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Reflecting In and Projecting Out Through Alice's Looking Glass: Self-Study for Teachers and Students

Tammy Abernathy and Teresa Agey

This paper describes a collaborative project between a teacher educator and a middle school special education teacher. As a graduate student in a class on Severe Learning Disabilities, the middle school teacher participated in a self-study project that was designed to help her move beyond the definitions and characteristics of learning disabilities and help her identify with the learners in her classes. As a surprise twist, the teacher took the self-study experience and translated it into a project for her middle school students to help them begin the self-advocacy part of self-determination.

“Dear, dear! How queer everything is today! And yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I’ve been changed in the night? Let me think: Was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I’m not the same, the next question is, who in the world am I? Ah, that’s the great puzzle!” (from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, first published in 1865)

The stories of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (Carroll, 1988) remind young and old of the value of reflecting on our actions as a means of better understanding ourselves. As general and special educators we struggle to improve educational outcomes for all students and may feel as though we are participating in the Queen of Hearts croquet game, where the rules are ambiguous and the players are rapidly changing. Instructional strategies that are

designed to give both educators and students an opportunity to reflect on their own learning actions, dispositions, and challenges may provide teachers and students with the kind of essential knowledge needed to encourage the development of self-advocacy behaviors (Van Reusen, 1998), an essential part of self-determination (Mithaug, Mithaug, Agran, Martin, & Wehmeyer, 2003). Specifically, the more our students know and discover about themselves as learners, the less ambiguity and confusion there will be in instructional programming and development of individual education plans (IEPs) and individual transition plans (ITPs).

This paper describes a collaborative project between a teacher educator (Tammy) and a middle school special education teacher (Teresa) where a professional development experience used at the university level was later translated into a meaningful personal experience for the students in Teresa's middle school program. Teresa was a graduate student in Tammy's learning disabilities course. Her experience in the course led her to create the same type of experiences for her middle school students. This paper describes learning experiences from both Tammy's and Teresa's points of view and is presented in a reflective dialogue style. Teresa's reflections are highlighted by italics.

A Teacher Educator's Vision: Meaningful Professional Development for Teachers

Recent changes in accreditation standards call for teacher education programs to show evidence of K-12 student learning (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2000). It is the K-12 student learning mandate that inspired this project. As a teacher educator I am often left to guess about the influence my teaching has on my students and the impact my teaching has on their students. Not unlike Alice strategizing to find a way into the beautiful garden, I reflect on my choices and continue to search for learning experiences that will shape my teacher education courses, evolve into meaningful K-12 classroom practices, and improve outcomes for K-12 students. Figure 1 (page 7) reflects my vision for connecting graduate

studies for practicing teachers and outcomes for school age students. The dotted line represents the connection I find so elusive, but worth pursuing.

While preparing for my graduate course in severe learning disabilities I struggled to write the course description. All of my attempts were descriptions filled with jargon. The words sounded elegant and important, but as I reread the words it occurred to me that a class of this nature (e.g., one filled with vocabulary and definitions) would not result in a meaningful understanding of the disability or interaction with learning.

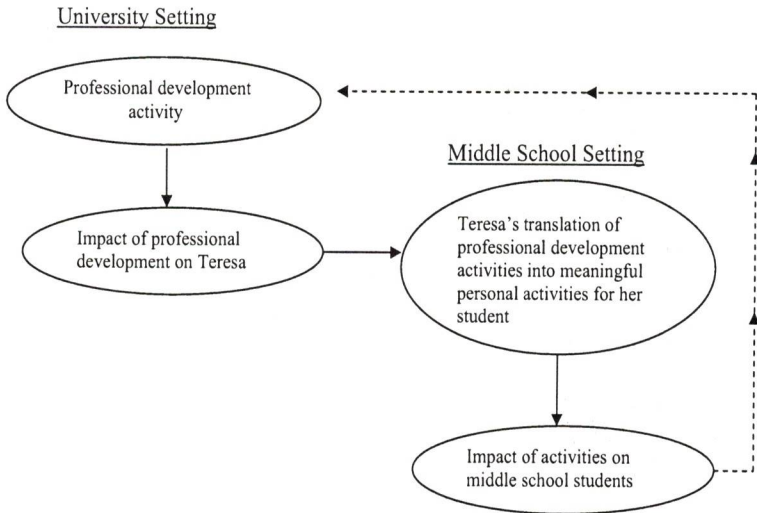


Figure 1. My vision for connecting graduate studies for practicing teachers and outcomes for school age students.

