

Accommodation Ideas for IEPs or 504 Plans

Students with disabilities who receive special education or Section 504 services often need accommodations. Accommodations can help special education students accomplish their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, participate and make progress in the general curriculum, participate and be educated with students with and without disabilities, and participate in extracurricular activities. For students with a 504 Plan, accommodations can help them overcome barriers that could prevent full participation in school activities.

An accommodation is a change that can help a student overcome or work around their disability, provide equal access to learning, and equal opportunity to show what they know and can do. These changes are typically physical or environmental changes. For example, allowing a student who has trouble writing to give their answers orally is an accommodation.

Accommodations do not change what a student is expected to learn. Instead, an accommodation may: change how a student receives instruction or completes the same assignment or test as other students, and/or change the amount of time, format, location, method of response, or presentation for tests or assignments. Accommodations should not change the content or level of the test or assignment.

Assistive technology can also be used as an accommodation. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines assistive technology as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.” [IDEA, Sec. 300.5](#)

For students receiving special education services under IDEA, the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee, which includes the parent or guardian, determines the accommodations that meet the unique and individual needs of the student. These accommodation decisions are written into the student’s IEP.

For students who receive services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the accommodations are decided by the Section 504 team. While federal law does not require that families participate in a Section 504 meeting, they should be provided ample opportunity to participate.





Resources for Families

Need more information on IDEA, IEPs, or special education? Scan the QR code to access our online resources.



Partners Resource Network

 Offices in Lubbock, Houston, Austin, El Paso, and Dallas/Fort Worth

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Accommodation Examples

Textbooks and Curriculum

Books

- Provide summaries of chapters
- Use a marker to highlight important textbook sections
- Provide two sets of classroom materials, one for home and one for school
- Provide a list of discussion questions before reading the material
- Provide books and written materials in alternative formats (Braille, large print, audio formats, or digital text)

Curriculum

- Provide a vocabulary list
- Allow alternative assignments in place of long writing assignments (posters, panoramas, electronic presentation, or oral presentation)
- Provide alternatives to reading aloud in front of the class

Classroom Environment

- Keep work space clear of unnecessary materials
- Keep the classroom quiet during times that require focus
- Reduce visual distractions in the classroom
- Provide a computer for written work
- Seat the student close to the teacher or a positive role model
- Use a study carrel (make study carrels available to all students)
- Seat the student away from distractions (windows, doorways, and high-traffic areas)
- Provide a clear view of the board, teacher, and screen
- Keep extra classroom materials on hand (pencils, paper, etc.)

- Provide additional personal space between desks
- Post a visual schedule on the student's desk
- Allow frequent movement breaks
- Provide accessible classroom furniture (special desks, tables, or chairs)
- Provide headsets to block noise
- Provide FM or sound field amplification system for listening
- Provide organizers for lockers or desks
- Provide sensory tools or fidgets

Instructions and Assignments

Directions

- Make sure to have the student's attention before giving directions
- Simplify directions
- Use both oral and printed directions
- Highlight keywords in directions
- Number and sequence steps in a task
- Have a student repeat directions to check for understanding
- Provide visual aids
- Show a model of the completed work
- Allow use of an assistive technology device to record directions (smartphone camera or voice recording app)

Time and Transitions

- Provide visual or verbal cues several minutes before the transition from one activity to another
- Provide additional time to complete a task
- Allow a specified amount of extra time to turn in homework without penalty
- Provide assistance when moving between classrooms or around the building
- Allow the student to leave the classroom 2-3 minutes early to avoid crowded hallways
- Increase wait time for responses

- Provide a visual timer
- Take a test at a specific time of day

Handwriting

- Use worksheets that require minimal writing
- Provide a computer for written work
- Use fill-in-the-blank questions rather than short answer
- Provide a copy of class notes
- Provide outlines
- Provide partially completed outlines of lectures for students to fill in the blanks
- Provide a copy of any notes, assignments, or directions written on the board
- Allow the use of assistive technology to write, record, or dictate answers or essays
- Provide adaptive writing tools, pencil grips, slanted surface
- Allow the student to dictate a writing assignment for a teacher or teacher's aide to transcribe

Grading

- Weigh daily work more heavily than tests for a student who tests poorly
- Mark the correct answers rather than incorrect ones

Tests

- Give directions orally
- Allow extended time to complete tests
- Allow the test to be taken in a room with few distractions
- Read materials out loud to the student and allow oral responses (for tests that don't measure reading or writing)
- Provide study guides and study questions over test materials
- Divide tests into small sections

- Group similar questions and problems together
- Allow alternative projects in place of tests
- Provide a sample or practice test

Math

- Allow the student to use a calculator without penalty
- Group similar problems together
- Allow the student to complete fewer problems to focus on mastery of concepts
- Reduce the number of problems per page
- Use enlarged graph paper to help the student keep numbers in columns
- Provide a table of math facts for reference (unless testing math facts)
- Provide a number line
- Read word problems to the student
- Break complex problems into smaller steps
- Use pictures or graphics
- Circle math computation signs

Other Accommodations

- Check progress and provide help, as needed, during independent work
- Chunk complex or long assignments into smaller pieces
- Provide checklists for individual tasks on longer assignments
- Allow the student to practice presenting to the teacher or in a small group before presenting to the entire class
- Give the student one worksheet at a time
- Sequence work with the easiest parts first
- Provide graphic organizers or flow charts to help student organize thoughts and ideas
- Use color coded materials for each class



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