

*Dr. R. Kenton Denny* by Rhonda Watson



*R. Kenton Denny, Ph.D.:*

*Walker-Gibbs Endowed Associate*

*Professor Department of*

*Educational Theory, Practice and*

*Policy, [Louisiana State University](#),*

*Baton Rouge, LA*

**Table of Contents**

1. *Background Information*
2. *Early Beginnings*
3. *Influences*
4. *Current Projects/Research*
5. *Publications*
6. *References*

*Dr. R. Kenton Denny has focused most of his work in the area of [Emotional Behavioral Disorders](#) (EBD) in children. His research efforts address emotional and behavioral disorders, teacher-student instructional interaction, as well as behavioral interventions in school ([Louisiana State, 2010](#)). Dr. Denny teaches a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. These courses range from Introduction to Exceptionalities, to Beginning Applied Behavior Analysis. His teaching experiences have taught him about the many recent changes in the field (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

***Background Information***

*Dr. Denny grew up on the Cumberland Plateau of middle Tennessee. He has two sisters who are in the education field as well. He enjoys football, fishing, and, in his own words, collecting power tools that he seldom uses. In terms of education, Dr. Denny graduated in 1977 from [Tennessee Technological University](#) with a B.S. in secondary education. He obtained a Special Education Certificate from there as well, in 1978. In 1987, he received his Ph.D. in Education and Human Development from [Vanderbilt University](#) (R.K Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

### ***Early Beginnings***

*Dr. Denny, a second-generation special educator, started out working with students with severe disabilities. He worked with these students after school in a classroom where his mother taught. After completing his undergraduate degree in 1977, he worked with adults who exhibited intellectual disabilities while completing his certification in special education (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010). While completing his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt, Dr. Denny conducted research in a variety of areas. Specifically, he focused on the inclusion of students with autistic, cognitive, and physical disabilities into public school settings. He also studied the effects of physical conditioning on stereotypic and self-injurious behavior in adults who exhibited mental retardation. Lastly, he conducted research on the use of sensory stimulation in the treatment of stereotypic behavior in school settings (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

*After obtaining his Ph.D., he worked in many settings, but his work at the [University of Kansas Bureau of Child Research at Parsons, Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies](#), from 1992 to 1994, most notably influenced his career. It is here that he, along with his colleagues, started investigating student-teacher instructional interactions and the potential aversive affects on both students and teachers. He believes their work in this area has had a profound effect on everything he has done throughout his career (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

### ***Influences***

*Dr. Denny considers the influence of his colleagues and friends invaluable (personal communication, October, 15, 2010). Numerous individuals have impacted his work, each having and contributed to different aspects of career. He considers [Dr. Richard E. Shores](#), a professor in his doctoral studies at Vanderbilt's [Peabody College of Education and Human Development and](#) also his graduate advisor, one of these major influences. Dr. Shores' work on the interactional nature of student social behavior as well as the interactions between students and teachers, not only guides Dr. Denny's thoughts, but his activities as well. Dr. Shores has also taught him what it meant to be a scientist in the truest sense. Dr. C. Robert Campbell has also impacted his work; teaching him about funding for research, grant writing, and the challenges of working with schools (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

*Dr. Martin J. Kaufman, the former Dean at the [University of Oregon](#) and a Division Leader with OSEP, instructed Dr. Denny on a number of subjects such as the federal research system, and how to frame ideas and approaches in unique ways. Finally, the discussions and arguments between Dr. Denny and Philip Gunter, one of his oldest friends and colleagues, have been critical to his learning. He considers these discussions one of the most enjoyable aspects of their work together. (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010)*

### ***Current Projects/Research***

*Dr. Denny is currently working on a couple of projects. One project centers on the implementation of multi-tiered intervention models in the [Professional Development Schools](#). He and his colleagues are investigating the impact of using beginning teachers to provide secondary level interventions for academic performance across years. He also continues to work on designing and providing better web based behavioral data systems. He believes this will help to support the implementation of [Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support](#) on a state level. With the help of his colleagues, data on schools and student variables, which will aid in designing and redesigning new systems that address challenging behavior in the classroom, have been collected over the last five years (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

