Accommodations and Modifications: The Keys to Accessing Inclusive Education

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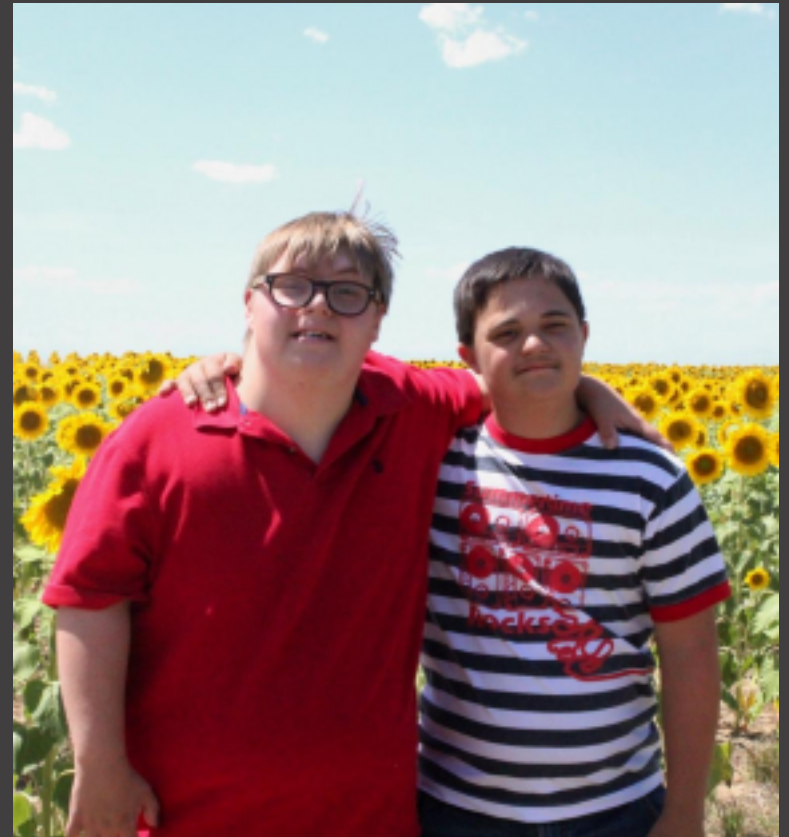University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

Who Am I?

Inclusion Coordinator at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs

- New position after passing SB16-196
- Supporting students with intellectual disabilities at college

Proud parent of two young men with Down syndrome

What Does the Law Say?

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Federal and state laws and regulations require schools to provide accommodations and modifications to make sure that students with disabilities have access to an appropriate education program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA 2004) requires that students with disabilities have the opportunity to be involved and make progress in the general curriculum.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that accommodations be provided to students with disabilities, even if they don't have an IEP.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination against any people with disabilities.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Requirements-Federal

Each public agency shall ensure –

(i) That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, … are educated with children who are nondisabled;

and

LRE Requirements-Federal

(ii) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the general educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

LRE Requirements-Federal 34 C.F.R. 300.116

e)   A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate general classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(5)

Accommodations

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A change in how students are taught or assessed (the content, level and performance criteria are not changed)

A Few Examples of Accommodations

- Additional time to take tests
- Test taken orally
- A quiet place to take a test or complete work
- Highlighted instructions
- Peer support for note-taking
- Large print textbooks

Modifications

Modifications

An actual change as to what the students are expected to learn and/or demonstrate.

While a student may be working on modified course content, the subject area remains the same as the rest of the class.

Modifications are for...

- Students who would have been traditionally pulled out to a separate program

- Students for whom accommodations have been implemented to the fullest extent and still have difficulty succeeding

A Few Examples of Modifications

- Outline in place of an essay

- Alternative books/media on same topic

- Spelling support by computer spell-check program

- Word bank of choices for test answers

- Use of a calculator for a math test

- Simpler language for test questions

- Projects substituted for written reports

Accommodations (can apply to all students)	Modifications (apply to students with disabilities)
Do not fundamentally change standards in terms of instructional level, content, or performance criteria	_Do_ fundamentally change standards in terms of instructional level, content, or performance criteria
Changes are made in order to provide equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known	Changes are made to provide student meaningful & productive learning experiences based on individual needs & abilities
Grading is _same_.	Grading is _different_.

A Few More Differences...

