M3: Now and Then

## Course

Special Education

## Location

Module 3

## Alignments

### Course Outcomes

CLO III: Examine the historical and philosophical foundations of special education.

### Module Outcomes

MLO 3.2: Identify practices and perspectives in special education that can potentially perpetuate bias.

MLO 3.3: Describe ways that historical context and awareness of bias in special education can inform equitable practices.

### Specific InTASC Standards

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **InTASC** | **Type** | **Specific Standard** |
| 9i | Knowledge | The teacher understands how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognizes how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others. |
| 10l | Knowledge | The teacher understands schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political, and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners. |

## Assignment Instructions

### Purpose

United State law pertaining to disability and special education has evolved over time, especially in the last few decades, in ways that have significantly improved educational access for students with disabilities. But not that long ago, many students would have experienced significant barriers to learning due to both their disabilities and a combination of factors, such as race, citizenship, and family income. That historical reality still affects how people understand their rights and resources when it comes to special education.

Imagining how today’s students with disabilities would experience education differently had they been born in a different time period can help professional educators not only grasp how important legal and policy changes have been, but also consider what kinds of resources and supports are important to advocate for moving forward. This assessment is an exercise in empathy that can help you draw on your knowledge of special education history to advocate effectively in the future.

### Task

1. Select one of the student scenarios provided.
2. Choose a year to place the student into.
3. Identify what laws, policies, practices, or assumptions were in place in the year you choose.
4. Based on the identity and needs expressed in the student scenario you chose, tell the story of how this student might experience education differently for one day in your chosen year. As you write this, consider the following guiding questions. Not all questions might pertain to your story, but you should be sure to cover those that do.
   1. What does physical access to the school building look like for this student?
   2. How would teaching and assessment occur for this student?
   3. What kinds of social and emotional support (or lack thereof) would the student likely experience?
   4. How might this student’s race, gender, citizenship status, or economic circumstances affect their learning environment?
   5. What might be the thoughts or feelings of the student as a result of their learning environment? How might their academic progress be different from what it could be in the present day?

#### Submission Options

* 400-600 word written story
* 2-3 minute video or podcast
* Graphic-novel-style story (4-6 panes)
* Slide deck with visuals (4-6 slides)
* Interactive learning object (such as an H5P, Articulate, etc.)

#### Additional Requirements

* You must cite (provide attribution) for any resources you use. This includes citing AI tools that you use to develop storyline ideas, images, or any other materials you include in your submission. Place these citations at the end of your assignment submission; while you are not required to use an official citation style, you must provide enough information for your instructor to find the resource you used.
* You must provide captions for any audio and alt text for images.

### Criteria

Your performance will be evaluated based on meeting the submission standards indicated in the Task section above, along with the following criteria. Here are some hints on how to use storytelling to do the following:

* **Describe the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective.**
  + You’ve probably seen this in a movie set in another time period, where some condition or behavior was not yet understood, but contemporary audiences recognize it. Make your character’s disabilities clear to your audience by incorporating strengths and needs from the 13 disability types listed in the IDEA.
  + Example: if a student had an epileptic seizure in 17th century Massachusetts, the community might believe the person was possessed by a demon, but it would be clear to the audience of a story that this was a medical condition.
* **Contrast** **special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day.** 
  + Drawing on your knowledge of the current special education environment, show differences that would occur in a past special education environment due to what laws, policies, practices, and perspective would have been in place.
  + Example: a student with dyslexia might have been placed in a completely separate class rather than in a general education classroom in 1976.
* **Predict how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era.** 
  + Race, class, gender, citizenship, and other factors have historically affected the learning experience of students with disabilities (and continue to do so today). This is due to structural biases in laws, policies, and practices, but also due to implicit biases in society. Show how a student might have experienced education differently due to these factors in your chosen era.
  + Example: When they show signs of dyslexia, a teacher in 1922 might assume the student’s struggles to learn to read are due to the fact that the student’s family does not speak English in the home. The teacher might also assume there is an innate difference in intelligence due to race, and therefore not make as much effort to help the student.

