



Accommodations: Making Response Accommodations

Est. Time: 1 Hour

Objective

Use a set of guiding questions to identify response accommodations for a student with a disability based on his or her individual strengths and needs.

Overview

Students with disabilities often encounter barriers when accessing the general education curriculum. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) require that educators provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities to address these barriers. Careful consideration of a student's strengths and needs can help guide the identification and selection of instructional and testing accommodations.

An *accommodation* is a change to instructional or testing procedures or materials that allows a student to fully access the information and to accurately demonstrate knowledge. It does not change the expectations of learning or the requirements of the task. Instructional and testing accommodations are generally grouped into four categories:

- Presentation
- Response
- Setting
- Timing and Scheduling

This activity will focus on *response accommodations*, which allow a student with a disability to complete instructional assignments or assessments through ways other than typical verbal or written responses. These accommodations change the way that a student demonstrates learning, knowledge, or the ability to perform a skill. The table below provides examples of some common response accommodations.



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Response Accommodations	
The student has difficulty with:	Examples of Response Accommodations
Verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer • Visuals or gestures • Alternate modes of communication (e.g., written, augmentative alternative communication device, sign language)
Oral expression (e.g., articulation, finding words) or speaking in front of a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate response mode (e.g., written report) • Increased wait time • Visuals
Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with spell-checking software
Grammar and punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with grammar-checking software
Organizing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic organizers • Templates
Mathematics computation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculator • Abacus • Concrete objects or manipulatives • Sheet of basic math facts
Visual-spatial tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graph paper to align numbers in mathematics problems • Write answers in test booklet (instead of filling in bubbles on answer sheet)
Handwriting or forming letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scribe • Computer • Braille • Audio recording device • Text-to-speech (or voice-recognition) software • Alternate response mode (e.g., oral response) • Finger spacer • Handwriting guide
Staying focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student writes answers in test booklet • Graph paper to align numbers in mathematics problems • Graphic organizers • Monitor understanding of directions



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Dexterity or muscle control (e.g., difficulty holding pencil, difficulty keeping papers in place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scribe• Word processor• Text-to-speech software• Audio recording device• Pencil grip• Student writes answers in test booklet• Paper stabilizer (i.e., non-slip material to keep paper from moving)• Word prediction software
Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpreter• Scribe

Note: This table highlights common examples of response accommodations, but it is not an exhaustive list.



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Activity

Identify a response accommodation for a student with a disability based on his or her individual strengths and needs. Select one of the options below to begin.

Option 1: Identify a student with a disability in your classroom. To preserve the anonymity of your student, be sure to use first name only or an alias.

- Describe the student you selected, making sure to include:
 - A description of the student (i.e., age, gender, disability, first language)
 - Student strengths (include a minimum of three)
 - What the student is having difficulty with (e.g., skills, content areas)
- Complete the attached Response Accommodations Worksheet.
- Select one response accommodation from the Response Accommodations Worksheet.
 - Identify the accommodation you selected and explain how it will address the student's needs.
 - Provide an example of how you would implement this accommodation.

Option 2: If you are not currently teaching, use the student in the scenario below to complete this activity.

Mason is an energetic ten-year-old boy who speaks English. Typically, he gets along with his peers and is well-liked by his classmates. Because he is quite creative and is fascinated by objects with moving parts, he is actively involved in the robotics club. Although Mason is very bright, he has a learning disability and ADHD. Mason has difficulty processing, retaining, and recalling information. He also has some difficulty organizing materials and keeping up with school supplies. It is quite common for him to complete his homework but then misplace it before he has a chance to turn it in. Mason often becomes easily distracted by what is going on around him and has difficulty staying focused long enough to complete his work.

- a. Complete the attached Response Accommodations Worksheet.
- b. Select one response accommodation from the Response Accommodations Worksheet.
 - Identify the accommodation you selected and explain how it will address the student's needs.
 - Provide an example of how you would implement this accommodation.



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Directions: This worksheet should be completed for an individual student. Read through each item in the left-hand column and determine whether it is a challenge for the student. If it is, circle “yes.” If not, circle “no.” For each item with a “yes,” refer to the handout “Examples of Presentation Accommodations” and record one or two accommodations in the third column of the worksheet that might meet the student’s needs.

Response Accommodations		
Does the student have difficulty:	Circle One	If yes, list 1–2 accommodations that might meet this student’s need.
Verbal communication	Yes No	
Oral expression	Yes No	
Spelling	Yes No	
Grammar and punctuation	Yes No	
Organizing information	Yes No	
Mathematics computation	Yes No	
Visual-spatial tasks	Yes No	
Handwriting or forming letters	Yes No	
Staying focused	Yes No	
Dexterity or muscle control	Yes No	
Hearing	Yes No	

Note: This worksheet was developed specifically for this activity. It is not a standard form.