- Accommodations focus on removing barriers and providing access to the general curriculum.

- Accommodations are designed for students who have barriers that can be removed to help them demonstrate what they know.

- Modifications focus on ensuring meaningful participation in the general curriculum.

- Modifications are designed for students who would benefit from participation in the general curriculum even though it is above their ability level.

Who is Responsible?

An accommodation is the "HOW" of the curriculum.
*How are we going to get the information to the child and how are we going to test the student's knowledge?

A modification is the "WHAT" of the curriculum.
*What part of the general curriculum does the student need to know to reach his or her fullest potential?
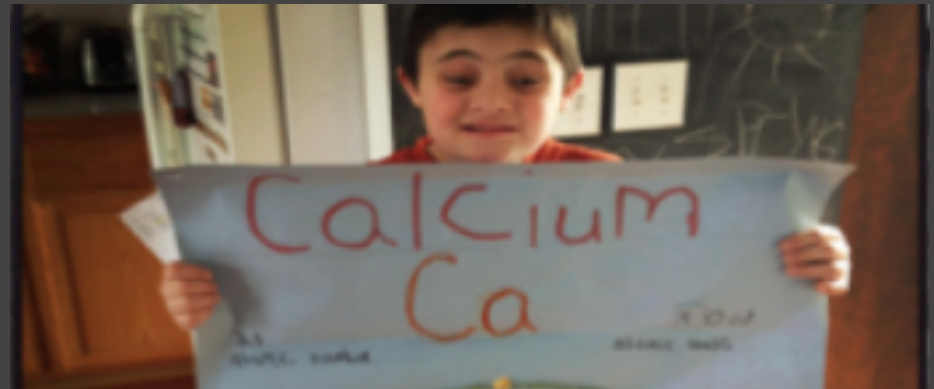
Both the general education teacher and special education teacher are responsible for making accommodations and modifications. It is a collaborative effort.

Accommodations and Modifications are most often made in the following areas:

- **Scheduling/Timing**
- **Setting**
- **Materials**
- **Instruction**
- **Student Response**
- **Presentation**

Scheduling/Timing

- Give extra time to complete assignments or tests
- Break up testing over several days
- Give multiple or frequent breaks
- Change testing schedule or order of subtests
- Vary activities every 10-30 minutes
- Alert students several minutes before a transition time, then give reminders

Setting

- Change the location of instruction or testing
- Seat student in front, next to teacher, or study carrel
- Reduce fluorescent lighting and increase natural lighting
- Seat student away from windows or other students
- Instruct or test in small group or individual setting

Materials

- Audio tape lectures or books
- Provide copies of teacher's lecture notes
- Supply large print books, Braille, or audio books
- Offer manipulatives
- Use visual cues – charts, pictures, graphs
- Utilize graphic organizers to demonstrate how concepts and ideas are related
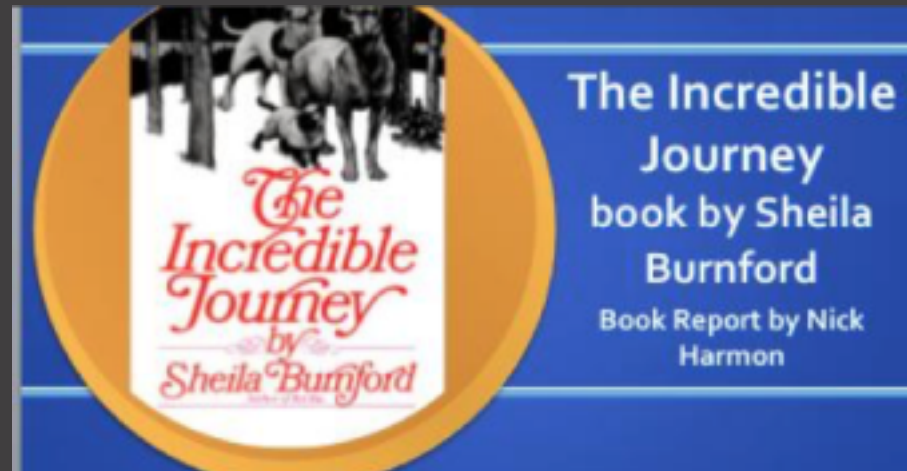
Instruction