After a week of struggle and reading final exams from another course, I realized that my students could accurately define terms and interpret test data, but they failed to personally identify with the learners they teach. My students understood little about their own learning, nor

as teachers were they given opportunities to examine themselves and their students and solve Alice's "great puzzle" of "who in the world am I" and who are my students? My second realization was that my students knew even less about how their own students learned. I asked myself, "How could teachers who did not understand their own ways of learning teach students whose ways of learning are unique and complex?" The current emphasis in special education on self-advocacy and self-determination, with legal expectations that students will, at age 14, begin to advocate for their own instructional needs, concerned me. My students, who were practicing teachers, were unsure how to help their students understand their disabilities and their unique learning needs.

Drawing on Schon's (1983, 1987) ideas about reflection on practice and Munby and Russell's (1994) ideas about giving "authority to experience," I created a nine activity self-study project designed to move my students from a vocabulary-laden understanding of disability to an understanding of themselves as learners. Metaphorically, I gave my students a "looking glass" and ten adventures and waited to see what they learned. Again, wanting to impact students in schools, the ultimate goal of the self-study project was to help my students use this experience to create a "looking glass" and meaningful self-study activities for their students as means of preparing students for future self-advocacy expectations.

A Graduate Student's Expectations: The Impact of Professional Development

After six years of teaching special education in the middle school, I decided to further my education. I enrolled in graduate school with the goal of earning my masters degree in special education with an emphasis in learning disabilities. My goals were simple. I wanted to learn techniques for teaching students with learning disabilities and to earn credits for recertification. I enrolled in Tammy's course on severe learning disabilities. I expected to become a better teacher, but I never expected to understand my students' challenges or learn to how to help them understand their individual learning differences.

As is typical, Tammy passed out the syllabus during the first class. Listed in the assignment section was a set of self-study activities. I was not sure what I would learn from these activities, but they seemed unusual and fun. At this point, I did not comprehend the value of these activities or the impact they would have on my teaching and on my students.

Description of Nine Self-Study Activities for Teachers and Teresa's Impressions

Self-study activities were designed to give my graduate students concrete experiences that targeted specific traits, characteristics, and experiences of students with learning disabilities in and out of school settings. Initially, the self-studies were designed only as a complement to the course. Over time, the self-studies became the focus of class discussions. The activities spanned the length of the semester and each varied in the length of time necessary to complete the self-study (SS). Activities were due on a specific date so that class discussion and reflection could occur.

Self-Studies 1-3

SS-1. In Self-Study 1 (SS-1) students engaged in learning about themselves as learners. Students completed the Learning Styles Indicator by Bernice McCarthy (1994). I selected McCarthy's work because it challenges learners to distinguish between perceiving concretely vs. abstractly and active vs. reflective processing.

SS-2. SS-2 elaborated on SS-1 and encouraged teachers to examine the relationship between their learning style and teaching style. McCarthy's work aligns learning styles with teaching styles; therefore, my students could see how their learning style translates into their classroom teaching. Using the results of SS-1, my graduate students were asked to redesign the course assignments to better suit their own learning style. The goal of SS-2 was to move students beyond relying on educational jargon and vocabulary to describe how they learn. I wanted my students to generalize their understanding of how they learn by giving them an opportunity to create concrete instructional activities specific to their unique learning style.

SS-3. A survey was constructed for SS-3 that required students to reflect on their own early learning experiences. I probed students for details about how they learned to read and write, ride a bike, please an adult, and keep track of their belongings. Students were encouraged to talk to siblings and parents in instances when they had no recollections.

The first three self-studies helped me to reflect on myself as a learner. The activities seemed simple since I only had to think of myself. When I took the learning styles inventory, the results were not surprising. I knew that I learned best in a traditional classroom with clear expectations. I was surprised to find that my learning style reflects my teaching style and that I may be teaching in a way that makes it more difficult for my students to learn.

Remembering my school days in SS-3 helped me realize that many of my positive memories of school were about the relationships that I had with my teachers and coaches. Those experiences definitely influence my teaching. On the surface, the self-study activities appeared simple, but I began to see the value of how remembering what school and learning was like for me could help me in my own teaching and how I build relationships with my students.

Self-Studies 4-8

SS 4-8. I gave my graduate students the opportunity to experience many of the characteristics of students with learning disabilities: specifically, poor motivation, learned helplessness, auditory perception difficulties, and resiliency.

