

72 Accommodations That Can Help Students with ADHD

Children and youth with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) often have serious problems in school. Inattention, impulsiveness, hyperactivity, disorganization, and other difficulties can lead to unfinished assignments, careless errors, and behavior which is disruptive to one's self and others. Through the implementation of relatively simple and straightforward accommodations to the classroom environment or teaching style, teachers can adapt to the strengths and weaknesses of students with ADHD. Small changes in how a teacher approaches the student with ADHD or in what the teacher expects can turn a losing year into a winning one for the child.

Examples of accommodations which teachers can make to adapt to the needs of students with ADHD.


1. Seat student in quiet area
2. Seat student near good role model
3. Seat student near teacher
4. Seat student near "study buddy"
5. Increase distance between desks
6. Allow extra time to complete assigned work
7. Shorten assignments or work periods to coincide with span of attention; use timer
8. Break long assignments into smaller parts so student can see end to work
9. Assist student in setting short term goals
10. Give assignments one at a time to avoid work overload
11. Require fewer correct responses for grade
12. Reduce amount of homework
13. Instruct student in self-monitoring of behavior using cueing (i.e. hand raising, calling out)
14. Pair written instructions with oral instructions
15. Provide peer assistance in note taking
16. Give clear, concise instructions
17. Seek to involve student in lesson presentation
18. Cue student to stay on task (i.e. private signal)
19. Ignore minor, inappropriate behavior
20. Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences

21. Use time-out procedure for misbehavior
22. Supervise closely during transition times
23. Use "prudent" reprimands for misbehavior (i.e. avoid lecturing or criticism)
24. Attend to positive behavior with compliments etc.
25. Set up behavior contract
26. Call on only when hand is raised in appropriate manner
27. Praise when hand raised to answer question
28. Allow student to stand at times while working
29. Provide opportunity for "seat breaks" (i.e. run errands, etc.)
30. Provide short break between assignments
31. Remind student to check over work product if performance is rushed and careless
32. Give extra time to complete tasks (especially for students with slow motor tempo)
33. Provide reassurance and encouragement
34. Frequently compliment positive behavior and work product
35. Speak softly in non-threatening manner if student shows nervousness
36. Review instructions when giving new assignments to make sure student comprehends directions
37. Look for opportunities for student to display leadership role in class
38. Conference frequently with parents to learn about student's interests & achievements outside of school
39. Send positive notes home
40. Make time to talk alone with student
41. Encourage social interactions with classmates if student is withdrawn or excessively shy
42. Reinforce frequently when signs of frustration are noticed
43. Look for signs of stress build up and provide encouragement or reduced work load to alleviate pressure and avoid temper outburst
44. Spend more time talking to students who seem pent up or display anger easily
45. Provide brief training in anger control: encourage student to walk away; use calming strategies; tell nearby adult if getting angry
46. If reading is weak: provide additional reading time; use "previewing" strategies; select text with less on a page; shorten amount of required reading; avoid oral reading
47. If oral expression is weak: accept all oral responses; substitute display for oral report; encourage student to tell about new ideas or experiences; pick topics easy for student to talk about
48. If written language is weak: accept non-written forms for reports (i.e. displays, oral, projects); accept use of typewriter, word processor, tape recorder; do not assign large quantity of written work; test with multiple choice or fill-in questions
49. If math is weak: allow use of calculator; use graph paper to space numbers; provide additional math time; provide immediate correctness feedback and instruction via modeling of the correct computational procedure



50. Ask for parental help in encouraging organization
51. Provide organization rules
52. Encourage student to have notebook with dividers and folders for work
53. Provide student with homework assignment book
54. Supervise writing down of homework assignments
55. Send daily/weekly progress reports home
56. Regularly check desk and notebook for neatness, encourage neatness rather than penalize sloppiness
57. Allow student to have extra set of books at home
58. Do not penalize for poor handwriting if visual-motor defects are present
59. Encourage learning of keyboarding skills
60. Allow student to tape record assignments or homework
61. Praise compliant and appropriate behavior
62. Provide immediate feedback
63. Use teacher attention to reinforce positive behaviors
64. Acknowledge positive behavior of nearby student
65. Implement classroom behavior management system
66. Monitor social interactions
67. Set up social behavior goals with student and implement a reward program
68. Prompt appropriate social behavior either verbally or with private signal
69. Encourage cooperative learning tasks with other students
70. Provide small group social skills training
71. Praise student frequently
72. Assign special responsibilities to student so others observe student in a positive light

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