- Reduce the difficulty of assignments
- Reduce the reading level
    - Read & Write for Google Simplify Tool
    - Adapted Literature
- Use a student/peer tutor
- Simplify multi-step directions
- Provide a partially completed outline during lectures
- Preteach vocabulary

Student Responses

- Replace summative assessment with oral reports and projects

Student Responses

- Allow answers to be given orally or dictated

- Use a word processor for written work

- Use sign language, a communication device, Braille, or native language if it is not English

- Give credit for participation

- Use recognition tests instead of essay tests example: T/F, multiple choice, matching

Presentation

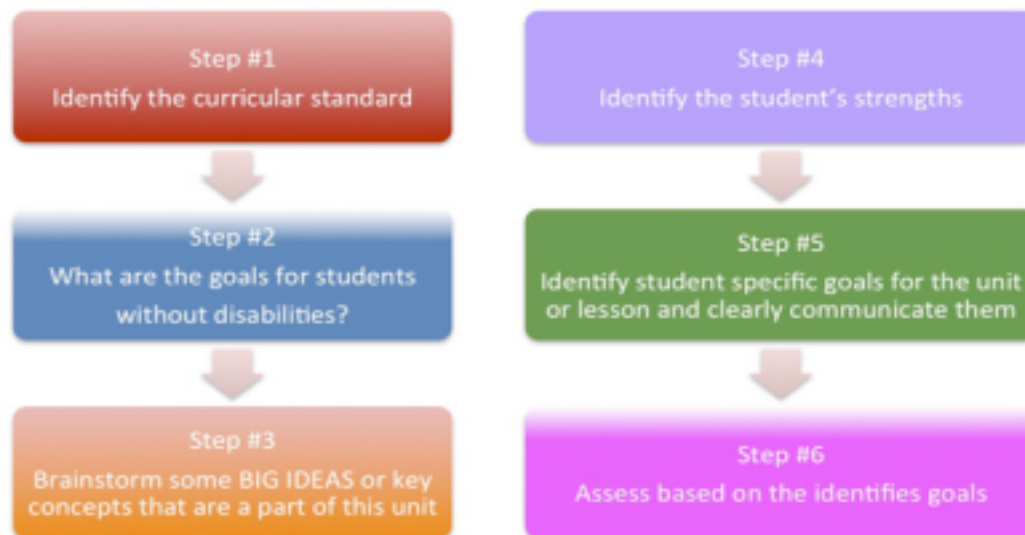- Increase "white space" on page
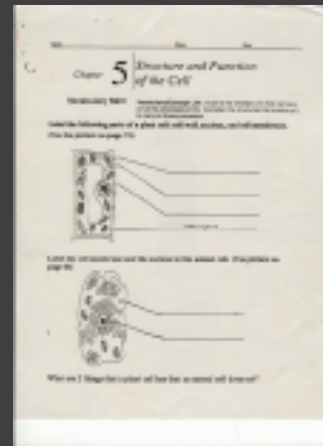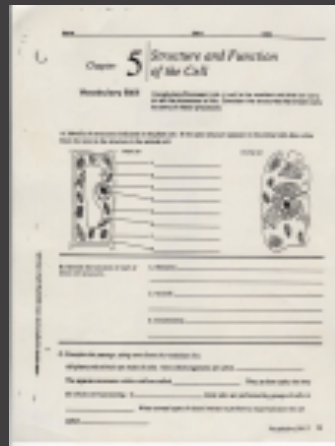
Presentation

- Use symbols on the test or answer form that help the student follow directions, such as an arrow or stop sign
- Give extra examples for practice to make sure the student knows what to do.
- Require fewer questions, but select ones that measure all required content.
- Eliminate one of the choices in multiple-choice items.

Big Ideas of Learning

BIG IDEA TEACHING=
Multi-Level Teaching

Step #1
Identify the curricular standard

Step #2
What are the goals for students without disabilities?

Step #3
Brainstorm some BIG IDEAS or key concepts that are a part of this unit

Step #4
Identify the student's strengths

Step #5
Identify student specific goals for the unit or lesson and clearly communicate them

Step #6
Assess based on the identifies goals

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Big Ideas of Learning

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Big Ideas of Learning

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Putting it all together

Goal: To remove barriers to learning and demonstrate mastery.

- Accommodations will keep standards substantially the same for all; outcomes may vary.

- Modifications may fundamentally change the standard; instructional level or content may vary.

Expectations remain high for ALL students.

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