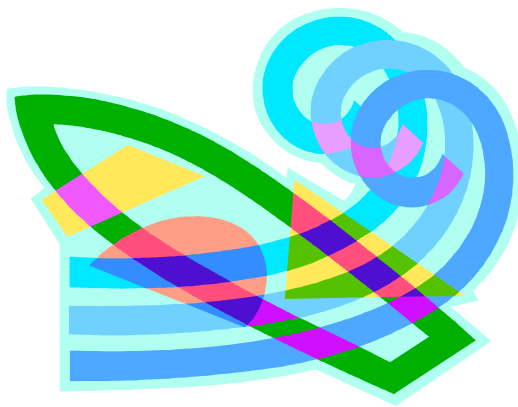


Accommodations and Modifications



The terms accommodations and modifications involve changes in different areas of curriculum and instruction that enable students with disabilities to be involved and progress in the curriculum. Students with disabilities have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), which identifies appropriate supports and techniques that enable them to access the curriculum. When a student accesses the general curriculum with accommodations only, they are held to the same learning objective as typical classmates. When accommodations are provided, changes are made with respect to **how** a student gains information or demonstrates knowledge. For example, a student with limited decoding ability might listen to a chapter of a social studies textbook on a CD and demonstrate knowledge by answering the same questions as peers in an oral, rather than a written format. In terms of the decision-making process regarding accommodations, the following principles apply: they must be necessary; should facilitate accurate demonstration of knowledge and skills; must not provide an unfair advantage or compromise test validity; and should be the same for instruction and assessment situations (FDOE, 2003). Areas in which students might receive accommodations may include: methods and materials; assignments and assessments; learning environment; time demands and scheduling; and special communication systems. The student's strengths, needs, preferences and style of learning must be considered when determining accommodations.

Modifications differ from accommodations in that changes are made to the learning objective (**what** the student is supposed to learn or demonstrate). Changes may be made in the aforementioned areas using identified considerations.

The following section provides a variety of checklists and other resource material relating to accommodations and modifications.

ACCOMODATIONS: NOTEBOOK QUICK LIST

Instructional methodology and materials:

- Needs alternate format to obtain information—braille, large print, oral, simplified text
- Needs assistance with notetaking—copy of notes, outline, notetaker
- Needs concrete objects, pictures, or graphics
- Needs appropriate assistive technology: _____
- Needs advanced organizers or study guides
- Needs adapted materials—uncluttered, fewer items, highlighted
- Other _____

Assignments and assessments:

- Needs to use alternate response mode—tell, draw, write, point
- Needs appropriate assistive technology: _____,
- Needs guides or prompts for specified tasks: _____
- Needs extended access to instructional resources and equipment
- Needs personal assistance—teacher, aide, peer, volunteer, interpreter
- Other: _____

Learning environment:

- Needs adapted environment—acoustical treatment, lighting, barrier-free
- Needs preferential seating or study carrel
- Needs individual system for behavior management
- Needs to have instruction in small groups or one-to-one
- Needs individual planner or assistance with organization
- Other: _____

Time demands and schedules:

- Needs additional time to complete course or grade
- Needs additional time to complete assignments and tests
- Needs to have independent or group work sessions in short time segments
- Needs reduction in number of required practice or assessment items
- Other: _____

Communication systems:

- Uses Total Communication
- Uses American Sign Language, Finger-spelling, or Signing Exact English
- Uses augmentative communication system: _____
- Needs instruction in home language other than English
- Other: _____

Accommodations Checklist

Adapted from- Accommodations: A Guide for Educators

A. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MATERIALS

1. Student can't identify main ideas or important points.

- _ Highlight important points of the text to draw attention. Tell the student to read these points first.
- _ Give the student a list of important vocabulary ahead of time.
- _ Have the student read the summary or objectives first.
- _ Have the student read the review questions first, then look for the answers.
- _ Give the student a worksheet or study guide to follow when doing independent reading.
- _ Use hands-on activities, pictures, or diagrams to provide alternate ways of learning abstract concepts or complex information.
- _ Let the student use sticky notes or an erasable highlighter to mark key points in the textbook.
- _ Let the student use a book written at a lower grade level. This can let the student pay more attention to the main ideas.

