

Making Modifications, Accommodations and Variations for Student Success

Compiled by:

Jim Rodrigues, Resource Specialist
M.S. Special Education

Contributions From:

Kathy Decker, PPS School Psychology
M.A. Special Education

9/11/2007

Complete manual available at www.jimrodsz.com/sped.html

Emotionally Disturbed

Characteristics

An emotional disability is characterized by one or more of the following: Displays pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behavior or feelings under normal conditions, inability to learn that cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors, displays tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or fears associated with personal or school problems, inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers. *Important to note: These characteristics must be displayed over a long period of time and to a marked degree.*

NOTE: Student usually has a normal range of intelligence and ability to handle the work presented BUT can become *EASILY* frustrated within a *SHORT* period of time regardless of the difficulty of the assignment presented and begin to act out in an inappropriate manner!! It is essential that you learn the signs the student will manifest prior to having a blow out and attempt to reduce the level of frustration the student is experiencing.

Recommended Accommodations, Modifications and Variations to the Curriculum:

Modifying the presentation

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Use concrete examples of concepts before teaching the abstract.
- Relate information to the student's experiential base.
- Reduce the number of concepts presented at one time.
- Provide consistent review of any lesson before introducing new information.
- Require verbal responses to indicate comprehension.
- Provide clear, concise directions and concrete examples for homework assignments.

Discussions

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Encourage participation, HOWEVER:
 - Be sure student understands class rules for participating in the discussion (i.e. raising hand before speaking).
 - Be sure student understands the importance of listening to others and not blurting out the answers.
- Be sure student understands that it is not acceptable to call other students names (i.e. calling someone stupid because they do not know an answer).
- Implement a silent cue indicating to student they will be called on soon.
- If you detect frustration mounting in the student, stand by them and/or encourage a self-timeout.
- If student is having a difficult day, then refrain from questioning student.

Worksheets

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Be sure worksheet is at the student's ability and readability level.
 - Re-work if necessary so that frustration levels are minimized.
- Break down tasks into multiple steps that are clearly detailed to minimize the building of frustration.
- If the worksheet contains a lot of material re-work it so that the visible content is minimized by dividing the worksheet into sections with:

- Lines, by folding the paper into sections, by boxing sections, by creating different colored sections, etc.
- If necessary, teacher should help prioritize the sequencing of tasks for student.

Assessments

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Minimize the use of timed tests.
- Provide limited choices for multiple choice and matching tests.
- Not more than 5 to 8 questions and answers per group.
- Provide the student with a word bank for fill in the blank questions.
- Minimize use of Scantron type answer documents.
 - Allow the student to write or circle the answers on tests rather than using Scantron type sheets.
 - If necessary, have an assistant transfer student response onto the Scantron type sheet.

Projects

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Break project into multiple segments with each segment having a specific completion date.
 - Develop calendar with list of specific due dates and provide to student for self-monitoring.
 - Frequent check-in with student is important to monitor progress towards completion and resolving any issues causing episodes of frustration.
- Short, frequent assignments are preferable to long-term projects.
- Frequent reminders of due dates during class are important.
 - Give reminders as to where they should be at this particular point in time so students can gauge their progress.
 - Consistently post due date reminders in the same location for student to review.
- Minimize unstructured time.
 - Provide additional assignments rather than allow student to sit idle or be unproductive.
- Give the student and parent a checklist detailing what is due and when it is due.
- Provide student samples for preview.
 - Discuss pros and cons of the sample with student so they will be able to see what is expected of them.
- Allow alternate methods of completing the project (i.e. PowerPoint, oral versus written presentation).
- Use peer editing to assist with project development.
- Provide and review grading rubric so student knows how they will be graded.

Reports

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Break report down into multiple steps with each step having a specific completion date.
 - Develop calendar with list of specific due dates and provide to student for self-monitoring
 - Frequent check-ins are important to monitor progress towards completion
- Allow student to use desktop publishing application (i.e. Publisher).
- Provide student an opportunity to use an outlining software application for brainstorming and organization (i.e. Inspiration).
- Allow student to use word processing software (i.e. Word)
 - Allow use of speech-to-text and text-to-speech software.
- Provide sample reports for student to review
- Review specific steps to writing a report
 - Provide an outline of required steps with due dates specified
- Provide and review grading rubric so student knows how they will be graded.

Reading

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Allow student to have a second set of books at home.
- If reading is an area of difficulty, utilize books on tape.
- For passages that need to be read aloud, have student read short passage segments out loud.
- Gradually increase length of passage as confidence builds.
- Allow student to use a hand-held spell checker or dictionary for identifying unknown words.
- To minimize frustration, select reading materials that are age and ability appropriate.

Writing

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration.**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Use graphic organizers to assist with organization of writing task.
- Allow student to use word processing software (i.e. Word).
 - Allow use of speech-to-text and text-to-speech software.
- Allow the student to use graph paper instead of lined paper (encourages neatness for some).
- Allow student to use writing instrument of choice (including color).
- If student has motor problems, allow the use of a pencil with rubber grip or a larger sized writing instrument.
- Allow alternate means of completing the assignment.
 - i.e. allow the student to dictate or record their responses instead of writing.
- Allow student to use desktop publishing application (i.e. Publisher).
- Provide student an opportunity to use an outlining software application for brainstorming and organization of thoughts for writing (i.e. Inspiration).
- Provide samples for student to review.
 - Review positive and negative aspects of the writing with the student so they have a better understanding of expectations.
- Review steps specific to the type of writing you are expecting the student to accomplish.
- Provide an outline of required steps.
- Provide and review grading rubric so student knows how they will be graded.

Group Work

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Allow student to work in cooperative mixed ability groups with group reward reinforcement system.
- Encourage peer assistance and collaborative learning.
- Clarify the rules when working in a group situation.
- Allow the student to have a responsible job within the group.
- Describe/rehearse rules of conduct and/or each student's role within the group expected to participate in the group.
- Allow each student to have their own physical space within the group to do their work.

Note-taking

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- If motor difficulties are involved or it is a day of high frustration, allow peer to take notes using carbonless paper.
- Provide slotted note guide so student can fill in the blanks and concentrate on the lecture or discussion.
- Provide student with a copy of the notes from the overhead (or allow student to copy the notes when you have finished each sheet).
- Provide printed copy of notes
 - Have student highlight key points on printed copy of notes rather than copying or recording lecture notes.
- Provide student with an outline of key points prior to the lecture.

Presentations

- **NOTE: In all cases, monitor student for increased levels of frustration**
- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Teach presentation techniques.
 - Model what you want the student to do during the presentation.
- Develop a detailed presentation checklist for students to follow and insure all aspects of the presentation are completed.
- Allow student to use alternative methods for presentation.
 - PowerPoint, visual presentation, videotaped presentation, graphs, maps, pictures, etc.
- Utilize visual aids to provide cues for student during the presentation (i.e. sign showing which part they should present next).
- Break presentation into smaller segments, each with specific due dates for self-monitoring.
 - Frequently monitor progress towards completion.

