In others, the student is taught how to write goals or look into future resources, like how to find an apartment. Activities are unique to each individual's needs. Students who have writing difficulties are given assistance to ensure they have answers charted that are accurate and unique to them and their needs.
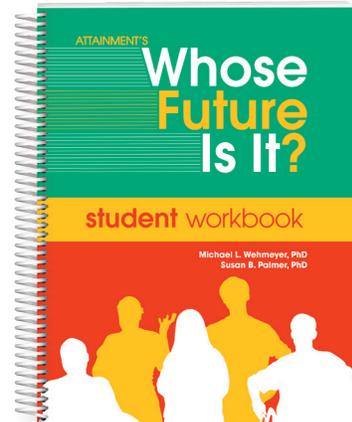
The **Instructor's Guide** is designed to pull the Reader and Workbook together. Students will go back and forth between the two books throughout Whose Future. For example, the bolded vocabulary words in the Reader are found in the Workbook at the beginning of each chapter. They are followed by a brief multiple-choice comprehension exercise that puts the words into context. This is also at the beginning of each Workbook chapter. Teachers should start students on the vocabulary words and comprehension questions before students go to the Reader, as these are key terms students must be familiar with. Read this Guide first and refer to it regularly until you master Whose Future, as it points to the interplay between the other two books.

The Student Workbook is available as a PDF and a locked Word document on the **Attainment HUB.** PDF pages can be printed individually for students who conduct an activity more than once. This feature allows students to have copies to take to their IEP meetings. With the locked Word format, students can complete the Workbook activities on the computer. The file can be saved and edited later. Adapted computer interfaces may make it easier for some students tod complete the Workbook activity. Individual pages can be printed by students from saved Word documents and taken to their next IEP meeting.

- **Vocabulary and Quiz:** Reader Software vocabulary words are bolded, and when selected by the user, their definitions are given. The Software provides a short quiz for vocabulary words at the end of each chapter. The quiz is replicated in the Workbook for those who do not have access to the software.

- **Instructor's Guide:** Includes instructions to access the **Attainment HUB** for digital, reproducible PDF files of the Student Reader and Workbook, plus this guide, along with the locked Word version of the Student Workbook. Appendix A of the guide is a sample IEP that can be printed for students who don't have access to their own IEP.

- **Role Play:** Experience is the best teacher. Prior to participating in an actual IEP meeting, it is valuable for students to have experience practicing. This can be accomplished through role play. Directions are provided in the last section, "Your IEP Meeting", Chapters 14-17 of this Instructor's Guide, with suggestions for conducting role play with your students.

The Instructor's Role

As the teacher, you will facilitate, instruct, and advocate. As facilitator, you provide support without being an authoritarian figure with all the answers. Instead, you encourage and help students to learn. Student self-understanding emerges best in a nonjudgmental atmosphere where efforts are valued and supported.

The second role is that of instructor, where you use your expertise to prepare students for their respective futures. Whose Future emphasizes the role of teachers as a vast resource of information about the educational planning process. Students are shown how to tap into that expertise and use it to succeed. The key is encouraging the student to request and seek out the information.

The third role is to advocate for the student. As advocate, you convince students that they can succeed, and that you will be there through the process to share their goal: that of reaching a successful transition. Most importantly you need to work collaboratively with students to achieve a shared goal. For example, as student advocate, you will work with administrators, diagnosticians, transition specialists, parents, or employees to make sure students are working to achieve meaningful participation in their planning meetings.

Student-Directed

Whose Future Is It? is student-directed. The direction varies according to each student's strengths and abilities. The curriculum is designed to ensure the student gains control over the process while getting the needed support to succeed. Students can be involved in self-directed transition planning even when they don't perform every step independently. Teachers and other adults are encouraged to provide ongoing support for student direction and involvement in the transition planning process.

