

# Accommodations for Students with LD

By: National Center for Learning Disabilities (2006)

## What are accommodations?

Accommodations are alterations in the way tasks are presented that allow children with learning disabilities to complete the same assignments as other students. Accommodations do not alter the content of assignments, give students an unfair advantage or in the case of assessments, change what a test measures. They do make it possible for students with LD to show what they know without being impeded by their disability.

## How does a child receive accommodations?

Once a child has been formally identified with a learning disability, the child or parent may request accommodations for that child's specific needs. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act states that a child's IEP (Individualized Education Program) team which both parent and child are a part of – must decide which accommodations are appropriate for him or her. Any appropriate accommodations should be written into a student's IEP.

Here are some examples of possible accommodations for an IEP team to consider, broken into six categories:

### \* Presentation:

- o Provide on audio tape
- o Provide in large print
- o Reduce number of items per page or line
- o Provide a designated reader
- o Present instructions orally

### \* Response:

- o Allow for verbal responses
- o Allow for answers to be dictated to a scribe
- o Allow the use of a tape recorder to capture responses
- o Permit responses to be given via computer
- o Permit answers to be recorded directly into test booklet

### \* Timing:

- o Allow frequent breaks
- o Extend allotted time for a test

### \* Setting:

- o Provide preferential seating
- o Provide special lighting or acoustics
- o Provide a space with minimal distractions
- o Administer a test in small group setting
- o Administer a test in private room or alternative test site

### \* Test Scheduling

- o Administer a test in several timed sessions or over several days
- o Allow subtests to be taken in a different order
- o Administer a test at a specific time of day

### \* Other

- o Provide special test preparation
- o Provide on-task/focusing prompts
- o Provide any reasonable accommodation that a student needs that does not fit under the existing categories

### Should accommodations have an impact on how assignments are graded?

School assignments and tests completed with accommodations should be graded the same way as those completed without accommodations. After all, accommodations are meant to “level the playing field”, provide equal and ready access to the task at hand, and not meant to provide an undue advantage to the user.

### What if accommodations don't seem to be helping?

Selecting and monitoring the effectiveness of accommodations should be an ongoing process, and changes (with involvement of students, parents and educators) should be made as often as needed. The key is to be sure that chosen accommodations address students' specific areas of need and facilitate the demonstration of skill and knowledge.

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