2. Student can understand the information, but can't read the required materials.

- _ Provide an audio version of the material. Use books-on-tape or have an assistant, volunteer, or other student make a recording.
- _ Provide alternate materials with similar content at a lower reading level.
- _ Use a videotape or movie that presents the same information.
- _ Use assistive technology to transfer printed words to speech.
- _ Have a learning buddy read aloud textbooks or other printed material.

3. Student is blind or visually impaired.

- _ Provide books-on-tape or large print versions of text.
- _ Provide books and other instructional materials in Braille.
- _ Obtain copies of class handouts and materials with key information in an embossed format.
- _ Let the student use a special tilt-top desk or book stand to hold materials for easier reading.
- _ Let the student use specialized equipment, such as an optical enhancer, magnifier, tape recorder, stylus and slate, or braillewriter.

4. Student is deaf or hard of hearing.

- _ Make sure the student is facing you when you are speaking.
- _ Seat the student in the place where he or she can receive maximum information and is least likely to be distracted by other classroom activities.
- _ Use nonverbal communications to convey your messages. Speak naturally.
- _ Use visual information (words, charts, graphics) to reinforce what is presented orally. Repeat as often as necessary.
- _ Help the student to be comfortable asking others for assistance whenever it is needed. Tell me what you need.
- _ Use a sign language interpreter or notetaker where appropriate.
- _ Talk while you teach, making an attempt to describe exactly what you are doing. Be sure to describe nonverbal messages and introduce beginnings, transitions, and closures to each activity.
- _ Use real-life examples and concrete materials whenever possible.

5. Student has difficulty with most lessons.

5a. Student needs help to get ready for the lesson

- _ Introduce new vocabulary prior to lesson; prepare glossary of terms; use visual aids (chalkboard, overhead, charts).
- _ Use advance organizers to alert students to what will be included and expected from the lesson or discussion.
- _ Provide an overview of the content or expected learning at the beginning of the session.

5b. Student needs help during the lesson.

- _ Present material in a logical manner and use explicit cues to shift from one aspect to the next.
- _ Promote active involvement of students by asking questions or breaking up the lecture with small group interaction, discussion, or structured responses.
- _ Break the information into steps or key components and monitor the student's comprehension as it is presented.
- _ Provide oral and visual clues during lecture or discussion about what is important to include in notes. Write important ideas on the board or chart paper. Use different color chalk or markers for emphasis or coding.
- _ Provide structured organizers for note-taking, such as a copy of overheads, outline of lecture, or pre-designed graphic organizers.
- _ Use NCR, carbon paper, or photocopying for peers to take notes that can be shared.

- _ Teach the student how to use a two-column note-taking format or concept mapping for notes.
- _ Key class notes to the relevant pages in textbook.
- _ Let the student use a tape recorder to record class lectures and discussions.

5c. Student needs help after the lesson.

- _ Repeat, paraphrase, and summarize all important points, particularly at the conclusion of the lecture or discussion.
- _ Ask the student to paraphrase key points in his or her own words and identify anything that is still unclear.
- _ Prepare a summary of important information from the lecture with blanks to be filled or questions to be answered by the student.
- _ Use cooperative learning techniques such as Think-Pair-Share or Jigsaw to have the students review key points.
- _ Ask the student to tell or write the important information that was included in the lesson before the class ends. Encourage the student to ask questions.
- _ Arrange for time to meet with the student after class to clarify anything the student doesn't understand.

6. Student has difficulty with mathematical concepts and processes.

- _ Let the student use concrete materials and manipulates to explore and learn
- _ Use computer-based models to represent mathematical concepts.
- _ Let the student practice skills using computer-based instruction.
- _ Let the student use a calculator for routine computation tasks.
- _ Let the student use a chart or table with basic math facts.
- _ Color-code or highlight key words in word problems.
- _ Let the student use a flowchart to plan strategies for problem solving.

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

1. Student has difficulty following instructions.

1a. Student needs help to get ready for the instructions.

