

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT



Weekly Reader partners with AbleNet in publishing adapted editions for students with moderate or severe disabilities

AbleNet Inc., has announced an innovative new series of adapted student publications and teachers' guides. AbleNet, long known for its expertise in the development of research-based curricula and assistive technologies for special education classrooms, developed the publications in partnership with Weekly Reader, one of the country's most respected publishers of materials for elementary and secondary schools.

Dubbed 'Weekly Reader AbleNet Editions,' these unique publications provide proven, quality content for today's special education classrooms. Teachers receive materials uniquely designed for students with moderate to severe disabilities, utilizing the fresh, engaging, and relevant content of Weekly Reader publications. In essence, this is Weekly Reader magazine adapted for special education classrooms.

Instead of the more traditional magazine-style format found in all other Weekly Reader publications, Weekly Reader AbleNet Editions feature Boardmaker picture symbols, an industry standard for differentiated instruction that has been proven effective in providing meaningful literacy and communication experiences to students with disabilities. A specially designed teacher's guide provides instructional strategies, techniques for incorporating assistive technologies and methods for literacy,

grade level content, and functional skills development.

In addition to delivering timely and relevant information, Weekly Reader AbleNet Editions provide direct access to grade-level content/standards with proven strategies unique to the instructional demands of students with significant disabilities. Ira Wolfman, Weekly Reader Senior Vice President, Editorial, sums it up as follows, "Weekly Reader is dedicated to producing content that meets both state and federal guidelines, which is important to educators and administrators. To that end, we recognize that content needs to be modified in a way that allows for differentiated instruction while preserving the full integrity of the content itself. Using the AbleNet framework, we're able to preserve the richness of the content, while allowing for differentiated instruction."

Weekly Reader AbleNet Editions give special education teachers a choice between Weekly Reader – Edition 2, which covers a variety of elementary grade-level themes and topics; Know Your World, which covers current events and pop culture news for secondary students; and/or Current Health 1, which covers a variety of age-appropriate and timely topics related to health and well-being also for secondary students. To further assist teachers in addressing the unique needs of individual students, all Weekly

Reader AbleNet Editions are available in two formats, one for students with moderate disabilities and one for students with severe/profound disabilities.

After reviewing the Weekly Reader AbleNet Editions, Betsy Detlefsen, a special education teacher for Anoka-Hennepin Independent School District 11 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, remarked, "Finally, something for special education classrooms! These publications give my students access to the same information as other high school students, but at their level, and I don't have to create it myself!"

AbleNet CEO Jen Thallhuber sees these exciting new publications as a perfect complement to the products and services AbleNet has been providing for more than 20 years. "AbleNet's mission has always been to provide strong content, meaningful participation and inclusion in the entire school community. The fact that Weekly Reader publications have been a mainstay of U.S. schools for many decades affords our students the opportunity to access rich standards-based content, while building relationships and connection with their peers."

Weekly Reader Publishing Group President Neal Goff is proud to be part of this groundbreaking partnership with AbleNet. "It has always been our mission to reach all students with our publications, and

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we knew this population of young people needed content adjusted in ways that would allow them to reap the full benefits of our various offerings. Recognizing this unique challenge, we felt partnering with AbleNet was essential. AbleNet has a strong background in curriculum development and the integration of assistive technology ensures participation. The partnership provides assurances that we at Weekly Reader continue to stay true to the No Child Left Behind Act," said Goff.

For more information, contact AbleNet, Inc., 2808 Fairview Avenue North, Roseville, MN 55113; Phone: 800-322-0956; Fax 651-294-2259; Web site: <www.ablenetinc.com>.

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