Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities in the area of Basic Reading

Accommodations are designed to remove barriers to learning for students with a disability so that they can access and make progress in the grade level curriculum. Accommodations offset the effects of the disability allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills; they often reduce, or even eliminate, the effects of the disability.

There are 4 categories of accommodations:
- Presentation
- Response
- Setting
- Timing.

Accommodations **do not** reduce learning expectations and should not give a false picture of what a student knows and is able to do.

Accommodations need to be directly related to the unique needs of the individual student that were identified through the evaluation process.

Presentation	A change in the way information is presented. ● **Example**: Letting a child with dyslexia listen to audiobooks instead of reading printed text.
Response	A change in the way a child responds to assignments, activities, or assessments. ● **Example**: Providing a keyboard to a child who struggles with handwriting when she's writing an essay
Setting	A change in the classroom or school environment. ● **Example**: Allowing a child with ADHD to take a test in a separate room with fewer distractions
Timing & Scheduling	A change to the time a child has for a task. ● **Example**: Providing extra time on homework for a child who has a slow processing speed[1] or poor[2]

Guide to IEP/504 Accommodations

Unique needs of disability	Questions to ask	Possible Accommodations to consider
Accessing grade level text due to issues with decoding.	Does the student have difficulty: ● Reading and understanding directions? ● Decoding grade level text? ● Fluently reading[3] grade level text?	● Text to speech technology ● An adult reads text aloud to a student ● Shorten reading passages ● Preview reading materials ● Clarify written directions
Difficulty processing information at the same rate as peers due to deficits in processing speed and working memory	Does the student have difficulty: ● Remembering large amounts of information? ● Reading grade level text fluently and accurately? ● Sustaining attention to grade level text? ● Completing lengthy reading assignments?	● Extend time to complete assignments and assessments ● Provide word banks[4] and multiple choice formats for assessments/learning activities ● Provide teacher notes ● Provide sentence starters[5] ● Alternate location for assessments ● Taping or recording lectures
Accurately spelling grade level words	Does the student have difficulty: ● Spelling grade level words? ● Remembering vocabulary words	● Speech to text technology ● Scribe ● Demonstrate knowledge in an alternate format (oral responding, drawing of concepts) ● Word prediction technology ● No penalty for misspelled words ● Access to spell check technology
Difficulty writing thoughts and ideas on paper at the same rate as peers.	Does the student have difficulty: ● Organizing thoughts? ● Expressing thoughts to others? ● Producing large amounts of written communication?	● Graphic organizers ● Speech to text technology ● Scribe ● Provide sentence starters

Unique needs of disability	Questions to ask	Possible Accommodations to consider
Difficulty comprehending grade-level text due to decoding concerns	Does the student have difficulty:: • Answering literal[6] and inferential[7] questions when a passage is read aloud but struggle when asked to read independently?	• Text to speech technology • An adult reads text aloud to a student • Shorten reading passages • Preview reading materials • Clarify written directions • Highlight key words and concepts
DIfficulty comprehending grade-level text due to deficits in vocabulary and/or receptive/expressive language	Does the student have difficulty: • Sequencing events in a story? • Using the context of a text to determine an unknown word? • Retelling the events in a story?	• Graphic organizers[8] to sequence events or retell a story • Pre and post teaching of new vocabulary • Modified text appropriate to instructional level • Sentence starters

Glossary of terms:

1: Processing speed- the time it takes to complete a mental task

2: Working memory- the type of memory that involves the way information is temporarily stored to complete a task. It plays a role in how we process and use information

3: Fluent reading- the ability of readers to read text effortlessly (rate) with meaningful expression that enhances comprehension of the text (prosody)

4: Word banks - lists of words that help students recall vocabulary that has been previously learned

5: Sentence starters - the first part of a sentence given to students so they can complete thoughts in a more structured fashion

6: Literal questions- questions with answers that can be found directly in the text

7: Inferential questions- questions with answers not found directly in the text but can be worked out using context and background knowledge

8: Graphic organizers- visual or graphic displays that help students organize the facts or ideas within a task