- _ Use a prearranged signal to gain attention before giving directions. _ Make
- sure the student is facing you when instructions are given.
- _ Change your tone of voice to alert the student and sustain attention.
- _ Give the student an agenda or schedule for each day.

1b. Student needs help while you are giving instructions.

- _ Combine oral directions with pictures, words, or diagrams.

- _ Read written directions orally before students start the assignment.
- _ When modeling expected behavior, describe critical components.
- _ Have the student paraphrase instructions or show you what to do.
- _ Repeat and simplify instructions for the student.
- _ Give the student a description of expected behaviors or the rubric to be used for evaluation.
- _ Give step-by-step instructions for an activity with the steps outlined in writing or shown in picture sequences.

1c. Student needs help after the instructions.

- _ Assign a study buddy to help the student when needed.
- _ Check to see if the student needs any assistance in getting started.
- _ Teach the student how to use an assignment notebook or personal planner to keep track of assignments and work.

2. Student has difficulty completing assignments.

- _ Break long-term assignments into sections with corresponding due dates.
- _ Teach the student to maintain a calendar of assignments.
- _ Give the student an individual responsibility checklist.
- _ Give the student a choice of tasks and assignments.
- _ Let the student have access to resources and materials outside of class.
- _ Use a kitchen timer to define work times.
- _ Reduce the total amount of work, but select those tasks or items that are needed to accomplish learning objectives.
- _ Have the student keep a journal or homework log that includes the directions and timelines.
- _ Communicate homework assignments and expectations to parents so they can help, if needed.
- _ At first, give partial credit for late assignments or incomplete work until the student is able to complete the work on time.

3 . Student gets confused by complex materials.

- _ Indicate sections on paper for each response by drawing lines or folding.
- _ Use different kinds of paper for different assignments, such as graph paper to write computation problems or paper with midlines for taking notes.
- _ Use color-coding to help students identify tasks, meanings, or expectations.
- _ Give page numbers for locating answers to questions in textbook.
- _ Simplify directions by numbering each step.

- _ Use uncluttered and clearly formatted tests, assignments and worksheets. Arrange problems or items so that it is easy to see where to start and know how to proceed.

4. Student needs help organizing or keeping track of materials.

- _ Let the student use a special folder or binder to keep materials organized. Use dividers or folders to keep subjects organized and use color-coding by unit or subject.
- _ Give the student a compartmentalized container for classroom materials, tools, and supplies.
- _ Let the student use physical supports such as bookends, plastic containers to keep supplies, or bags or folders for work materials.
- _ Place a timetable or assignment list on the student's desk.
- _ Give the student a checklist of materials needed for each class, to be kept in the student's locker or binder.
- _ Give the student a written copy of instructions and requirements for each assignment.
- _ Let the student keep one copy of school materials at home and one copy in class.

5. Student has limited writing abilities.

5a. Student has difficulty with handwriting.

- _ Place a dot on the upper left side of the paper to help student remember where to start writing.
- _ Give the student a copy of notes or directions for the assignment.
- _ Let the student write in the workbook or on a copy of the workbook page.
- _ Let the student use a word-processor or typewriter.
- _ Let the student dictate the assignment to an assistant or classmate who will write it down.
- _ Let the student create an audio or video recording of response to classroom Assignment.
- _ Let the student use adaptive devices: pencil grips or special pen or pencil holders, erasable pens, special paper with raised or color-coded line indicators.
- _ Make sure that worksheets have ample space for writing answers.
- _ Give the student two copies of a worksheet, one to work on as a draft and one to use as a final copy to hand in.
- _ Let student use graph paper for writing computation problems to help align the numbers.

5b. Student has problems with expressive language.

- _ Reduce the length of a written assignment, or allow more time.
- _ Let the student use a thesaurus (book or computer-based) to find words to write or say.

- _ Let the student use special word processing software that assists and anticipates what the student is trying to write.
- _ Give the student a structured outline or graphic organizer to help plan writing or oral presentations.
- _ Let the student use word processing or graphics software to plan ideas before writing.

5c. Student has problems with grammar or spelling.