SS-4. This self-study addressed motivation by asking students to view two videos: one, a favorite movie, and two, a movie in a genre they find distasteful. Students were asked to document their behaviors during the self-study.

The next three self-studies helped me to better understand some of the characteristics of my students. In my undergraduate course work I learned about the characteristics of students with learning disabilities. I could recite textbook definitions of "lack of motivation," "learned helplessness," "discrepancies in auditory perception," and "resiliency," but I had never consciously experienced these challenges.

In SS-4 I rented two videos, one movie that I wanted to watch (Pretty Woman) and another that I didn't (Sphere). I watched the first movie immediately. I was not conscientious about the second movie and therefore was charged a costly late fee. Asking me to watch the second movie was like me asking my students to write a three-page paper. I was not motivated to complete the assignment. The activity helped me understand how difficult it is to complete a task that I am not interested in. I have renewed sensitivity to motivation problems in my classroom. Motivation seems to be more than a problem with a student. It is so complex. The problem is also related to the task the student must complete.

SS-5. This self-study targeted learned helplessness by having students revisit an activity that they failed at earlier in their lives. After a lengthy brainstorming session, students compiled lists of activities they no longer participate in because of consistent failure. In SS-5 students were required to attempt one of these failed activities again. They were asked to attempt the activity at least five times over a two-week period and to give the activity their "best effort" each time. Students were required to demonstrate the activity to the class.

While trying to convince other teachers that my students were not lazy, I introduced teachers to the term "learned helplessness." In SS-5 I was able to experience learned helplessness first hand. I had to revisit a task that I had previously failed. If it had not been for this class, I would have never attempted to do this task again. Why do something that I knew I could not do? I tried once again to make greeting cards using an embossing technique. I was actually embarrassed to bring my cards to class because they were so ugly. I think my students feel the same way when they are asked to read or write. I understand the resistance they put up every day when I am asking them to do something they think they cannot do.

SS-6. Auditory perception difficulties were examined in SS-6. Students were assigned to map, diagram, or draw an example of a miscommunication episode between themselves and another person. When I designed this activity I was interested in discovering how my

students knew there was a communication problem, and how they resolved the problem. I was also curious to know whether the SS-6 experience could inform my students' teaching practices.

SS-6 was designed to help me to understand auditory perception. Again, I could state the definition, but I didn't have a clear understanding of how it affected my students. I mapped out a miscommunication I had with another teacher about which one of us was responsible for setting up a meeting. Each of us thought the other was responsible. After completing this activity and seeing how anyone can misunderstand what another person is trying to communicate, I began to realize the importance of making sure that my students understand what is intended. Our ability to function in the classroom depends on our ability to communicate clearly.

SS-7. An article by Smith (1989) used the metaphor of wearing a "mask" to describe problem behaviors of students with learning disabilities. I used this article to introduce resiliency in SS-7 and focused on the "masks" we wear to hide our lack of ability and insecurities. The article describes eighteen different masks, including the mask of invisibility, the mask of the victim, and the mask of outrageousness. My graduate students identified "masks" they wear to hide some of their less appealing behaviors and their motivation for wearing masks.

SS-7 helped me to understand the meaning behind my students' behavior. While I read the article about the masks that students wear in different situations, I recognized each of my students in their different masks. Some of them wear the class clown mask, others wear the invisibility mask, but the majority of my students wear the mask of not caring. Students wear these masks as a way to cope with difficult situations. Although masks are a good coping mechanism, I realized that in order for my students to learn, the masks must come off. If they keep the masks on, they tend to focus too much on how other people see them rather than learning.

SS-8. This self-study continued the theme of resiliency by uncovering personal situations where others expected us to fail. In SS-8 these expectations of failure were referred to as "pongs." I told my students to imagine they were playing a ping-pong game where two players are evenly matched and their rallies "ping" out a soft beat. I

told them a “pong” is when one of the players gets very aggressive and slams the ball over the net into the opponent and she is defenseless to the aggressive play. A “pong” is a harmful, mean-spirited comment that hits you so hard that you are defenseless to respond. Pongs undermine our self-confidence.

In SS-8, I was asked to remember the “pongs” (e.g., mean statements or expectations of failure) that have been said to me as a child and as an adult. I can still remember the “pongs” that were used against me in junior high. I felt that as a teacher I had some control over the “pongs” that were said in my classroom. After this self-study, I listened to how my students spoke to each other in my room. I was amazed at the number of “pongs” I heard. My students use “pongs” directed toward themselves and others as a way to cope when other students make fun of their disability. My hope is that the more my students learn about their disability the less they will use “pongs” against themselves and each other.