Expected Outcomes

Student outcomes will vary. Some students will complete the process and go on to take an active role in their transition IEP meetings. Others will participate in the process but may never lead their planning meetings. If students participate in the **Whose Future Is It?** curriculum for more than one school year, it's reasonable to think they will become more active participants in their IEP each year. The intended outcome is that students increase participation in the educational planning and decision-making process, and participate in a way that is meaningful to each student.
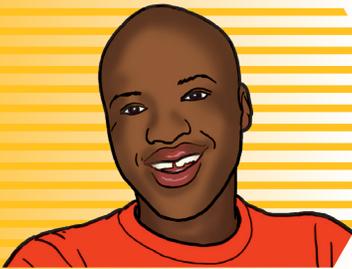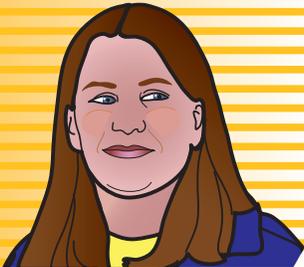
Chapter Sections by Theme

Getting to Know You

Chapters 1 to 5

The first section of the Reader/Workbook informs students about educational planning meetings. It gives them an overview of the IEP, including when and why meetings are held. Students are asked to give thought to who should be involved in that meeting. They are asked to get a copy of their last IEP and use it as a starting point for participation in their next IEP. Getting a copy of their previous IEP is the most effective way to teach students how to participate. If the previous IEP isn't immediately available, there is a sample IEP located in Appendix A of the Instructor's Guide students can use in the interim. You can print it for the student from the PDF. However, the generic IEP in Appendix A should only be used as stopgap measure. Providing student access to previous IEPs throughout the course of the curriculum is the best way to ensure a meaningful perspective about IEP participation.

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1. POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
_____ 1.1 None due to employment
_____ 1.2 Community college—no support
_____ 1.3 Community college—some support
_____ 1.4 Trade or technical school—no support
_____ 1.5 Trade or technical school—some support
_____ 1.6 University—no support
_____ 1.7 University—some support
_____ 1.8 Military
_____ 1.9 Adult education class(es)—no support
_____ 1.10 Adult education class(es)—some support
_____ 1.11 Adult education class(es)—special class
_____ 1.12 Other _____
Support services required? _____ Yes _____ No

2. EMPLOYMENT
_____ 2.1 None due to expected enrollment in post-secondary education
_____ 2.2 Competitive—no support
_____ 2.3 Competitive—time-limited support
_____ 2.4 Competitive—long-term support
_____ 2.5 Supported—infrequent support
_____ 2.6 Supported—daily support
_____ 2.7 Other _____
Support Services required? _____ Yes _____ No

3. RESIDENTIAL/INDEPENDENT LIVING
_____ 3.1 With parents/relatives
_____ 3.2 With roommate
_____ 3.3 Independent—no support
_____ 3.4 Independent—time-limited
_____ 3.5 Independent—ongoing, but infrequent support
_____ 3.6 Independent—daily support
_____ 3.7 Supervised apartment
_____ 3.8 Foster Care
_____ 3.9 Other
_____
Support Services required? _____ Yes _____ No

4. RECREATION/LEISURE
_____ 4.1 Independent
_____ 4.2 Family-supported
_____ 4.3 Friend-supported
_____ 4.4 Community parks & recreation programs
_____ 4.5 Local clubs & organizations
_____ 4.6 Religious (church/synagogue) groups
_____ 4.7 Specialized recreation programs
_____ 4.8 Other
_____
Support services required? _____ Yes _____ No

5. TRANSPORTATION
_____ 5.1 Self transportation
_____ 5.2 Public transportation
_____ 5.3 Specialized transportation
_____ 5.4 Family transports
_____ 5.5 Friends transport
_____ 5.6 Car/van pools
_____ 5.7 Other _____
Support services required? _____ Yes _____ No

6. INCOME / RESOURCES
_____ 6.1 Earned wage
_____ 6.2 Social Security benefits
_____ 6.3 Unearned income (gifts, family supports)
_____ 6.4 Trust/will
_____ 6.5 Public assistance—food stamps
_____ 6.6 Public assistance—AFDC
_____ 6.7 Other _____
Support services required? _____ Yes _____ No