## Rubric

| **Criterion** | **InTASC** | **A(4)** | **B(3)** | **C(2)** | **D(1)** | **F(0)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Describe the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective. | 9i, 10l | Describe the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective; indicates social/emotional implications that might also occur. | Describes the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective. | Describe the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective, but in a way that is incomplete or confusing to the reader. | Inaccurately describes the needs of a student with disabilities, and/or uses a perspective that is not contemporary. | Does not describe the needs of a student with disabilities using a contemporary perspective. |
| Contrast special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day. | 10l | Contrasts special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day; incorporates social, scientific, or other debates into the narrative consistent with the time period. | Contrasts special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day. | Contrasts some special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day, while leaving out key factors that demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the era. | Inaccurately contrasts special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day. | Does not contrast special education laws, policies, practices, and perspectives from a chosen historical era to those in the present day. |
| Predict how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era. | 9i, 10l | Predicts how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era; illustrates different elements of identity might intersect to affect the student’s experience. | Predicts how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era. | Predict how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era, but with minimal or no acknowledgment of the structural biases factoring into the experience. | Inaccurately or unrealistically predicts how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era. | Does not predict how a student with disabilities would experience education differently in a prior era. |

## Scenarios

The following scenarios were generated from Microsoft Copilot (2024).

### Scenario 1: Mai Lam

Mai Lam is a six-year-old female second-generation Vietnamese American female child (her grandparents were refugees from Vietnam). She lives with her large, extended family: her maternal grandparents, her mother and father, and five older siblings ranging in age from 8 to 19. Mai can be shy, especially with adults. Both Vietnamese and English are spoken in the home; Mai’s grandparents can manage in English but strongly prefer Vietnamese, while her parents are completely bilingual, and she and her siblings tend to speak English unless they are conversing with their grandparents.

Mai enjoyed kindergarten, but she has been very different in first grade, especially when it comes to reading lessons. When the class begins a subject that Mai doesn’t like, she seeks ways to avoid the lesson: asking to go to the bathroom, saying that she is sick, or having an “accident,” like dropping a glass of water all over the floor. She is very quiet and withdrawn, keeping to herself during recess, and only speaking when she is compelled to do so. When Mai does speak, she can be hard to understand due to lack of articulation with certain sounds made in the back of the mouth (hard c, g, etc.). She ends many school days in tears.

### Scenario 2: Rueben Washington

Rueben Washington is an eleven-year-old African American and American Indian male who lives with his mother, father, and one-year-old brother. Rueben qualifies for free/reduced lunch, and while his parents are very involved in school activities, they sometimes cannot attend events due to their reliance on public transportation.

Rueben was an excellent student throughout elementary school, but this has changed since the family moved into an older apartment building closer to the family’s work and school. Rueben has missed school due to headaches and dizziness, putting him behind on some of his schoolwork. During class, he occasionally speaks out of turn, and the gym teacher has given him many time-outs due to Rueben playing roughly with other students or throwing equipment during a game. His performance on standardized tests has dropped significantly as well. His parents are concerned that he is ill, but they aren’t sure what is causing all of these changes.

### Scenario 3: Aiden Gonzalez

Aiden Gonzalez is a sixteen-year-old Chicano male who lives with his mother and his step-mother in a small, rural community. Aiden has cerebral palsy, which has presented some physical challenges during his education. His parents have very actively sought every medical and therapeutic resource to support Aiden’s development from an early age, and fortunately they have the financial means to do so. Aiden’s academic performance has been above average, and he has expressed the desire to attend college at a state school a few hours away to pursue a degree in computer science.

Aiden is unable to drive and still requires assistance in physically navigating some daily activities, he and his parents are unsure how to help him achieve his goals for after high school. They are seeking advice and support for how to help Aiden make the transition from high school to college, knowing that Aiden will not be eligible for many of the resources they have relied on for the last several years, but they are dedicated to finding solutions to help him achieve his dreams in adulthood.

## Reference

Microsoft. (2024). *Copilot.* [www.bing.com/chat.](http://www.bing.com/chat)