



## Accommodations: Making Setting Accommodations

Est. Time: 1 Hour

### Objective

Use a set of guiding questions to identify setting 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 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 *setting accommodations*, which allow a change in the location or the characteristics of the environment. The table below provides examples of some common setting accommodations.



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Setting Accommodations	
The student has difficulty with:	Examples of Setting Accommodations
Staying focused (i.e., is easily distracted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate setting (e.g., different room for testing)</li> <li>• Different location in classroom (e.g., away from distractions such as windows or trash can)</li> <li>• Preferential seating (e.g., near teacher)</li> <li>• Study carrels</li> <li>• Noise-reducing headphones</li> <li>• Individual setting</li> <li>• Small-group setting</li> </ul>
Regulating behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate setting (e.g., different room for testing)</li> <li>• Preferential seating (e.g., near teacher)</li> <li>• Study carrels</li> <li>• Individual setting</li> <li>• Small-group setting</li> </ul>
Seeing text or illustrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferential seating (e.g., near whiteboard)</li> <li>• Different location in classroom (e.g., away from windows)</li> <li>• Special lighting</li> </ul>
Hearing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferential seating (e.g., near teacher)</li> <li>• Different location in classroom (e.g., away from noisy areas)</li> </ul>
Physically accessing resources or needed equipment/assistive technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different location in classroom (e.g., near electrical outlet, end of row)</li> <li>• Separate location to access equipment (e.g., computer lab)</li> <li>• Ample space for adaptive furniture or equipment</li> <li>• Adjustable height desk (e.g., to accommodate wheelchair)</li> <li>• Space for a service animal</li> <li>• Larger desks or tables (e.g., to accommodate equipment)</li> <li>• Storage areas for equipment</li> </ul>
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual supports (e.g., labeled storage containers, color-coded binders)</li> <li>• Checklist of needed supplies</li> </ul>

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



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### Activity

Identify a setting 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.

- a. 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)
- b. Complete the attached Setting Accommodations Worksheet.
- c. Select one response accommodation from the Setting 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 Setting Accommodations Worksheet.
- b. Select one response accommodation from the Setting 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.

Setting Accommodations		
Does the student have difficulty:	Circle One	If yes, list 1–2 accommodations that might meet this student’s need.
Staying focused	Yes    No	
Regulating behavior	Yes    No	
Seeing text or illustrations	Yes    No	
Hearing information	Yes    No	
Physically accessing resources or needed equipment/assistive technology	Yes    No	
Organization	Yes    No	

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