- _ Let the student use a spelling dictionary or electronic spelling aid.
- _ Let the student use peer editing or teacher assistance in the revision process.
- _ Let the student use the spell-check or grammar-check utility in word processing software.
- _ Grade content and mechanics separately in assignments requiring written expression. Give the student a chance to correct identified spelling and grammar errors.

6. Student has difficulty taking tests. 6a.

Change the presentation format:

- _ Read the test items to the student, unless it is a test of reading skills.
- _ Let the student read the test items aloud as he or she works on it.
- _ Provide copies of the tests on audio tape, in braille, or large print format.
- _ Let the student use assistive technology such as magnification or amplification, if needed.
- _ Provide a sign language interpreter to give oral directions.
- _ Use symbols on the test or answer form that help the student follow directions, such as an arrow or stop sign.
- _ Reread or explain the directions during the test if the student needs it.
- _ Underline or highlight important words in the directions or test items.
- _ Group questions so that similar kinds of items are together. Put the easiest questions first.
- _ Block matching questions into small groups of four or five items.

6b. Change the response mode.

- _ Increase spacing and size allowed for test answers.
- _ Let the student respond orally, dictate to an aide, or tape record for later review.
- _ Let the student use a typewriter or word processor to write answers to the test item.
- _ Let the student write on the test itself if an answer sheet is used.
- _ Let the student use webs, diagrams, or charts and outlines to plan for or respond to open-ended or essay questions.
- _ Let the student provide alternate demonstrations of knowledge and skills using objects or oral explanations, role-playing, interviewing, etc.

6c. Change the test procedures.

- _ Give extra examples for practice.
- _ Let the student have additional time to complete the test or grade only what the student can finish.
- _ Break up the test into small sections, and let the student take it over a period of days, if needed.
- _ Eliminate one of the choices in multiple-choice items.
- _ Require fewer questions, but select ones that measure all required content and skills.
- _ Grade the student's response separately for content and mechanics.
- _ Let the student take an open book test, unless memorization of content is required.
- _ Let the student use references such as a spelling dictionary.
- _ In math, let the student use a calculator to recheck or complete computations.
- _ Give partial credit for answers that are partly correct.
- _ Let the student retake the test and give credit for improvement.
- _ Give shorter tests more frequently.

6d. Change the setting:

- _ Administer the test individually or in small groups.
- _ Let the student use a study carrel to take the test.
- _ Let the student take the test in another classroom where there are no distractions.
- _ Let the student take breaks during the test.

7. Student has difficulty taking tests.

7a. Student has difficulty preparing for the test.

- _ Provide instruction in test-taking skills. Use practice tests to help students learn some of the strategies effective test-takers use.
- _ Conduct a review of the knowledge and skills to be tested several days before the test.
- _ Give study guides to help students prepare for the test.
- _ Give the student practice with the testing format; give sample questions and explain the scoring rubric or procedures that will be used.
- _ Read the directions of the test and simplify language, if needed. Go over enough sample questions to make sure the student knows how to answer.

7b. Student has difficulty identifying areas that need to be corrected after the test.

- _ Review corrected tests and provide a debriefing.
- _ Have the student evaluate his or her own performance on the test. *Did I study the right things? Did I make use of clues in the test? Did I survey the test and plan my response? Did I use the time allowed effectively? Did I answer the questions I knew first? Did I correct mistakes? Did I have to guess?*

C. TIME DEMANDS AND SCHEDULING

- _ Use flexible scheduling practices that allow the student more time to complete a course. Sometimes summer school can be used for this purpose.
- _ Let the student have additional time for assignments and assessments.
- _ Give assignments ahead of time so the student can get started early.
- _ Provide a clear schedule with checkpoints along the way.
- _ Use a reward system to motivate assignment completion. Let the student engage in an activity of choice, following the completion of a required assignment.
- _ Give the student shorter tasks with easier tasks first.
- _ Give the student a pass to travel between periods to avoid hallway traffic and unnecessary delays in moving between classes.

D. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1. Student is easily distracted or has a short attention span.