SS-9. Finally, SS-9 emphasized the importance of quality teaching for students with learning disabilities. This activity was designed to remind my students of the challenge of learning something new. Students were required to choose a new skill or activity they would like to learn. This study required students to teach themselves, without any direct instruction from a person. They were allowed to use books, or pictures, but the use of audio or videotape was forbidden. Students were required to demonstrate their new achievement and share their learning log during our last class.

SS-9 was a great activity for teachers. In this activity I tried to teach myself wreath-making. I bought a book that gave explicit directions, but it was written for someone who had prior experience. I needed instructions for beginners. It was difficult to teach myself a new skill. You never know if you are doing the skill correctly. No one is there to help or give feedback. It would have been easier if someone showed me how to make a wreath. Through my frustrations of having to teach myself, I was reminded that some of my students might need to be shown what to do rather than being left to read and interpret the directions on their own.

Tammy's Reflections of Self-Study as Professional Development

When the caterpillar asked Alice, "Who are you?," she remarked that she hardly knows who she is now, but she knew who she was that morning. At the conclusion of my graduate course I was certain that the self-study project had impacted my students. What was unclear was **how** they were impacted and whether my graduate students would use the experience to enhance their teaching, or whether they would go back to their classrooms and conduct business as usual. After reading the students' work, I realized that while my students could not know what it was like to be a student with a learning disability, they had reflected on the characteristics of their students through a new lens and old perceptions began to dissipate. Although I knew my students could never be insiders into the world of disabilities, their writings on each self-study indicated that they were breaking down some of the barriers between themselves and their students. In a summary of the self-study experience a graduate student wrote:

We are all so busy rushing to get things done and cramming information down our students' throats that we forget what it is like to be that age again. This class made me take a step back and slow down. It truly made me stop and think for once how my students must feel in my class sometimes. Now I am wondering if I am hindering them or helping them and what I can do now to better serve them. I also learned about myself (this was scary, but important).

Teresa's Reflections of Self-Study as Professional Development

I have been a student all of my life but I have never fully understood myself as a learner. By completing Tammy's ten self-studies, I have grown to understand the importance of knowing what kind of learner I am. Also, I have come to realize how important it is for my students with learning disabilities to see themselves as learners, to

understand the difficulties they face, and to advocate for themselves. My students typically say they are "stupid, and can't learn." I tell them that it is not true, but I have never helped them to understand why. Completing the self-studies made me realize that I am in a position to help them understand how they learn and perhaps why they learn the way they do.

Teresa's Translation of the Self-Study Experience Into her Practice: Self-Study for Middle School Students

I decided to use a self-study experience with eight students assigned to my afternoon classes. My goal was to help my students think of themselves as learners with the hope that they could begin to communicate with others about their disability. Realizing the self-study activities in Tammy's class were not developed for eighth graders, I created six self-study activities that were developmentally appropriate for eight of my students with learning disabilities. I believed some students were more ready to learn about themselves than others were, but I thought they would all benefit from the experience. Below is a description of the self-study activities I created for middle school students with learning disabilities as well as examples of student work.

Self-Study 1 – Learning Styles Inventory Revised

Similar to Tammy's Self-Study 1, eight students completed the Learning Styles Indicator by McCarthy (1994). During the activity, I defined the vocabulary, read the inventory orally, and responded to individual questions. After the students compiled their individual results, we discussed the meaning of the results and the implications. We found that one student was categorized as learning style 1, none of the students were learning style 2, three students were considered learning style 3, and four students were learning style 4.

It did not surprise me that none of my students had a type two learning style since, according to McCarthy, the students who are type two learners are usually successful in school. Both type three and type four learners have trouble sitting still, do not like lectures, and have difficulty memorizing information (McCarthy, 1994). Type three and

type four learners like to know the usefulness of the information they are learning and prefer to use hands-on materials. Students with a type one learning style enjoy group discussions, talking about their experiences, and working with others.

After the inventory was completed and the students had collected information about their learning style, we discussed how they could use the information in their general education classes. They had typical middle school responses such as using their learning style to avoid homework and as an opportunity to tell their teachers they talk too much. Understanding the implications of what this inventory was telling them took a great deal of discussion but was critical to the success of Self-Study 2.

