

## Modifications

## Definitions

- Modifications:
  - [California Education Code Section 60850](#) (f) (5) "Modification" means any variation in the assessment environment or process that fundamentally alters what the test measures or affects the comparability of scores.
    - California Department of Education Document Explaining: [Testing Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications](#).
    - Also see [California Department of Education](#) for additional information.

## Definitions

- Accommodations:
  - Techniques and materials that allow individuals with disabilities to complete school or work tasks with greater ease and effectiveness.
    - Examples: tape recorders, spell checkers, expanded time.
  - An accommodation is any variation in the assessment environment or process that does not fundamentally alter what the exam measures or affect the comparability of exam scores.
    - Source: [Questions and Answers about the California High School Exit Examination \(CAHSEE\) Test Variations](#).
  - Examples of accommodations as per the California Department of Education: [Accommodations Matrix - Standards and Assessment Division \(California ...http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/lsa/documents/matrix5.pdf\)](#)

## Definitions

- Test Variations:
  - A test variation is defined as a change in the manner in which a test is presented or administered, or in how a test taker is allowed to respond.
  - Test variations include, but are not limited to, accommodations and modifications.
    - Source: [Questions and Answers about the California High School Exit Examination \(CAHSEE\) Test Variations](#)

## Legal Citations

- IDEA
  - **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**
    - **§ 300.114 LRE requirements:**
      - (a) *General.* (1) Except as provided in §300.324(d)(2) (regarding children with disabilities in adult prisons), the State must have in effect policies and procedures to ensure that public agencies in the State meet the LRE requirements of this section and §§300.115 through 300.120.
      - (2) Each public agency must ensure that—
        - (i) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and
        - (ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
    - Source: [U.S. Department of Education](#)

## Legal Citations

- **Title 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5)**
  - A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum.
    - Source: [Cornell University Law School](#)

## Inclusion: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions from NEA

- IDEA does not require that every student with a disability be placed in the regular classroom regardless of individual abilities and needs.
- This recognition that regular class placement may not be appropriate for every disabled student is reflected in the requirement that school districts make available a *range of placement options to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities.*
  - Known as a continuum of services (alternative placements )

## Inclusion: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions from NEA

- **Continuum of Services**
  - The requirement for the continuum reinforces the importance of the individualized inquiry in determining what placement is the LRE for each student with a disability.
    - Not a "one size fits all" approach
  - The options on this continuum must include the alternative placements listed in the definition of special education under 300.17
    - (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions).
  - Source: [Wrightslaw](#)

## Questions to Ask Prior to Making Adaptations to the Curriculum

- Can the student actively participate in the lesson without any adaptations and achieve the same outcome?
- Will student-specific learning objectives need to be written?
- Can the student's participation level increase by altering the modality of instruction?
- Can the student's participation level be increased by altering the structure of the lesson?
- Can the student's participation and comprehension be increased by altering the instructional methods or teaching styles?
- Can the physical environment be altered to help facilitate participation?
- Will the student need individual help to ensure participation?
- Will an alternative activity need to be implemented?

## Questions to Ask Prior to Making Adaptations to the Curriculum

- Modify instruction:
  - Provide classroom demonstrations, adjust the lesson pace, and employ multiple instructional modalities during instruction.
  - Simplify language, pre-teach vocabulary, use mnemonics, use picture clues, implement peer tutoring, and evaluate which vocabulary is essential.
- Modify assignments:
  - Provide models, shorten assignments, and lower difficulty levels.
  - Adapt the time allowed for learning, task completion, or assessment.
- Strategies:
  - Teach study skills, test-taking skills, and learning strategies.
  - Modify rate and how material is presented
    - Include visual organizers, present concrete examples, pre-teach prerequisite information, provide additional application activities, use a variety of instructional strategies, provide advanced organizers, integrate other content areas into science, shorten lessons, and provide structure.

## Questions to Ask Prior to Making Adaptations to the Curriculum

- Alter instructional materials:
  - Provide alternate materials, taping books, and reformatting worksheets.
  - Provide graphic organizers and framed outlines, highlight important vocabulary and key concepts, implement partner reading, provide tape-recorded readings of text selections, and use trade books at various reading levels.
- Vary instructional groups:
  - Use peer tutoring and cooperative learning groups.
- Facilitate progress monitoring:
  - Read tests orally, provide study guides, allow students to retake tests, and modify grading criteria.
  - Provide authentic and performance-based assessment that can be easily linked to scientific processes, allow for multiple opportunities to demonstrate acquired knowledge and skills, implement portfolio assessment, teach test-taking skills and study techniques.
- Teachers may use a variety of adaptations to meet the needs of their student population while keeping them engaged through active participation in the lesson.

