

O-G Reading Clinic

Practical School Accommodations and Adjustments by Age

For students with dyslexia, reading, spelling and written-language difficulties

Purpose: Adjustments reduce unnecessary barriers while students continue to receive explicit teaching. They should be selected according to individual need, monitored for effectiveness and updated as the student becomes more independent.

Age bands used: Infants/Early Primary = Kindergarten-Year 2; Primary = Years 3-6; High School = Years 7-12.

Area	Infants / Early Primary Kindergarten-Year 2	Primary Years 3-6	High School Years 7-12
Teaching and instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give one or two directions at a time. Use simple language, demonstration and visual cues. Ask the student to repeat the first step before beginning. Pre-teach new sounds, words and classroom vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break complex instructions into numbered steps. Provide written and spoken directions. Check understanding privately rather than asking, "Do you understand?" Pre-teach vocabulary and concepts before new units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide task instructions, success criteria and due dates in writing. Chunk long tasks into staged deadlines. Clarify the essential learning outcome and reduce unnecessary literacy load. Provide lesson notes, slides or an outline before or after class.
Reading access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use decodable texts aligned with taught sound-letter patterns. Read instructions and unfamiliar vocabulary aloud. Allow supported paired reading without public comparison. Provide extra time for reading tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide text-to-speech or audio versions of age-appropriate texts. Reduce copying and excessive silent-reading volume. Allow previewing of texts and vocabulary. Continue access to explicit decoding and fluency instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide digital texts compatible with text-to-speech. Allow audiobooks while the student follows the print. Prioritise key sections rather than requiring unnecessary reading volume. Do not require unprepared reading aloud in front of peers.
Spelling and written work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept phonetic attempts during content tasks. Provide sound mats, alphabet strips and taught spelling prompts. Offer sentence starters and oral rehearsal before writing. Separate handwriting, spelling and idea-generation goals when possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide planning templates, word banks and model paragraphs. Allow speech-to-text or keyboarding for longer responses. Mark content separately from spelling when spelling is not the assessed skill. Teach spelling and morphology explicitly rather than relying on copying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow typing, speech-to-text and word prediction. Provide subject-specific vocabulary lists and writing frameworks. Assess knowledge separately from spelling accuracy unless spelling is the outcome. Allow editing tools and a staged drafting process.

Assessment and examinations

- Read directions aloud and check understanding.
- Allow additional time and short movement breaks.
- Reduce the number of repetitive items once mastery is demonstrated.
- Permit oral responses or teacher scribing when appropriate.
- Provide extra time and rest breaks.
- Use a quiet or small-group setting where available.
- Allow a reader, text-to-speech, scribe or keyboard according to need.
- Use alternative ways to demonstrate knowledge, including oral or recorded responses.
- Apply approved disability provisions consistently across subjects.
- Provide extra working time, rest breaks and a low-distraction room.
- Allow computer use, reader, text-to-speech, scribe or speech-to-text as appropriate.
- Avoid penalising spelling in assessments where it is not a marking criterion.

Classroom materials and copying

- Seat the student where instructions and demonstrations are easy to see.
- Provide a printed model rather than expecting copying from the board.
- Use uncluttered worksheets with clear spacing and larger print.
- Highlight where to begin and what to complete.
- Provide printed or digital notes and partially completed templates.
- Reduce board copying and copying lengthy questions.
- Use headings, spacing and visual organisation to reduce overload.
- Allow the student to photograph homework instructions if permitted.
- Upload notes, assignments and rubrics to one predictable platform.
- Provide accessible digital files rather than scanned images where possible.
- Avoid simultaneous listening and extensive note-taking.
- Give copies of diagrams, formulas and worked examples.

Memory, organisation and processing time

- Use consistent routines and visual schedules.
- Allow extra thinking time before expecting an answer.
- Keep required equipment organised and clearly labelled.
- Give frequent brief review of previously taught skills.
- Use checklists, planners and colour-coded folders.
- Allow processing time before oral responses.
- Teach the student how to break down and monitor tasks.
- Schedule cumulative revision rather than last-minute recall.
- Use calendar reminders and interim deadlines.
- Provide checklists for multistep assignments.
- Allow additional processing time during questioning and discussion.
- Teach explicit study, note-taking and revision routines.

Assistive technology

- Introduce simple audio support and accessible reading apps with adult guidance.
- Use headphones where they reduce distraction.
- Teach keyboard familiarity gradually without replacing handwriting instruction.
- Teach text-to-speech, speech-to-text, typing and spellcheck explicitly.
- Allow assistive technology during everyday learning, not only tests.
- Ensure digital resources are accessible and easy to navigate.
- Normalise independent use of text-to-speech, speech-to-text and word prediction.
- Allow the same technology in class that is approved for assessments.
- Provide training so the student can use tools efficiently and discreetly.

Homework and workload

- Keep homework brief and matched to taught skills.
- Avoid requiring independent reading of text beyond the student's decoding level.
- Give parents clear instructions about the purpose of practice.
- Reduce repetitive written volume while preserving the learning goal.
- Provide realistic time limits and stop points.
- Offer digital submission and alternatives to extensive handwriting.
- Coordinate major assessment dates where possible.
- Prioritise essential tasks and avoid unnecessary copying.
- Allow negotiated extensions when disability-related difficulty has affected completion.
- Provide clear expectations for group work and individual responsibility.

Participation, confidence and wellbeing

- Correct privately and praise effort, strategy use and improvement.
- Avoid public ability grouping or comparisons.
- Provide predictable opportunities for success.
- Avoid asking the student to read or spell publicly without preparation.
- Offer choices for participation and presentation.
- Recognise fatigue caused by sustained reading and writing effort.
- Maintain high expectations while adjusting access.
- Discuss accommodations directly and respectfully with the student.
- Protect privacy and avoid drawing attention to adjustments.
- Provide alternatives to public reading and spontaneous written performance.
- Monitor avoidance, anxiety, disengagement and school refusal.

Selecting effective adjustments

1. Match the barrier

Identify the specific barrier: decoding, spelling, handwriting, memory, processing speed, language or organisation.

2. Preserve the learning goal

Adjust access and response demands while preserving the essential skill or concept being assessed.

3. Review impact

Review whether the adjustment improves access, independence and achievement, and update it as needs change.



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