

## LEARNING DISABILITIES

Specific Learning Disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in using or understanding spoken or written language. It may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do math calculations. LD includes perceptual disabilities, brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

Instructional Method / Delivery	Accommodations
Discussion / Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain “discussion etiquette” before beginning question and answer period. Example: require students __ seconds to think before answering a question. Gradually increase the time between question and response.</li> <li>• Establish a cue with the student, to provide him with feedback (non-verbally) regarding his on-task behavior; turn taking, level of movement, etc.</li> <li>• Keep discussion groups small, so each student can participate successfully without distractions while waiting to speak.</li> <li>• Keep topics small in scope until the students have mastered “discussion etiquette” and their ability to stay focused on the discussion.</li> <li>• Give a written copy of the questions that are going to be asked during the discussion for student who needs additional processing time.</li> <li>• Emphasize key words in the questions by inflection or deliberate pausing to help students focus on the main idea.</li> </ul>
Independent Worksheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify work by breaking it up into small step-by-step tasks.</li> <li>• Give one assignment at a time in an individual folder.</li> <li>• Assign the task at the appropriate level; giving PRECISE directions, being certain the child can see an end to the task.</li> <li>• Reinforce often, praise for concentration.</li> <li>• Allow the students some choice within the framework of the assignment, i.e., doing step 2 then 1 then 3; or drawing before writing etc. The student must then stick to the choices he/she has made.</li> <li>• Provide the task in the learning media best used by the student- large print, electronic format for annotating and/or auditory support.</li> </ul>
Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow “Assessments” under Accommodations for teacher assessments.</li> <li>• For assessments regarding a child’s work, try these techniques:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow open book tests; provide practice questions for study.</li> <li>• Give multiple choice (grouped with no more than three to five choices per group instead of short answer tests).</li> <li>• If matching vocabulary with definitions, color-code the test- definitions=blue paper; words=green paper.</li> <li>• Cut test into strips so the child can match one blue strip with one green strip, until the test is completed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include activities for various skill/ability levels.</li> <li>• Provide a variety of types of work within the centers (chart making, maps, pictures, and graphs, etc.).</li> <li>• Give a teacher-made checklist (tailored to the student’s possible “trouble spots”) to help the child self-monitor himself.</li> <li>• Provide closure at points along the way.</li> <li>• Make the center full of purposeful and structured activities!</li> </ul>
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set mini-deadlines for the student, advising the students of exactly when assignments are due using mini-projects at first if necessary.</li> <li>• Develop a monitoring process, providing frequent feedback.</li> <li>• Establish rewards for finished work and consequences for unfinished work using a student “contract” discussed with and agreed to by the student prior to beginning the project.</li> </ul>
Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let some students do oral reports, could be done on an individual basis.</li> <li>• Child gives report to a small group using a student-rating checklist.</li> <li>• Accept written reports in a modified form, i.e., a series of illustrations or illustrations coupled with written work.</li> <li>• Have a student tape an oral report accompanied with a brief written outline.</li> </ul>
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Reading: Use materials that will tie into the student’s prior knowledge of a related subject. Discuss new vocabulary and storyline.</li> <li>• Use “advance organizers” to help the child transfer and maintain new skills.</li> <li>• Use reading material that is simpler; cue into main idea of specific passage. Ask short, concrete questions about paragraph.</li> <li>• Teach child options for figuring out new words: context clues, phonetic analysis, structural analysis or ask someone for help.</li> <li>• Provide deliberate use of visual aids/cues to help the student grasp the concept being taught.</li> <li>• Provide reading material in accessible format to student: larger print, simpler format page, &amp; electronic format for auditory support.</li> <li>• Color-code the text according to 5W questions. At first do this for the student prior to the reading and discussion of the story, and then gradually lead the students to find the main point themselves as they pre-read. If coding is kept consistent, then the student will be able to categorize/process information more independently and be able to respond more quickly during the oral questioning period. (All WHO question answers are in red, all WHERE question answers are in green, etc.)</li> </ul>

Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer story starters to promote creative writing.</li> <li>• Provide a “sample” of what the finished paper should look like.</li> <li>• Omit assignments that require copying in a timed situation.</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers-Venn diagram, web, brainstorm sheet, etc., to help organize student’s thoughts. Could use Kidspiration or Inspiration for the organizers.</li> <li>• Add editing support through spell checkers, grammar checkers, and text to speech support.</li> <li>• For students with speed, legibility, and spelling difficulties, consider the use of a keyboard-based solution consisting of a standalone keyboard or computer with a word processor and a word prediction program.</li> <li>• For students requiring semantic support, use sentence part strips until they learn the components of a complete thought.</li> <li>• For students requiring semantic support, consider giving the student a color-coded grid that contains the main components of a complete sentence. Student’s sentence must contain each component before being finished.</li> </ul>
Drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If fine motor skills are a weakness, use larger sized implements and/or grasps.</li> <li>• If having trouble with letter formation, allow student to use a teacher-made stencil: practicing letter shape, size, and pencil strokes.</li> <li>• Provide feedback as going through the process, allowing extra time to complete the work.</li> </ul>
Note-taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with partially-completed teacher-made “samples,” giving the student plenty of guided practice.</li> <li>• Teach outlining using skeletal outlines within many software word processing programs such as Kidspiration or Inspiration.</li> <li>• Teach child how to highlight main ideas in written passages and paraphrase information.</li> <li>• Look for “clues”,i.e., The main point is...; This is important because...; The lesson is...</li> <li>• Provide students with an outline of the material so they are responsible for details and clarifications, not entire content.</li> <li>• Provide written record of lesson prior to the lecture so students with dyslexia or those with several processing difficulties can use a marker to highlight points in lecture, but can focus on the teacher’s lecture not the recording of the information.</li> </ul>

Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster student “interdependence” within groups-natural support systems (“buddies”) <u>within</u> a larger group.</li> <li>• In the beginning, involve the student in small group activities (one to two other children) that he/she will be successful in.</li> <li>• Provide direct instruction in “group processes.”</li> <li>• Prepare the group members to include and help the student.</li> <li>• Provide structure within the group by stating the goal, objectives and tasks, and listing the necessary steps to accomplish this goal.</li> </ul>
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the teacher-use a variety of instructional techniques when giving presentations to students.</li> <li>• Allow other non-traditional presentation forms for self-expression (if verbal is not appropriate) i.e., puppet play, clay work, paintings, drawings, etc.</li> <li>• Follow a teacher-made “presentation checklist.”</li> <li>• Demonstrate and model presentation techniques.</li> <li>• Break the presentation into small, logical, naturally progressing components for the student to follow.</li> <li>• Preferential seating.</li> </ul>
Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the skills that need to be applied into manageable chunks for the student.</li> <li>• Allow the student plenty of time to “over-learn” task through repeated drills before moving onto a new task. This applies to software applications as well.</li> <li>• Group like tasks together, so that the student will be able to use his/her tendency to “over-generalize” to help him/her learn a new skill.</li> <li>• Give students short sequences of “instruction-practice-seat work” with lots of guided practice.</li> <li>• After the child understands the desired outcome for a specific software application, guide the student through “short cuts,” use of different “function keys,” etc., with the goal of minimizing the number of steps required for the student.</li> <li>• Use headphones and appropriate volume to ensure clear sound representation, especially for reading and phonics programs.</li> </ul>
<p>* If the accommodations do not seem appropriate for the student, remember to check other disability areas.</p>	