IEP/ Transition Services

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:
Student Name: Last_____ First_____ MI_____
Meeting Date:_____
Date of Birth:_____ Age:_____ Sex : M F   Student ID number:
_____
District/Campus:_____ Instructional
Placement:_____
Disability/Eligibility: (Check one)
☐ Autism ☐ Deaf-Blindness ☐ Deafness ☐ Hearing Impairment ☐ Emotional Disturbance
☐ Learning Disability ☐ Intellectual Disability ☐ Orthopedic Impairment ☐ Multiple Disabilities
Other ☐ Health Impaired ☐ Speech or Language Impairment ☐ Traumatic Brain Injury
☐ Visual Impairment
Other (describe): _____
Parent or Guardian:_____
Address:_____
Phone: (home)_____ (work)_____
Projected Graduation Date:_____ Actual Exit Date:_____
Reason for Exit: ☐ Graduation with Diploma (Regular) ☐ Graduation with Diploma (IEP
☐ Completed Age Eligibility (No Diploma) ☐ Dropped Out (under 18) ☐ Dropped out (over 18)

B. PLANNING PARTICIPANTS:
We the undersigned have provided input for the development of this Plan and agree to carry out the recommendations specified within.

DATE _____	Signature	Agree	Disagree
Student and Advocates			
Student			
Parent			
Guardian			
Advocate			
Other_____			
_____			
_____			

Chapter 1

Provides a brief introduction to the IEP and Transition Meetings. If students have difficulty reading the text, it can be read to them individually from Reader Software or as a group using Smart Board technology.

The Chapter 1 Workbook introduces important vocabulary and asks students a series of questions about participation in previous IEP Meetings.

Pretest / Posttest

Activity 1 can be used as a posttest at the end of the year after students have participated in their Transition Planning Meeting. This short assessment offers a snapshot of how the curriculum works, and how it has made a difference in student perspective about the Transition process.

✓ **Vocabulary words or phrases**

1 **planning meeting** – when people meet to make decisions about your school program

2 **take charge** – to take responsibility for your own affairs

3 **individual** – a single person, you are an individual

4 **transition** – to go from one place or thing to another, moving on with your life

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? **Multiple-choice questions**

1 A **planning meeting** is…
  a when your softball team gets together
  b a civic organization
  c when you meet with others to make decisions about your school program

2 When you **take charge,** you are…
  a taking responsibility for your own affairs
  b forcing others to do what you want
  c taking over driving the car

3 An **individual** is…
  a a group of people
  b just two people
  c a single person

4 A **transition** is when you…
  a stand in one place
  b go from one place or thing to another
  c run really fast

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1   **Getting Started**

At your IEP meetings, you plan for your future. It is your meeting, and you are in control of it. You help your teachers and others to make decisions about your education. When you are in high school you start the Transition Planning Process. Transition meetings are a bridge from school to the adult world of living and working on your own. You are in control of your future.

Think back to your last IEP or planning meeting and answer these questions.

1. Did you attend your last IEP meeting?   Yes   No

If so…

2. Who was there?

3. What did they talk about?

4. Who was the leader of the meeting?

5. Did you say anything?   Yes   No

6. Did you prepare for the meeting?   Yes   No

7. Did you talk about things that are important to you?   Yes   No

8. If yes, did people listen when you talked during the meeting?   Yes   No

9. Do you know what your IEP goals or objectives are?   Yes   No

10. If yes, have you talked with anyone about them?   Yes   No

11. Describe one of your goals:

12. Are you making progress on your goals?   Yes   No   I don't know

13. How did you feel about your last IEP meeting?

Chapter 2

Asks students to think about who they want at their Transition meetings. **Activity 2**, the "Planning Team Pie Chart," directs them to think about which of their advocates should be there.

In the Workbook, students are tasked with identifying those people in their lives who are friends and advocates, and taking the initiative to invite them to their meeting.

Activity 3 relies on having a copy of the previous IEP so that a student can check to see who was present at their last IEP meeting.

Activity 4 invites students to establish who they want to have present at their next Transition meeting, based on student preference.

