

Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations are instructional or test adaptations. They allow the student to demonstrate what he or she knows without fundamentally changing the target skill that's being taught in the classroom or measured in testing situations. Accommodations do not reduce learning or performance expectations that we might hold for students. More specifically, they change the manner or setting in which information is presented or the manner in which students respond. But they do not change the target skill or the testing construct.

Presentation accommodations allow a student to:

- Listen to audio recordings instead of reading text.
- Learn content from audiobooks, movies, videos and digital media instead of reading print versions.
- Work with fewer items per page or line and/or materials in a larger print size.
- Have a designated reader.
- Hear instructions orally.
- Record a lesson, instead of taking notes.
- Have another student share class notes with him.
- Be given an outline of a lesson.
- Use visual presentations of verbal material, such as word webs and visual organizers.
- Be given a written list of instructions.

Response accommodations allow a student to:

- Give responses in a form (oral or written) that's easier for him.
- Dictate answers to a scribe.
- Capture responses on an audio recorder.
- Use a spelling dictionary or electronic spell-checker.
- Use a word processor to type notes or give responses in class.
- Use a calculator or table of "math facts."

Setting accommodations allow a student to:

- Work or take a test in a different setting, such as a quiet room with few distractions.
- Sit where he learns best (for example, near the teacher).
- Use special lighting or acoustics.
- Take a test in small group setting.
- Use sensory tools such as an exercise band that can be looped around a chair's legs (so fidgety kids can kick it and quietly get their energy out).

Timing accommodations allow a student to:

- Take more time to complete a task or a test.

- Have extra time to process oral information and directions.
- Take frequent breaks, such as after completing a task.

Scheduling accommodations allow a student to:

- Take more time to complete a project.
- Take a test in several timed sessions or over several days.
- Take sections of a test in a different order.
- Take a test at a specific time of day.

Organization skills accommodations allow a student to:

- Use an alarm to help with time management.
- Mark texts with a highlighter.
- Have help coordinating assignments in a book or planner.
- Receive study skills instruction.

Modifications actually do change that target skill or the construct of interest. They often reduce learning expectations or affect the content in such a way that what is being taught or tested is fundamentally changed. Modifications are instructional or test adaptations that allow the student to demonstrate what he/she knows or can do, but they also reduce the target skill in some way.

Assignment *modifications* allow a student to:

- Complete fewer or different homework problems than peers.
- Write shorter papers.
- Answer fewer or different test questions.
- Create alternate projects or assignments.

Curriculum *modifications* allow a student to:

- Learn different material (such as continuing to work on multiplication while classmates move on to fractions).
- Get graded or assessed using a different standard than the one for classmates.
- Be excused from particular projects