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Five years’ Struggle to Teach Science to Students with Disabilities

ABSTRACT
In spite of long history of special education, very little attention has been paid to teaching particular subject matter, especially science, to students with disabilities. Furthermore, science is one of the subjects special educators are often less comfortable teaching. My colleagues and I started a science festival for the disabled that has been running since 2006. We have developed science plays and hands-on activities specially designed for students with disabilities including visual and hearing impairments, mental handicaps and autism. We invite students to our campus for the science festival every year, and for students with physical disabilities we visit their schools with teaching materials. It has been very challenging to develop and adapt teaching materials to meet the needs of disabled students. Through our work with these learners, we have gained information and started a research program about students’ difficulties in learning science. In this presentation, I would like to share these experiences and introduce a recent pilot study with visually impaired students.

BIO
Daniel Cha is an associate professor of science education at Daegu University in South Korea. His research deals with teaching science to the visually impaired students and using technology in science teaching and learning.