- _ Let the student use an enclosed study carrel to complete independent work.
- _ Let the student sit in an area away from the busy parts of a classroom.
- _ Give the student tasks that can be completed in short periods of time.
- _ Let the student use a timer to monitor how much longer he or she has to work on specific tasks.
- _ Give the student legitimate opportunities to get up and move in the classroom, use the restroom, or get a drink of water.
- _ Have the student sit close to the teacher.

2. Student can't work in groups.

2a. Whole groups:

- _ Let the student sit next to an aide, volunteer, or trained classmate who can help maintain attention and understanding.
- _ Give the student a preview of what is going to happen during the class.
- _ Provide a balance of active and passive activities within the lesson.
- _ Provide follow-up instruction individually, as needed.

2b. Small groups:

- _ Make sure the student has the communication and social skills needed for group interaction.
- _ Assign a specific role and responsibility to the student when working in a group.
- _ Let the student work with a trained classmate to help keep on task in a group situation.
- _ Allow partial participation in cooperative groups.

2c. Student has difficulty with independent work, study, and practice.

- _ Let the student use a learning center with appropriate materials and equipment.
- _ Let the student use self-checking materials or computer-assisted instruction to practice skills.
- _ Let the student have a study buddy who can repeat and explain directions.

3. Student can't control own behavior.

- _ Give students a copy of class rules and expectations. Let students role-play positive and negative examples of behaviors on a regular basis to make sure all students understand.
- _ Give positive reinforcement for following class rules.
- _ Establish and regularly use a hierarchy of consequences for rule infractions. Make sure that the student knows what the consequences are.
- _ Monitor student's compliance with class rules and communicate regularly with the student, the family or others.
- _ Identify a study buddy who can help the student when the teacher is unavailable. Make sure the buddy knows how to work effectively with the student.
- _ Provide a set of alternative activities for the student during unstructured time. Make sure the student knows how to initiate and complete the activities and wants to do them.
- _ Use a regular routine for transitions in the class. Establish a system of alerts and procedures to follow to get ready to start a lesson, to change classes, to complete an activity, to go to lunch to go to another area in the school, etc.
- _ Identify a quiet area where the student may go when necessary.
- _ Seat the student away from distractions such as windows, heating or cooling vents, doors, resource area and other students.

Types of Assessment Accommodations

Students with disabilities are expected to participate in state and district assessments for accountability purposes. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) 2001 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 require that students with disabilities participate in the statewide testing program and be afforded appropriate accommodations in instruction and assessment. Further, IDEA requires that the accommodations be documented on the student's individual educational plan (IEP). Accommodations are described in detail in the next section of this document. **Students with disabilities are expected to participate in state and district assessments for accountability purposes.**

Further, IDEA requires that the accommodations be documented on the student's individual educational plan (IEP). Testing accommodations are changes or adjustments to standard testing procedures or materials that enable a student with a disability to participate in state or district assessments. Students with disabilities are eligible for accommodations on the FCAT, if needed. The IEP team or the team that develops the 504 accommodation plan identifies the needed accommodations for the FCAT for students with disabilities. Accommodations are described in 5 categories: presentation, response, setting, scheduling, and assistive technology.

Presentation

The presentation category of accommodations involves the way the test content and questions formatted.

Students who need augmentation of the visual format of the tests may use

- enlargement of the regular print versions through mechanical or electronic means
- Braille versions for students who use Braille materials
- means to maintain or enhance visual attention to items, such as a pointer, template, blank card, or noncalibrated ruler, or a means to mask portions of the test to direct attention to uncovered item(s)
- positioning tools such as a reading stand
- colored transparencies or overlays

Unique accommodations (require prior approval by Commissioner of Education)

- papers secured to the work area
- increased spacing between test items
- fewer items placed on each page

Students who have difficulty hearing, understanding, or remembering verbal directions and information may have

- a printed copy of the directions read by the teacher from the FCAT administration
- signed presentation of the directions
- the opportunity to paraphrase or repeat directions to show understanding
- directions repeated, summarized, or clarified
- use of a highlighter or highlighter tape to mark key words and phrases in directions, questions, and passages. If a highlighter is used at grade levels where the test questions and answers are in the same book, the answers must be transcribed into a separate book. If highlighting marks are found on an answer document, the student's answers must be transcribed.
- visual cues on the answer form that relate to test directions
- use of text-to-speech technology to communicate directions and test items other than reading passages and items
- extra examples for practice