### Nine Types of Adaptations

Size	Time	Level of Support
•Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or complete. •For example: •Reduce the number of social studies terms a learner must learn at any one times.	•Adapt the time allotted and allowed for learning, task completion, or testing. •For example: •Individualize a timeline for completing a task, pace learning differently (increase or decrease) for some learners.	•Increase the amount of personal assistance with a specific learner. •For example: •Assign peer buddies, teaching assistants, peer tutors, or cross-age tutors.
Input	Difficulty	Output
•Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner. •For example: •Use different visual aids, plan more concrete examples, provide hands-on activities, place students in cooperative groups.	•Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work. •For example: •Allow the use of a calculator to figure math problems, simplify task directions, change rules to accommodate learner needs.	•Adapt how the student can respond to instruction. •For example: •Instead of answering questions in writing, allow a verbal response, use a communication book for some students, allow students to show knowledge with hands-on materials.
Participation	Alternate	Substitute Curriculum
•Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task. •For example: •In geography, have a student hold the globe, while others point out locations.	•Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials. •For example: •In social studies, expect a student to be able to locate just the states while others learn to locate capital as well.	•Provide different instruction and materials to meet a student's individual goals. •For example: •During a language test, one student is learning computer skills in the computer lab.

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Time
  - Break up tasks into smaller components; reduce their feeling of being overwhelmed by the mere size or requirements of the assignment.
    - Multiple steps or problems broken out onto individual pages.
  - Be specific on time requirements.
    - Routines should be just that: routine!
    - Insure they understand the routines and the specific time allowances allocated.
  - Reasonable extension of time for activities.
  - Assist with organizational skills.
    - More frequent reviews of notebooks, assignment books, etc.
  - Assist with time management skills.
    - Notebooks or daily homework/assignment logs.

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Method of Instructional Delivery
  - Always provide both verbal and written directions.
  - Provide clear, concise directions and concrete examples for homework assignments.
  - Tape record essential reading materials.
    - Books-on-Tape may be available as well.
    - Visually impaired students may qualify for recorded books (see information on [visually impaired](#)).
  - Preview unit vocabulary words.
  - Assess in variety of ways.
    - Give visual cues prior to asking questions if you want them to orally respond to questions in class (this allows them time to process the materials being discussed so you won't catch them off guard and contribute to their feeling inferior).

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Method of Instructional Delivery (continued)
  - Cooperative learning.
    - Place with students who will be willing to work with them and who understand that the quality of material the disabled student produces may be of a less quality than they might like. (Be sure the group understands that this will not affect their individual grades.)
  - Allow student to create flash cards with key information.
  - Use of student notebook, homework book, communication book (allows for daily communications with parent).
  - 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.

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Content of Instruction
  - Fewer items, but as many as needed to show grasp of standard(s) being presented.
  - Chunks: Break up tasks into smaller, achievable components (See 1.a)
    - Reduce number of items on page (i.e. 5 steps per page instead of all 15).
  - Presenting one or two items at a time in testing.
    - Eliminate tricky questions; be straight forward in assessing the student.
    - Do not give endless list of multiple choice type questions. Break them into "chunks" so that the student is not overwhelmed with information.

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Content of Instruction (continued)
  - Reduce extraneous material.
    - Insure student knows what they will be held accountable for.
  - Allow the use of a highlighter.
  - Use frequent visual cues (e.g. walking to student and standing by them to signal they will be called on next).
  - Provide study guides.
    - Keep it to the material they need to know to demonstrate mastery of the standard.
  - Whenever possible provide immediate feedback - correction at point of error.

## Generic Curriculum Modifications

- Learning environment
  - Individual work spaces.
  - Create quiet areas as necessary.
  - Peer tutors.
  - Insure rules, schedules, procedures are understood by all students.

## Considerations in Making Adaptations

- **PRESENTATION SEQUENCE OF SKILLS AND CONCEPTS**
  - Limit presentation of facts, concepts, and strategies to be learnt.
  - Provide practice of one fact, concept, and strategy at a time.
  - Provide guided practice first, then independent practice, with teacher monitoring.
  - Provide immediate feedback and correction procedures.
- **FOCUS ON RELEVANT INFORMATION**
  - Identify and highlight most important information to be learnt
  - Reduce distracting materials.

## Considerations in Making Adaptations

- **VOCABULARY AND LANGUAGE LEVELS ARE DIFFICULT**
  - Individualize some tasks by tape recording tasks
  - Provide written outlines
- **DIFFICULTY FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS**
  - **Oral:**
    - High light steps of the direction on board.
    - Tape record directions
    - Choral repeat of directions
    - Different students restate directions
    - Peer tutor or coach to clarify
  - **Written:**
    - Short and easy; low level vocabulary; no jargon
    - Number order of completion
    - Create peer checks
    - Color code directions to correspond with tasks,

## Good Modifications Should Always:

- Seamlessly fit into the classroom environment.
- Meet individual student needs.
- Increase curriculum understanding for each student.
- Increase disabled student participation in the curriculum
- Support and enhance instructional activities.

## Resources

- Modifications Resource Manual is available at:
  - <http://jimrodsz.com/sped.html>
- Other Materials Currently Available Include:
  - [Special Education for the General Education Teacher](#)
  - [A Parent's Guide to Commonly Used Special Education Terminology](#)
  - More will becoming in the near future