

# Introduction

Teachers assign classwork and homework to provide practice for their students and to help ensure mastery of specific content. Sometimes the classwork or homework is assigned for solo practice, with the expectation that it will be performed independently. At other times, it is assigned within student dyads, groups, or as part of a cooperative project that extends over many weeks or months. In any case, classwork and homework arguably play a central role in students' academic curricula because such work (a) increases opportunities for students to respond, (b) creates occasions for active student responses, and (c) provides teachers with feedback on the quality of instruction (Greenwood, Delquadri, & Hall, 1984; Heward, 1994).

Still another benefit for well-designed classwork and homework relates to generality and maintenance of behavior change. Teachers also provide classwork and homework to determine if behaviors demonstrated during daily instruction are evident in different contexts (i.e., Can the student solve a higher order problem after instruction on a lower level skill? Are skills maintained in the future?).

Also, although not often recognized, homework provides an opportunity for parents to participate in the learning processes of their child. Even if ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic family practices and dynamics, or language skills mitigate against active participation, parents can still be home-based partners if they supervise their child's work. Regardless of the child's level—elementary, middle, or high school—parents can be extremely influential in helping to reinforce skills introduced by teachers.

The purpose of this book is to address strategies that teachers, parents, and students can use to facilitate the accurate, timely, and proficient completion of classwork and homework assignments. Part I addresses increasing classwork productivity. Part II addresses increasing homework productivity. A range of examples is provided across elementary, middle, and high school levels for students with and without disabilities. Emphasis is placed on practical procedures that meet the standard of best practice (Peters & Heron, 1993).