Self-Study 2 – Letters to Teachers

Self-Study 2 was designed to give my students an opportunity to share with their general education teachers what they had learned in Self-Study 1. My students wrote letters to their teachers explaining their learning style and offering accommodations that could be used to help them be more successful. Many of their letters were similar. They all mentioned that more time and advance organizers for notes would help them. Most students wanted more time to think about the information given in class. They wrote about how it was difficult for them to understand something immediately, but if it was reviewed several times in class, they could eventually understand it. Interestingly, all of my students asked their teachers not to write on the board or overhead in red because it was more difficult to read. They also asked their teachers to talk slower, to use more hands-on activities in class, and to give directions in smaller steps. It was exciting to see my students articulate their needs. I believe this is an important first step in developing self-advocacy skills (see Figure 2, p. 18).

Self-Study 3 – Teaching Yourself a New Skill

Self-Study 3 was a modification of Tammy's SS-9. In this activity, I gave each student written directions on how to fold a paper bird. Students were given one sheet of paper and told to sit somewhere in the room where they could not see anyone else. Further, they could

not ask anyone for help. I observed as my students attempted this project. After five minutes, the activity was no longer fun for them. I heard them say, "This is stupid," "I can't do this," and "Do we have to do this?"

After 15 minutes, we discussed why it was difficult to learn something without a teacher. They mentioned that it would have been helpful if I had demonstrated how to fold a paper bird or if I allowed them to work with a partner. We discussed how this experience could help them to be more successful in general education classes. They talked about how not listening in class, not paying attention, and not asking questions would cause them to teach themselves the material on their own time. They also mentioned that directions can be confusing, and if they do not ask for help, they are just guessing and might not be doing an assignment correctly. I found these comments promising. If my students could articulate how they could make learning easier in this simulated activity, then perhaps they could recognize the value of behaviors such as asking for help in their general education classes.

Self-Study 4 – Motivation

Self-Study 4 was modeled after Tammy's SS-4 on motivation. Before we started this activity I discussed with my students the meaning of motivation. Money and fun were my students' strongest motivators. No one said they were motivated by grades. In SS-4, students wrote a list of activities that would be fun to do in a classroom and a list of activities they disliked. Next they chose one activity from each list. All eight students selected writing as the activity they disliked. The class then voted to complete the less desirable activity first. Therefore, I instructed them to write for 15 minutes on any topic. This was difficult for my students because they hate to write and struggle to persist on tasks they do not like. During the next 15 minutes, each student engaged in a selected desirable activity. Some of these activities were drawing on the white board and playing games. We discussed the importance of motivation and its impact on success in school (see Figure 3, p. 18). My students acknowledged that they should get the difficult tasks over with first, and then they could relax. They thought that ignoring the difficult task would interfere with their enjoyment of a preferred activity.

Dear Mrs. Brown*,

What would help me in class is if once in a while if you would ask me if I needed anything to be explained to me. That I might not get Because I don't get things that well when we get lexers (lectures) so if you just spent a little more time explaining it to me I might get it more.

Sincerely,
Ann

Dear Mr. White,

It is hard to learn science. Frist of all it is a hard class to be in because you teach difficult words. May be I could learn better if you didn't use such big words that I can't understand, some people can't comprehend like others can. It makes it easier when you really explain the words and what you mean. Also, when we do experments that helps me the most!!!

Sincerely,
Andrew

*All names were substituted with pseudonyms. These letters include spelling and grammar errors from the original text.

Figure 2. From Self-Study 2 – Letters to Teachers.

Motivation*

The thing that moderats (motivates) me is deer hunting. I like to find out were I am going and whn how long and the size of the animal. I Don't like to work but inord (in order) to go plase like hunging and the fun things I have to do my stuff. If I want alowens (allowance) I am modivad to do my jobes every day. Some thimes it mens that I have to some thing Withought saying anything. I think modivate works in lots of ways such as fear of losing some thing. I have to work if I don't want to be restict (restricted).

*This paragraph maintains the spelling and grammar errors from the original text.

Figure 3. From Self-Study 4 – Motivation.

Self-Study 5 – Auditory Memory

Since most of my students have auditory memory difficulties, I designed Self-Study 5 to help them understand this weakness and to learn accommodation strategies. In this study, I read five lists of numbers. Each list had between three and ten numbers. After reading each list I asked different questions about the list such as, “What was the sequence of numbers, what was the biggest or smallest number, and what was the last number?” After trying this activity with the five lists of numbers, including the follow-up questions, we discussed the students’ strategies for remembering the numbers.

