

Accommodations to the Physical Environment: Setting Up a Classroom for Students with Visual Disabilities

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels below each section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Otherwise, print this document and record your notes by hand.

Module Home

- Module Description: This module offers helpful tips on setting up the physical aspects of your classroom and will introduce types of equipment used by students with visual disabilities (est. completion time: 1 hour).
- *STAR Legacy Cycle*
- Related to This Module
 - Link: Module Outline
 - Video: Navigating an IRIS *STAR Legacy* Module
 - Link: IRIS and Adult Learning Theory
 - Wrap-Around Content Map

Challenge

- Video: Ms. Milton has just learned that she'll have two students with visual disabilities in her class this year. She is unsure of what types of accommodations to make to her classroom and her teaching approach so that both students' needs and her goals for the class are met.

Notes

Initial Thoughts

- What resources should Ms. Milton consult to learn more about Evan's and Emily's needs?
- What should Ms. Milton consider when planning her room?
- What is all this equipment? Where should Ms. Milton put it?

Notes

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Perspectives & Resources

❖ Module Objectives

- After completing the entire Perspectives & Resources section and reviewing the accompanying activities, you should be able to:
 - Identify resources for obtaining assistance with including students with visual disabilities in the classroom
 - Describe key considerations for organizing your classroom to include students with visual impairments or blindness
 - Help students with visual impairments safely navigate the classroom
 - Consult with professionals who will assist you in familiarizing students with the school and classroom environment and who are knowledgeable about the equipment that students with visual disabilities may use
 - Identify and describe the functions of commonly used assistive equipment designed for students with visual impairments and blindness
- This IRIS Module aligns with the following licensure and program standards and topic areas...

Notes

❖ Page 1: Getting Started

- Establishing Your Resources
 - Link: “individualized education programs” [definition]
 - Members of the support team [bullet points]
 - Link: Teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI)
 - Link: Orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist
 - Link: Paraprofessionals and other professionals
- Keep in Mind

Notes

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❖ Page 2: The Individualized Education Program

- Using the IEP as Your Road Map
- Notes from Emily's IEP
- Notes from Evan's IEP
- Link: Blank form

Notes

❖ Page 3: The Student and the Family

- Getting Student Input [bullet points]
 - Link: Sample questions to ask students
- Getting the Family's Perspective [bullet points]
 - Link: Sample questions to ask family members

Notes

❖ Page 4: The Professionals

- Support from the TVI [bullet points]
 - Link: Sample questions to ask the TVI
- Assistance From the O&M Specialist [bullet points]
 - Link: Sample questions to ask the O&M Specialist
- Aid From Paraprofessionals and Other Professionals
 - Paraprofessional
 - Other professionals

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❖ Page 5: Tips for Setting Up Your Classroom

- Functional Considerations, Guidelines for Accommodations
- Keep in Mind
 - Audio: Sharon Sacks discusses the importance of flexible seating
- Link: Safety considerations
- Link: Furniture arrangement
- Link: Lighting needs
- Link: Color and contrast considerations
- Link: Materials storage
- Link: Bulletin boards/other posted materials
- Activity: Help Ms. Milton identify areas of concern
 - Link: Help Ms. Milton lay out her bulletin board for Evan and Emily

Notes

❖ Page 6: Helping Students Navigate the Classroom

- Audio: Sharon Sacks discusses how teachers can alert students with visual disabilities to changes in the classroom environment
- The O&M Specialist
 - Link: Tactile map
 - Link: Close-up view of tactile map
- Commonly used techniques for safe travel (box with photos and links)
 - Link: Squaring off
 - Link: Aligning
 - Link: Upper-body protective technique
 - Link: Lower-body protective technique
 - Link: Trailing
- The Classroom Teacher
 - Audio: Betty Hurst describes helping a blind student navigate the classroom
- Do Use [bullet points]
- Avoid [bullet points]
- Activity: Test your knowledge
 - Link: Test your knowledge of orientation and mobility skills

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Notes

❖ Page 7: Materials and Devices Used by Students with Visual Disabilities

- Link: assistive technology
- Devices
 - Devices to aid use of vision
 - Link: Optical
 - Link: Nonoptical
 - Link: Electronic magnification
 - Devices to aid access to print materials
 - Link: Braille
 - Link: Audible/Speech
 - Devices to aid orientation and mobility
 - Link: Optical
 - Link: Nonoptical
 - Link: Orientation aids
- Activity: Help Ms. Milton choose devices for Evan and Emily
 - Link: Who is more likely to use each device?

Notes

❖ Page 8: Tips for Using Helping Students with Visual Impairments Use Assistive Technology

- Where Do I Put It?
 - General Tips [bullet points]
- Do I Need to Know How to Use It? [bullet points]
- Audio: Sharon Sacks discusses what teachers should know about assistive technology

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Notes

❖ Page 9: References & Additional Resources

- Suggested module citation
- References
- Additional Resources

❖ Page 10: Credits

- Suggested module citation
- Content Experts
- Module Developers
- Module Production Team
- Media Production Team
- Media
- Expert Interviews

Wrap Up

- Summary of the module
- Audio: Sharon Sacks discusses the role of the general education teacher with students who have visual impairments
- Link: [Instructional Accommodations: Making the Learning Environment Accessible to Students With Visual Disabilities](#)
- Link: [IRIS Module](#)
- Revisit your Initial Thoughts responses

Notes

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Assessment

- Complete the numbered questions. Please note that the IRIS Center does not collect your Assessment responses. If this is a course assignment, you should turn them in to your professor using whatever method he or she requires.

Notes

You Have Completed This Module

- Give Us Your Feedback
 - Link: [Module feedback survey form](#)
- Professional Development Hours
 - Link: [IRIS PD Options](#)
- Related Resources [[links](#)]