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2   **My Planning Team Pie Chart**

Name _____ Date_____

Pie chart segments: Friends, Family, Work, Church/Community, Neighbors, School

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3 **Who Came to Your Last IEP Meeting?**

☑ **Your IEP**

Who was at your last IEP? Were you there? Your parents, too? Which of your teachers were there? Many adults may come to your IEP because you are working with them on goals for your future. You need to make future plans with their help. This is a time to discuss your needs and future.

Have your instructor get a copy of your last IEP. Put a check mark next to those who were at your last planning meeting. Write down the name of that person.

☐ You (student) _____
☐ Your parents _____
☐ Your friend(s) _____
☐ Your brother/sister _____
☐ Your general education teachers _____
☐ Your special education teachers _____
☐ Related Services People _____
☐ Psychologist or diagnostician _____
☐ Your principal _____
☐ Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor _____
☐ An advocate for you _____
☐ Your boss at work _____
☐ Your job coach _____
☐ Your neighbor(s) _____
☐ Other _____

Now you know who was at your last meeting.
Was everyone there who should be?   Yes   No
If so, great. If not, who should also be there? _____

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4 **Who Should Come to Your Next IEP Meeting**

Prep Work

It is important to have certain people at your IEP. First of all, you should be there. Your special education teacher and other teachers will be there. So will related services and your parents. Friends, siblings and your principal can come too. They are part of your education and have ideas to help you plan your future.

Write down the names of people you want at your next planning meeting. Look at your pie chart and decide if there is anyone there who should be at your next IEP meeting. If there are, add their names below.

First, the people who should be at every meeting:

1. Me (That is you!) _____
2a. _____ (Mom)
2b. _____ (Dad)
3a. _____ (teacher)
3b. _____ (teacher)
3c. _____ (teacher)
4a. _____ (principal)
4b. _____ (vice-principal)
4c. _____ (psychologist/diagnostician)

If you are 16 or older, make sure people who can help you be an independent adult are at the meeting, like:

5a. _____ (VR Counselor)
5b. _____ (Job Coach)
5c. _____ (Work person)
6. _____ (Live-in help)

Who else? Look at your pie chart and add people you want at your next IEP meeting:

7a. _____ (friend)
7b. _____ (friend)
8a. _____ (relative)
8b. _____ (sister/brother)
9a. _____ (other people)
9b. _____ (other people)

Chapter 3

Challenges students to think about their preferences and interests in all areas of their lives. Workbook **Activity 5** asks students to think more about their preferences and how they have previously learned skills, and begins to probe students about their future.

Activity 6 asks questions related to the IEP and Transition objectives for post-secondary education, employment, residential outcomes, and recreational outcomes.

Activity 7 invites the students to think about their own abilities and interests.

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5 **All About You!**

Here are some questions to help you think about who you are and what kinds of things you like. Write down the first answer that comes to mind:

1. What is your favorite food?
2. Who is your favorite singer?
3. What do you like best about yourself?
4. What would you change about yourself?
5. What has been your greatest accomplishment so far?
6. What makes you feel guilty?
7. What makes you feel angry?
8. What do your friends say about you?
9. What new skill have you learned in the last 6 months?
10. If you were 21 today, what would you be doing?
11. Who taught you to tell time?
12. Who taught you to count money?
13. How old do you feel?
14. Who do you admire the most?
15. What are you most afraid of?
16. Would you like to get married someday?   **Yes**   **No**   **I don't know**
17. Name three people you would invite to dinner, if you could.
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____

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Whose Future Is It? ● Workbook Chapter 3

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6 **After You Graduate**

Before your next transition planning meeting, think about your interests and preferences. Think about what things you like to do in your spare time. Think about what work you would like to find. And think about where you would like to live.

On June 1 of the year you graduate, where do you want to live?
A house? An apartment? A bus? In a city? What part of the city?
Do you want to live on your own or with someone else?
Think about it and write down one or more answers:

_____
_____
_____
_____

What do you want to be doing during most days?
Working? Where? Doing what? Going to school? Where? Learning to do what?
Think about it and write down one or more answers:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How do you want to spend your free time?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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Workbook Chapter 3 ● Whose Future Is It?