One student indicated that he repeated the numbers to himself as I read the list. Other students said they wrote the numbers down, which was not allowed, but it was encouraging that they knew a strategy that could help them. Through SS-5 I learned that when my students knew I would hold them accountable for knowing the list of numbers rather than just expecting their attention, they listened more intently to what I was saying. They recognized that intent listening had rewards.

Self-Study 6 – How I Think

For this activity, students drew a picture of what they visualize happens to information in their brain when they are trying to remember or learn something new. The pictures ranged from a circle with a light bulb in the center to a head with arrows about where thoughts go and how to get them out. In another interesting picture, a student drew boxes for storing information on different subjects such as math and English. He recognized that it was easier to remember things when his thinking was organized. He already understood the concept of organizing a retrieval system.

After the drawings were complete, we discussed their pictures. One student’s initial picture revealed that he did not process what his teachers were saying. In most classes he only heard “Can I help you?” and “Let’s go home” (see Figure 4, p. 20). Next, I showed students diagrams of learning models (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Lloyd, 1999; Lerner, 2000) and discussed each part. The “Let’s go home” student revised his initial drawing to reflect what he had learned about learning (see Figure 5, p. 21). When I explained semantic and episodic memory,



Figure 4. From Self-Study 6 – How I Think. Student's initial drawing.



Figure 5. From Self-Study 6 – How I Think. Student's revised drawing.

another student mentioned that he remembers experiences with his friends but struggles to remember important information a teacher tells him. Later, when students were learning a new concept or skill, we discussed strategies for remembering important information. I refocused my teaching on helping my students develop their own strategies to store and retrieve information.

Teresa's Reflections

By creating my own self-study project, I was able to help my students begin to see themselves as learners. My students began to understand behaviors associated with their disability. This experience seems like a prerequisite to self-advocacy. The major benefit of this project was that all of my students learned that it was their right and responsibility to let teachers know what accommodations they need to be successful. Some students also realized that it was their responsibility to engage in the learning process. Specifically, they could choose to listen intently, ask for clarification, and develop strategies for remembering information.

Final Thoughts

While our independent experiences with this project impacted each of us differently, we believe there are three common perceptions from the project worth further discussion. First, it was important to validate Tammy's vision and reassure ourselves that what happens at the university level can impact instruction in K-12 settings. Second, we agreed that the self-study experience was valuable for teachers and provided greater insight into the challenges of students with learning disabilities. Finally, self-study experiences that are facilitated by special educators for students with learning disabilities may be an important tool in initiating students into their self-advocacy responsibilities.

This experience renewed Tammy's enthusiasm for creating learning experiences at the university level that can be translated into teaching practices that directly impact students. Teresa's experience with self-study in Tammy's class motivated her to try self-study with her students, with very positive results. This project helped to validate

the value of graduate study as being more than a collection of discussions of theory and as an experience that is disconnected from students in schools. One challenge in complying with new accreditation standards that demand teacher education programs demonstrate their impact on K-12 instruction is finding strategies that allow university faculty and teachers to collaborate and then have time to communicate the effects of the collaboration.

Individuals determine the value of the self-study experience for themselves. The graduate students (all of whom were teachers) who participated in the project each favored different activities and, through their own "looking glass," found different activities rewarding. However, there was consensus among the participants on three issues. First, the self-study experience helped the graduate students understand the vocabulary they used to describe students with learning disabilities. They were able to enhance their language of learning disabilities by including concrete examples that the listener, perhaps a parent or student, could relate to. Second, the self-study resensitized a group of sophisticated learners (graduate students) who had a shared compassion for their students with learning disabilities, but who had, over time, lost their sensitivity to what it feels like to struggle to learn and achieve. And third, the self-study experience, and SS-9 in particular, reminded the participants that, just as Alice complained about her lessons, learning is difficult. There is no substitute for good teaching.

As was the case at the university level, middle school students valued different experiences in the self-study activity. Teresa found two themes that permeated the students' reflections on their experiences. First, the students believed that by knowing themselves as learners they would have more control over their learning environments and their own behavior. And second, they believed that if they knew more about themselves they could help their teachers see them as "learners" and not just as "problem kids."

The Cheshire Cat, always grinning but never fully revealing himself, gave Alice ambiguous directions about what road to travel to get to the Queen's croquet game. Realizing that this cat may not be the best source of information and that she could make her own choices, Alice promptly determined her own path. Teresa found that using self-study activities with her students was a powerful and effective strategy

for introducing students to future self-advocacy expectations. Her students discovered that by learning more about themselves they could stop relying on someone else to determine the direction of their own personal journeys. They, like Alice, could be empowered to determine their own path.

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