

Text Response Assignment #1
June 19, 2012

1. Joey, a second grade student, has been having difficulty in school since kindergarten. His biggest challenge, which has only recently become significant, is his lack of progress in learning how to read. His parents are wary of having their son involved with special education. How would you explain to Joey's parents what is involved in qualifying for special education and their basic rights?

Hello Mr. & Mrs. Smith, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to come in today. I'm so glad that we could have this time to talk about Joey and his progress at school. It's been great having Joey in the classroom. He brings a lot of enthusiasm and leadership to our class and loves to help out whenever he can. Just the other day, he was the first one to volunteer to help me pass out papers. I'm so happy that both of you came in today – it tells me that you are both very committed to Joey's schooling. As you both know, Joey has been struggling with reading and in the recent weeks he has fallen even further behind. I take this very seriously because Joey's ability to read will greatly determine his success in school. If we don't take this serious now, he will continue to fall behind. I don't want to alarm you. With the right amount of specialized instruction, we should be able to get Joey caught up. But it is important to do something now - research has shown us time and time again, that children who struggle with reading do not catch up unless we "intervene with intensive instruction" (Glaser & Moats, 2008, pg. 12).

I think the best option for Joey right now is to refer him to the special education process so that we can determine whether or not an individualized education program is right for him. I do not want to make any assumptions regarding how much you both know about special education – so let me tell you about the general process and if you have any questions feel free to jump in. Special education would allow Joey to receive specially designed instruction at no cost to you (Chapman, 2008, pg. 5). The first step would be for Joey to have an initial evaluation to determine whether he is eligible to receive special education services and also what his educational needs are at this time. Before we can evaluate Joey though, we would need your consent (Chapman, 2008, pg. 20). Your consent does not mean you are consenting to Joey receiving special educational services, only that you are giving us permission to evaluate him. Once the initial evaluation is complete, it will be determined whether Joey is eligible to receive special education services. If he were eligible, then you both would need to consent to him receiving services. Then the screening and evaluating process could begin to determine the content of Joey's individualized education program, also known as an IEP (Chapman, 2008, pg. 21). As Joey's parents, you have many rights during this process, including the right to be members of his IEP team (Turnbill, Turnbill & Wehmeyer, 2012, pg. 19). Now, this is just a general overview of the first few steps, but it is important for you to know that your support for Joey along this process is critical and we want both of you to be involved each step of the way. If at anytime during this process you thought that Joey is was not being given the appropriate special education services, you also have the right to challenge the school through due process (Turnbill, Turnbill & Wehmeyer, 2012, pg. 18). Do either of you have questions for me so far?