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7 **Abilities and Interests**

Abilities are things you can do, things that you are good at, like working on computers.

Interests are things you like to do, things you do in your spare time, like listening to music or watching movies.

List 3 abilities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List 3 interests:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Compare your lists of abilities and interests and see what items are the same or similar. Mark the things that appear on both lists and show your planning team what you discovered about your interests and abilities.

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Whose Future Is It? ● Workbook Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Addresses stereotypes about disabilities.

Activities 8 and **9** define stereotypes and ask students to think about what it means to have a disability.

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8 **Stereotypes**

Here is a stereotype: Blondes are dumb.

Wrong! There are lots of smart men and women who are blonde.
To say that "blondes are dumb" is both a stereotype and not true.

List 3 more stereotypes:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

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9 **(continued)**

9. What is your first thought when you see a person using a wheelchair? _____

_____

10. What rights do people with disabilities have? _____

_____

11. Where should people with disabilities live?
☐ Wherever they want to   ☐ Someplace special

12. Should people with disabilities work?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Maybe

13. Should a person with a disability get married?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ If they want to

14. Should people with disabilities have children?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ If they want to

---

9 **Disability & What It Means to You**

What does the word "disability" mean to you? Does a person with disabilities have rights? Can a person with a disability work? Think about these issues and what they mean to you.
Think about these questions and answer them:

1. What is a disability? _____

_____

2. What does the word "disability" mean to you? _____

_____

3. What does a person with a disability look like? _____

_____

4. What happens to people when they have a disability? _____

_____

5. What is your first thought when you see a person with a white cane? _____

_____

6. What is your first thought when you see someone with a hearing aid? _____

_____

7. What is your first thought when you are told a person has an intellectual disability? _____

_____

8. What do you think of first when you know a person has a learning disability? _____

_____

Chapter 5

Addresses the topic of resources.

Activity 10 invites students to differentiate between things they can change and those they can't, then asks them to give thought to supports that can compensate for limitations.

In **Activity 11,** students use their own IEP to identify Post-secondary Education or Training Outcomes, Employment Outcomes, Residential or Independent Living Outcomes, and Recreational or Leisure Outcomes as listed on their previous IEP.

Activity 12 asks students to record services listed on their previous IEP for use as a support for each Outcome. Students then go back to read answers supplied in Activities 11 and 12 from Workbook Chapters 8, 9, and 10.

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10 **Things I Can Change and Things I Cannot Change**

List three things you can change (like your haircut):
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List three things you can't change (like how tall you are):
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Limitations and Supports

Understanding what supports help you achieve what you need to do is important. For instance, if you need help balancing a checkbook, your support could be to use a computer program that balances the checkbook. Think about your unique limitations and the supports that help you to accomplish what you need to do. Write down three different limitations you experience and the supports that can help you with that limitation:

Limitation	Support
1.	
2.	
3.	

---

11 **Outcomes from Your Last IEP**

Your IEP ✔

Ask your instructor to get your IEP from last year.

Find the section on your IEP or transition plan that is called **Desired Outcomes.** See if you have Post-secondary, Employment, Residential, or Leisure Outcomes listed.

Check the Outcomes below that are listed in your last IEP:

Post-Secondary Education or Training Outcomes
- ☐ None due to expected employment
- ☐ Community college, no support needed
- ☐ Community college, support needed
- ☐ Technical or trade school, no support needed
- ☐ Technical or trade school, support needed
- ☐ Military or military school
- ☐ University, no support needed
- ☐ University, support needed
- ☐ Adult education classes, no support needed
- ☐ Adult education classes, support needed
- ☐ Other _____

Residential or Independent Living Outcomes
- ☐ With parents or relative
- ☐ Independent living, no support
- ☐ Independent living, support needed
- ☐ With roommate
- ☐ Supervised apartment/supported living
- ☐ Other _____

