

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP SERVICES

Instructional Module: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

IDEA (1997, 2004) required that accommodations be made, if necessary, to provide students with disabilities access to a free appropriate public education. Accommodations are to be used for students with disabilities in all educational environments including the regular classroom. Administrators are in a position to serve as a resource person for instructional strategies for both general education and special education teachers.

This instructional module is designed to increase your knowledge and skills as an instructional leader in your building. The materials presented in this module include general instructional strategies, specific instructional strategies based on specific exceptionalities and by content area, and behavioral strategies. Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify general classroom strategies for general education teachers.
- Identify strategies for students with varied disabilities and/or students with disabilities in specific content areas.
- Identify behavioral strategies that enhance the instruction of students.
- Discuss appropriate instructional modifications with special education personnel.

Review the following outline and the selection of activities to familiarize yourself with the material presented in this module. Then select your activities based on the material which most effectively meets your needs. The outline of topics contains actual titles of web materials that you will find as you proceed through the module.

TOPICS/ACTIVITIES

Section I: General Information

There are eight areas of General Information:

- A. Strategies for Including All Students
- B. General Classroom Strategies for All Students
- C. Strategies for Visual Learners
- D. Classroom Accommodations
- E. Testing and Evaluation Tips
- F. Homework How-To's
- G. Making Modifications in the Classroom: A Collection of Checklists
- H. Features of Good Listening Strategies

Activity #1: Review the information from the following four websites:

- “Strategies for Including All Students” (www.geocities.com/~sarahfiles/include.html)
- “General Classroom Strategies for All Students” (www.flv.vcu.edu/ld/class.html)
- “Strategies for Visual Learners” (www.flv.vcu.edu/ld/strats.html)
- “Classroom Accommodations”
(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/teaching-2.html)

Create a list of 15 general strategies that you would encourage your teachers to use from the very first day of school. Remember, accommodations that are helpful for students with special needs or disabilities can help ALL students learn more effectively and efficiently. Develop a cover memo to all teachers sharing this list to improve instruction.

Activity #2: Develop a year-long plan for a professional learning activity for your school on “Testing and Evaluation Tips” and “Homework How-To’s”; your plan should include goals/objectives/activities/ evaluative outcomes and the characteristics from Joyce and Showers (1993) including a coaching, monitoring, and demonstration of impact on adult behavior and student behavior. Use the following two websites—as well as supplementing with other web sources of information on testing, evaluation, and homework tips as you prefer. You may also consult with the coordinator of professional learning in your school/school system as you see appropriate.

- “Testing and Evaluation Tips”
(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/testing_tips.html)
- “Homework How-To’s”
(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/hwguide.html)

It may also be advantageous to put this plan in the proposal format for professional learning used in your school system to obtain funding/support for implementing this plan.

Activity #3: Arlington County Public Schools has a publication entitled “Making Modifications in the Classroom: A Collection of Checklists” (www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/mod_checklists.html). This document has suggestions for modifying the presentation of materials, the environment, time demands, materials (four parts), using groups and peers, helping focus attention, assisting the reluctant starter, and dealing with inappropriate behavior. After analyzing these checklists, do one of the following:

- a) Create a checklist for yourself and your school
- or**
- b) Select at least 3 checklists from this website and explain why these will be useful for your faculty/staff.

Activity #4: Read the Ellis/Lenz article entitled “Features of Good Learning Strategies” (www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/ellis_strategyfeatures.html) Describe how you will use the information presented to advise your staff on determining which instructional strategies will be most efficient and effective in the school or individual classrooms.

Section II: Specific Strategies

This section is composed of two sets of specific strategies—those for various disabilities and those for content as follows:

Strategies for Various Disabilities

1. What Teachers Can Do About Learning Disabilities
2. Teaching Tips for Children and Adults with Autism
3. Gifted But Learning Disabled: A Puzzling Paradox
4. Educating Students Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

Content Specific Strategies

1. Adapting Mathematics Instruction in the General Education Classroom for Students with Mathematics Disabilities
- 2.. Foreign Language Requirements and Students with Learning Disabilities
3. Wheels for Literature
4. Five Guidelines for Learning to Spell and Six Ways to Practice Spelling
5. Ways to Get Students with Learning Disabilities to Write More
6. Suggestions for Helping Students with Learning Disabilities to Write

Activity #5: Depending on your area of interest, choose two articles from the following:

--“What Teachers Can Do About Learning Disabilities”

(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/teaching-1.html)

--“Teaching Tips for Children and Adults with Autism”

(www.autism.org/temple/tips.html)

--“Gifted But Learning Disabled: A Puzzling Paradox”

(www.fsdb.k12.fl.us/admin/blind.ed.html)

Indicate the articles you selected and summarize in one page or less for each what was most useful to you about them. Also, indicate how you would encourage your teachers to read them and state what you anticipate your teachers would get out of each article.

Activity #6: Depending on your area of interest, choose two articles from the following:

--“Adapting Mathematics Instruction in the General Education Classroom for the Student with Mathematics Disabilities”

(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/math_skills/adapt.cld.html)

--“Foreign Language Requirement and Students with Learning Disabilities”

(www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed355834.html)

--“Wheels for Literature”

(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/wheelsli.html)

- “Five Guidelines for Learning to Spell and Six Ways to Practice Spelling”
(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/spelling_studying.html)
- “Ways to Get Students with Learning Disabilities to Write More”
(www.ldresources.com/writemore.html)
- “Suggestions for Helping Learning Disabled Students to Write”
(www.ldresources.com/suggestions.html)

Design a summary sheet of suggested practices you could use with your faculty during a professional learning session on adapting general education instruction for students with disabilities or special needs—be creative!

Activity #7: Design a professional learning activity based on additional information you have found on the web—include the web site in your materials. The parameters are as follows:

- a) The activity should be one you would find useful as an instructional leader.
- b) The web source should be a new one—not one used in this section.
- c) The topic must be related to instructional strategies.

Develop an appropriate description for your activity, a sample response you anticipate from teachers, and a discussion of its impact on students, teachers, and administrators.

Section III: Behavioral Strategies

This section focuses on three areas:

- A. Managing Inappropriate Behavior in the Classroom
- B. Behavior Disorders: Focus on Change
- C. Adjustments in Classroom Management

Activity #8: Read each of the following three articles:

- “Managing Inappropriate Behavior in the Classroom”
(www.ccc.sped.org/digests/e408.html)
- “Behavioral Disorders: Focus on Change”
(www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed358674.html)
- “Adjustments in Classroom Management”
(www.Idonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/class_manage.html)

Describe how you would use three articles to improve your school’s behavior management/discipline plan and/or each teacher’s classroom management plan and design a list of at least 10 behavioral strategies that would be helpful to your faculty/staff.