

Making Modifications, Accommodations and Variations for Student Success

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

Visually Impaired

Characteristics

A student with a visual impairment is one whose vision significantly interferes with functioning in a regular school program or, for preschool- age children, in learning tasks. Visual impairment is determined on the basis of a current examination by an ophthalmologist or optometrist, and the District Vision Specialist.

Recommended Accommodations, Modifications and Variations to the Curriculum:

NOTE: Visual Impairment varies by student and so do their specific needs. Please consult the student's IEP and with the assigned Visual Specialist to see what the student specifically needs to be successful.

Questioning

- Call on student by name to have them participate in discussion.
- Make sure everything that is visually displayed is verbally described.
- Provide the students with a printed outline so the discussion can be more easily followed.

Worksheets

- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Enlarge to appropriate size (consult Vision Specialist), or have converted to Braille (whichever is appropriate) for the student.
- Scan materials and allow student to use text-to-speech software (i.e. [Natural Reader](#), free version).
- If available, allow student to use computer with screen magnification.
- Allow students to work in pairs to complete worksheets. Pair the visually impaired student with a print reader.
- Keep the format of the document visually clear and uncluttered.

Assessments

- Check students IEP to determine the accommodations needed in testing situations.
- Enlarge to appropriate size (consult Vision Specialist), or have converted to Braille (whichever is appropriate) for the student.
- Scan materials and allow student to use text-to-speech software (i.e. [Natural Reader](#), free version).
- If available, allow student to use computer with screen magnification.
- Allow extra time to complete tests.
- Read test to the student.
- Reader can record answers.
- Scantron type sheets are difficult for the VI student to use. Use an alternate form for recording of answers
- Bubble-in answer sheets are difficult for low vision students to use.
- Allow student to record answers on a separate sheet of paper.

Projects and Reports

- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Enlarge project or have converted to Braille (whichever one is appropriate).
- Allow additional time for completion of project.
 - Encyclopedia articles can be ordered in Braille (free) from the ROSE Project at 1- 800-777-8552 (www.seedlings.org).
- Give the student and parent a checklist about what is due and when it is due.

- If appropriate, provide student enlarged samples for preview.
 - Provide for parent as well if they will be assisting their student with the project.
- Allow alternate methods of project presentation (i.e. PowerPoint, orally).
- If students are working in groups on the project, and depending on the abilities of the disabled student, have them participate as note taker, presenter, etc.
- Provide and review grading rubric so student knows how they will be graded.

Reading Assignments

- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Allow additional time for low-vision readers as they may experience eye fatigue.
- Provide information on reading materials in advance to the case carrier, vision specialist or appropriate person so these materials can be ordered in the format that best benefits the student.
- Provide reading materials in advance to the appropriate individuals to be enlarged, scanned, converted to Braille, or recorded on tape.
 - Textbooks and books commonly used in educational settings are available on recorded tapes through [Recording for the Blind and Dyslexia](#). (**NOTE:** Students must be registered before ordering texts.) Many are also available through [BookShare.org](#).
 - Recreational books in recorded or Braille format can be ordered through the [Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped](#) (lcweb.log.gov/nls/). This is a free service. **NOTE:** Student must be registered before ordering.
 - The local county library system may have many common texts already on audiocassette.

Writing

- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Some low-vision students use dark, bold, or raised lined paper for writing assignments.
- Some students use a computer for written assignments.
- Allow use of speech-to-text software.
- Braille readers may Braille their assignments and have it transcribed into print.
 - **NOTE:** Meet with all involved parties to set time lines for the materials to be converted and given to you.
 - Some Braille readers use an electronic Braille note taker, such as a Braille' N Speak, for written assignments. (The assignment is input in Braille and then translated into a print copy for the classroom teacher to grade.)

Groups

- Depending on the abilities of the visually impaired student, they can be the note taker, the recorder, or the speaker for the group.

Note taking

- Visually impaired students may take notes on their Braille, electronic Braille note taker, computer, or may use a cassette recorder.
- Any notes written on the board should be said aloud for the visually impaired student.
- The visually impaired student should be seated as close to the board, overhead display or other devices used in the classroom as possible.
- Keep the information in a visually simple and organized format for all students with visual perceptual difficulties.
- Use high contrast writing tools when using the overhead, chalkboard, or dry erase board.
- If available, use of a Smart Board that is attached to the student's or a classroom computer can provide the student with an accessible version of the notes.
- If available, use of a Smart Board with text conversion software would enable the student to access the electronic version of the notes with a screen reading or voice output program.
- Allow use of speech-to-text software.

Presentations

- Verify student understands assignment instructions.
 - Use both oral and written instructions
- Allow the low-vision student to stand next to or beside the presenter.
- The presenter should avoid standing with his back to a window or bright light source to avoid glare.
- Allow the low-vision or blind child to touch any tactual items being presented either before or during the presentation.
- Some students may use telescopic devices for distance viewing.

Computer Use

- Make sure the computer systems to be used by students with visual impairments have the monitor at eye level and it is positioned so the students can view it at close quarters.

- Some students need only a small amount of magnification, which may be available on the accessibility menu of the computer.
- Some low-vision readers use a screen magnification program to access the computer screen.
- Some students with visual impairments use screen readers, text readers, or other voice output devices to provide them information about the contents of the screen
- Some Braille readers use a voice output program or a refreshable Braille display to access the computer screen.
- Provide headphones to the student so they can more effectively understand the speech output device of their computer by limiting extraneous noise and to limit the distraction experienced by other students from the speech generated by the VI student's computer.

Other Information for Visually Impaired

- It is essential that all materials that need to be enlarged or converted to Braille are given to the appropriate person well in advance of the assignment.
- Provide a supportive peer assistant.
- Identify yourself and other group members before beginning a conversation.
- Provide large print or Braille text for all materials the student will need.
- Allow extra time for student and peers to continue with activities of choice outside of school day or at home.
- Use books-on-tape whenever possible.
- Allow (and encourage to use) adaptive equipment and supplies as specified in their IEP or by the vision specialist.
- Make sure all areas the student will use are kept uncluttered.
- Review directions with the student.
- Use tactile or auditory signals when appropriate.
- Maximize availability of visual media and/or models.
- Clearly label items or equipment.
- Allow for direct manipulations of material when appropriate.
- Allow additional time for all assignments.