Employment Outcomes
- ☐ None due to post-secondary education
- ☐ Competitive employment without support
- ☐ Competitive employment, time-limited support
- ☐ Competitive employment, long-term support
- ☐ Self-employment
- ☐ Supported employment, infrequent support
- ☐ Supported employment, daily support
- ☐ Other _____

Recreational and Leisure Outcomes
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Support from family and friends
- ☐ Specialized recreation activities
- ☐ Community parks and recreation programs
- ☐ Local clubs
- ☐ Church groups
- ☐ Other _____

---

12 **Support Services From Your Last IEP**

Your IEP ✔

There are support services in your community that can help you with many things. Some services help you find jobs, while others help you find places to live. Still others provide rides when you need them.

Now, find the section on your last IEP or transition plan that is called **Services Required, Needed Services, Community Resources,** or a similar title.

List the services identified on your previous IEP.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
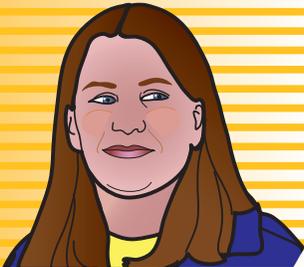
**Chapter Sections
by Theme**

Your IEP
Meeting

Chapters 14 to 17

The last section (Chapters 14 to 17) focuses on teaching students effective communication skills for use in small groups, like team meetings. Chapter 14 looks at the concept of body language. This final section introduces methods of communication and ideas for what to do and not to do in successfully getting your ideas heard and accepted at your meetings.

Successful communication is best learned through practice. In this section of the Guide, Role Play is explained and scripts are offered to help students practice communication skills. Role play scripts and instruction should be modified based on age, grade, and level of student to facilitate meaningful participation. Some scripts are appropriate for any age and level, others need modification.

Role Play

It's valuable for students to experience a virtual IEP meeting before their real one. Role play is a great way to simulate experience in a controlled setting. And it has the added advantage of permitting repeated practice.

A role play differs from a stage play in two ways: (1) education is its primary purpose, and (2) there are no lines to learn. Role play is improvisation in which student actors are told their character's situation or problem, but decide for themselves what to say and do.

Theater engages visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles, so it's especially effective for people with disabilities. Students with autism can practice social skills that encourage independence. Nonverbal students can participate by preprograming AAC devices with appropriate phrases.

Each chapter below contains one or more role play suggestions. These are only suggestions. All aspects—the problem, the materials, and the discussion—can be easily modified to suit a student's particular needs.

It takes less than five minutes to do the initial role play. Discussion and subsequent reenactments will extend the session by 10 to 15 minutes.

To begin, designate the setting, the characters, and the problem. Student actors act out the problem and try a solution. Student observers discuss what they have seen and make suggestions for the actors.

Preparing for role play

The Instructor's Job:

- Set up the scene, assign the characters, explain the situation, and start and end the scene.

- Coach actors during the scene to keep it on track, if necessary.

- Lead the discussion with the players and observers.

- If an activity needs to be modeled, play one of the roles yourself.

Facilitating Role Play

The scene should happen quickly. You can leave a little latitude, but if the actors aren't moving the dialog forward, encourage them to do so by giving direction. If you need to stop the action, say "Freeze" (see sidebar).

At a good stopping point in the scene, talk about it with the observers. Ask: "What was the problem? What did (the character's name) do about it? Was that successful? If not, what should be done instead?"

If you get one or more suggestions from the observers, have the actor follow one and see what happens. Or have the observer make the suggestion, take the place of the actor, and try it out.

When the scene and discussion seem complete, have the actors sit down and encourage the observers to applaud them.

> ## Theater Terms in Role Play
>
> **Places**—Characters go to the place where you start the scene.
>
> **Go**—When everyone is ready, start the scene or restart it if it was stopped.
>
> **Freeze**—Actors stop the scene temporarily and stay where they are, ready to restart it.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 introduces the concept of communication and body language and explains that these are important aspects of the IEP or Transition Meeting. For some students, this will be familiar material and can be covered quickly. For others, spend some time introducing these ideas. Role Play can be conducted many times over several days with different students and topic areas so they all get more than one opportunity to practice "bad" and "good" body language.