Students who have difficulty maintaining attention and effort in written assessments may have

- white noise (sound machines) to reduce auditory distractions
- verbal encouragement (e.g., "keep working," "make sure to answer every question"); may not be used to cue a student regarding correct/incorrect responses

Students who are unable to read the writing prompt or the mathematics and science test items independently may have

- signed or oral presentation of the topic (prompt) on the writing test and all mathematics and science items. Passages and items on the reading test must be read by the student through visual or tactile means.
- the test administrator read all mathematics and science questions. The test questions may not be reworded, summarized, or simplified.

Response

The response category of accommodations involves the method the student is expected to use for answering the test questions. The FCAT includes questions that require different types of responses.

Students who have difficulty recording answers to test questions on a separate answer document may

- enter answers directly in the test booklet
- be monitored periodically by the test proctor to ensure that the answers are marked in the proper space for the item
- dictate responses to the test proctor
- dictate responses into a tape recorder
- sign responses to an interpreter
- use a pointing device to indicate answers
- Braille responses on a separate answer form
- use speech-to-text technology to indicate answers
- use computer switch, computer, or alternative keyboard, or other communication device to indicate answers.

Students who need assistance to use their own handwriting to write responses for performance tasks or the writing prompt may use

- special paper with raised, shaded, or color-coded lines
- a writing guide (grid) to produce legible answers
- math guides (gridded paper) to organize mathematical computation

Students who are unable to respond to the performance tasks or the writing prompt independently may

- dictate to a proctor or tape recorder
- sign responses to an interpreter
- Braille responses on separate paper
- use speech-to-text technology to indicate answers
- use alternative keyboards, pointing devices, and switches
- use communication devices

Students who must use assistive technology for calculations may use

- an adapted calculator for FCAT mathematics in grades 7-10 and FCAT science in grades 8 and 11
- an abacus if the student is visually impaired (all grades) as a substitute for paper and pencil computation

Scheduling

The third category of accommodations involves the schedule (date and time) when the test is given and the amount of time allowed for individual test sessions.

Students who require adjustments to the FCAT time limits or schedule may

- take a specific session at a specific time of the day
- have extended time to take any session of the test
- take the test in several brief sessions, allowing frequent breaks during the session, within specifications of the test manual.

Setting

The fourth category of accommodations involves the setting or location where the student takes the test.

Students who are unable to sustain attention and effort in large group settings may take the tests

- in an individual or small group setting
- in an environment with reduced stimuli (a study carrel, desk cleared of extraneous items)
- with increased or decreased opportunity for movement
- with white noise (sound machines) to reduce auditory distractions
- with verbal encouragement ("keep working," "answer every question")
- in a familiar place such as the home with a test proctor present and/or a familiar person for students who are hospital/homebound students
- other specialized settings may be approved as a unique accommodation.

Students who have special physical or sensory needs may take the test

- in a classroom designed to accommodate special lighting or acoustic needs and FM systems

Assistive Devices

The fifth category of accommodations involves the use of assistive technology. Assistive technology may be used to provide alternate presentation formats or alternate ways of responding.

Students who need assistive devices when taking the FCAT may use

- adapted calculators as authorized for grades 7-11
- visual magnification and auditory amplification devices
- technology such as word processing software, digital voice, tape recorder, or communication device for performance tasks or writing, without accessing spelling or grammar check
- use of an English/sign language dictionary for students who use sign language as their primary means of communication. The dictionary may not contain definitions of words, but may contain the sign picture, the word, synonyms, and an index.

Unique Accommodations

Unique accommodations typically involve alterations to the test materials or booklets. The unique accommodation must be one that is regularly used by the student for classroom instruction and may not alter the underlying content of the assessment. Unique accommodations require special approval from the Commissioner of Education.

Examples of unique accommodations that may be approved include

- increased space between test items
- fewer items on a page
- tabbed or modified pages for easy turning
- paper secured to the work area
- specialized setting

Source: The IEP Team's Guide to FCAT Accommodations, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education 2005