*Along with these projects, Dr. Denny is also involved in several grant projects. He is the principal investigator of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support, which he has been facilitating since 1995. This program provides information and resources to help educators create a positive school environment for their students ("Positive Behavioral Interventions", 2010). Other grant programs include the [Louisiana State Improvement Grant](#) and two Professional Development School Grants. With these proposals, he hopes to address program needs within his department. These grants address critical needs within the state or schools and aid in improving the instructional program for beginning, as well, as graduate students. His grant work has changed his research focus to implementation, along with the challenges involved in changing instructional practice on a wide scale. One of the difficulties Dr. Denny and his colleagues have experienced is determining the degree of implementation, which will effect meaningful changes in student behavior (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).*

### ***Publications***

*Allor, J., Gansle, K., Alexander, K., & Denny, R.K. (2006). The stop and go game: The effects of modeling, practice, and feedback on phonemic awareness segmentation tasks. *Preventing School Failure, 50*, 23-30.*

Cheek, E., Denny, R.K. & Rice, G. (2000). *Technology , exceptional individuals and the coming millennium*. In J. Lindsey (Ed.). *Technology and Special Education* (3 rd Ed). Austin TX: Pro-Ed. ( pp. 459 –462).

Cheek, E., & Denny, R.K. (2006). *Evaluation models for technology applications*. In J. Lindsey (Ed.), *Technology and Special Education* (4th ed.). Austin, Texas: Pro-Ed

Davis, C.A., Lane, K.L., Sutherland, K., Gunter, P., Denny, R.K., Pickens, P., & Wehby, J. (2004). *Differentiating curriculum and instruction on behalf of students with emotional and behavioral disorders within general education settings*. In L.M. Bullock, R.A. Gable, & K.J. Melloy (Eds). *Meeting the Diverse Needs of Children and Youth with EBD: Evidence Based Practices*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Gunter, P.L., Callicott, K., & Denny, R.K. (2003). *Finding a place for data collection in classrooms for students with emotional/behavioral disorder*. *Preventing School Failure*, 48(1), 4-8.

Gunter, P.L., & Denny, R.K. (1996). *Research Issues and Needs Regarding Teacher Use of Classroom Management Strategies*. *Behavioral Disorders*, 22 (1), 15-20.

Gunter, P.L. & Denny, R.K. (1998). *Research trends in academic instruction for students with emotional behavioral disorders*. *Behavioral Disorders*, 24, 38-42.

- Gunter, P. & Denny, R.K. (2004). *Data collection issues in behavioral disorders research*. In R. Rutherford, M. Quinn & S. Mathur (Eds). *Handbook of Research in Behavior Disorders*. Guilford Publishing: New York.
- Gunter, P.L., Denny, R.K., & Venn, M.L. (2000). *Modification of Instructional Materials and Procedures for Curricular Success of Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*. *Preventing School Failure, 44*(3), 116-121.
- Kevin S. Sutherland, R. Kenton Denny, & Gunter, P.L (2005), *Teachers of Students With Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Reported Professional Development Needs: Differences Between Fully Licensed and Emergency-Licensed Teachers*. *Preventing School Failure, 49*(2), 41-46.
- Mooney, P., Denny, R.K., & Gunter, P.L. (2004). *The Impact of NCLB and the Reauthorization of IDEA on Academic Instruction of Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders*. *Behavioral Disorders, 29*(3), 237-246.
- Mooney, P. McCarter, K.S., Schraven, J., Hintze, J.M., Mooney, E., Landry, C. Colclough, T., Gansle, K., Denny, R.K., Grandstaff-Beckers, G., Benner, G., & Allor, J.H. (2008). *Further evidence of oral reading fluency's utility in predicting statewide student reading proficiency*. *International Journal of Psychology: a Biopsychosocial Approach, 2*, 121-146.

*Stuhlmann, J., Daniel, C., Dellinger, A., Denny, R. K., & Powers, T. (1999). A generalizability study of the effects of training on teachers' abilities to rate children's writing using a rubric. Reading Psychology, 20 (2) 107-27.*

## **References**

*Louisiana State University. (2010). Retrieved September 17, 2010, from [www.lsu.edu](http://www.lsu.edu)*

*Positive behavioral interventions and support. (2010). Retrieved September 17, 2010, from [lapositivebehavior.com](http://lapositivebehavior.com)*