Activity 41 provides students with an opportunity to think about what messages they are sending with their body language. **Activity 42** provides students an opportunity to differentiate between aggressive behavior and assertive behavior. Both activities might invoke a group discussion. Alternatively, use these activities to set the stage for using role play to understand the impact of body language.

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41 **Body Language**

Let's think about the body language that happens at IEP meetings.

If you slump down in your chair, do not make eye contact, and look at the clock, your body language is saying:

☐ I don't care about this meeting ☐ I do care about this meeting

☐ This meeting is boring ☐ This meeting is important

☐ Nobody listens to me anyway ☐ I want to contribute

So if you care about the meeting, and you know it's important, and you want to contribute, then:

Do you sit up straight? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Do you lmake eye contact? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

If you have a question, what do you do?

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42 **Aggressive or Assertive?**

When you are angry, it is easy to get **aggressive.** Being aggressive means you get mad. You might also yell, shout, and argue. If you are in your meeting and you act aggressive, are you going to get what you want? Probably not.

Does that mean you sit quietly when someone says something you don't like? Or do you keep your opinions to yourself? No. This is where **assertive** comes in. Assertive means letting people know you have different ideas than theirs. It lets them know you are an equal part of the team.

Read each statement below and mark whether
the behavior is **Aggressive** or **Assertive:**

1 Yell and scream to get everybody's attention.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

2 Argue with them if they make a suggestion you don't like.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

3 Stomp out of the room if you don't get your way.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

4 Stand or sit up straight.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

5 Make eye contact with the person speaking.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

6 Talk with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice.
☐ Aggressive or ☐ Assertive

Being assertive means making eye contact, sitting up straight, and talking with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice.

Role Play

In these two role play examples, find likely scenarios that could conceivably take place in a student's life so it feels "real" to them. At the same time create a consequence or contrast within the role play. If there is an issue to be discussed at an upcoming IEP meeting that is not one the student wants to discuss, use it for your role play.

physical setting

• table with several chairs around it, as if in a small IEP meeting

materials

• note paper and pencils that might be at an IEP meeting

characters – **some of the people who might be at an IEP meeting**

• teacher   • principal   • student

characters' places at start

• everyone is sitting around the IEP meeting table

Role Play 1 – Body Language

I don't care about this meeting

Situation – By his body language, the student actor is telling the IEP team he doesn't want to be there.

Action of scene – The IEP Meeting Leader, (the teacher) is talking about outcomes and goals for the next year but the student is demonstrating that she is bored and doesn't want to be there.

Sample dialogue

Teacher: Today we are going to make decision about [student's] goals and objectives for next year.

Principal: Good. What do you have in mind?

Student: [slumps down in their chair, does not make eye contact]

Teacher: For the Employment goal, we don't think [student] should bother to look for a job because we think he should go for more training.

Principal: Okay. Tell me what training you have in mind.

Student: [looks at the clock, fidgets, gets up, and wanders off in the middle of the meeting]

Sample discussion questions

1. What was the message that [student] was sending to the IEP members?

2. If [student] was interested in earning money, and wanted help in getting job skills, did it seem like she was going to have an IEP objective focused around that goal?

Role Play 2 – Body Language

I care about this meeting

Situation – The student actor is telling the IEP team he is interested in being present at the meeting based on his body language.

Action of scene – The IEP Leader (played by the teacher) is talking about outcomes and goals for the next year while the student demonstrates that he wants to participate in the meeting.

Sample dialogue

Teacher: Today we are going to make decisions about [student's] goals and objectives for next year.

Principal: Good. What do you have in mind?

Student: [Makes eye contact with the speaker, sits up and is attentive]

Teacher: For the Employment goal, we don't think [student] should bother to look for a job because we thinks he should go for more training

Principal: Okay. Tell me what training you have in mind.

Student: [raises a finger, makes eye contact with the teacher and after the Principal has finished speaking, says] I was really hoping for some work experience next year that I could do at the same time that I am doing my other training.