

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS – MODIFICATIONS

There are some regular classroom demands, instructional activities, and materials that many paraprofessionals are asked to modify or adapt. The following lists provide a few helpful suggestions for making these modifications. Please realize that these lists are not exhaustive. Space is provided in each list for you to write in your own suggestions and those you learn from others. Also, feel free to add more topics as well.

**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
TAKING WRITTEN TESTS,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- allowing more time
- going over the directions
- reviewing notes, sheets, or textbook
- reading the test aloud
- explaining or rewording test questions
- allowing the student to answer in his or her own words or to answer orally
- providing vocabulary list or word bank
- allowing the student to dictate essay question answers
- allowing the student to work with another student
- allowing the student to write on the test, instead of the answer sheet
- providing second try or grading twice
- adding more "white space" by rewriting or retyping
- using blanks to cue answers (number of blanks or length of blanks corresponds to the number of letters or the length of words)
- breaking long lists of matching into more groups of short lists
- deleting inappropriate or repeated items (cross out on student's test)
- allowing breaks in testing time

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**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
TAKING NOTES,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- giving the student a copy of the notes
- giving the student a partial outline to complete during note
- having another student make a carbon copy of notes
- using a tape recorder
- trading the student's incomplete notes for a copy of complete notes
- giving additional instruction on note taking
- allowing the student to listen without taking notes and conclude with a short oral or written summary of main points
- keying class notes to pages in textbook

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**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
COMPLETING STUDY GUIDES OR WORKSHEETS,  
TOU CAN TRY...**

- providing page numbers for location of answers in reading material
- making sure questions are in the same order as the reading material
- selecting or marking out items (based on appropriateness for each student)
- highlighting or under lining answers
- providing a word bank
- breaking material into smaller parts
- allowing students to form study groups
- taking turns: you do one, the student does the next one, etc.

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## WORKING WITH STUDENTS – Modifications (CONTINUED)

**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
USING A TEXTBOOK,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- reading the textbook aloud to the student
- using a peer as a "reading buddy"
- using computer programs with audio
- using visuals (films, videotapes, computer programs)
- providing summaries or outlines
- using a parallel textbook (same subject, lower reading level)
- providing preview questions
- going over important vocabulary
- finding out what the student already knows about the information (activating prior knowledge)
- developing study guides
- highlighting the textbook
- asking questions during and after reading (to check comprehension and reinforce information)
- teaching the student to use specific parts of the textbook (glossary, index, table of contents, diagrams, charts, etc.)

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**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
KEEPING AN ORGANIZED NOTEBOOK,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- checking the notebook often
- having the student number all pages
- checking the notebook daily
- requiring the student to keep one notebook for each subject, or using one large ringbinder with a divider for each subject
- color coding pages by subject area or by weeks, months etc.
- having the student immediately file pages following instruction or being given the sheets
- assigning a "notebook buddy" from the class (choose someone who has good notebook-keeping skills)

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**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
KEEPING TRACK OF MATERIALS OR ASSIGNMENTS,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- helping the student develop self-checking or self-monitoring skills for remembering classroom supplies and assignments
- writing assignments on board for the student to copy
- requiring envelopes for big projects or projects with separate parts
- asking the student what materials he/she will need
- keeping an extra set of materials in the classroom
- making sure all returned papers are immediately put in the notebook
- giving rewards for bringing materials and assignments each day or class period
- developing nonverbal cues to remind the student to self-check for materials
- keeping an assignment calendar, checklist, or diary
- using Post-It notes to mark assignments in textbooks
- writing assignment requirements on Post-It notes marking assignments

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**IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE  
COMPLETING WORK ON TIME,  
YOU CAN TRY...**

- reducing the amount of work or allowing more time for the work
- reminding the student of time periodically
- writing schedules and helping the student plan use of time
- helping the student keep a calendar
- breaking assignments up and having several "due dates" for the pieces
- developing checklists
- using a kitchen timer to define work times

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## **WORKING WITH STUDENTS – Modifications (continued)**

<p><b>IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE STAYING ON TASK, YOU CAN TRY THIS...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reducing distractions</li> <li>rewarding on-task behavior</li> <li>providing shortened tasks</li> <li>making sure the student's workspace is clear of materials</li> <li>reducing the amount of work</li> <li>using peer helpers or peer tutors</li> <li>varying activities often</li> <li>isolating the student</li> </ul> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p><b>IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE GETTING INTERESTED OR GETTING STARTED, YOU CAN TRY THIS...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>telling stories that relate the lesson to real life</li> <li>relating the lesson to things the student already knows or has experienced</li> <li>seating the student near the teacher – distance affects interest</li> <li>using cues to begin work</li> <li>giving work in smaller amounts</li> <li>providing lots of encouragement</li> <li>sequencing work with easiest answers first</li> <li>making sure the student has all needed materials</li> <li>making sure the student knows exactly what is expected</li> <li>checking on progress often in the first few minutes of work</li> <li>giving clear directions</li> <li>providing a checklist of the steps involved</li> <li>having another student talk about the material or start reading the material to the student</li> </ul> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>IF THE STUDENT HAS TROUBLE READING WRITTEN MATERIAL, YOU CAN TRY...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finding a text written at a lower reading level</li> <li>providing highlighted material</li> <li>taping student reading material</li> <li>using a peer or parent to read important material</li> <li>decreasing the amount of required reading</li> <li>finding the same information in another form -</li> <li>videotapes, audiotapes, filmstrips, etc.</li> <li>making oral reading optional: find another way the student can contribute (role-playing or storytelling)</li> <li>prearranging oral reading and allowing the student time to practice</li> <li>allowing extra time for reading</li> <li>substitute one-page summaries or study guides that identify key terms and ideas of the reading assignment</li> <li>using material that the student finds relevant and interesting so he or she will want to try to read</li> <li>preteaching vocabulary</li> <li>putting main ideas on index cards and organizing them</li> <li>using larger print type or copies</li> <li>allowing the student to use pictures and manipulatives</li> <li>controlling the introduction of new ideas</li> <li>questioning the student often as he or she reads</li> </ul> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

# Regular Classroom Modification Suggestions

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Modifications needed to assure success for this student in regular, remedial, and supportive programs.

## PACING

- Extend time requirements
- Allow breaks, vary activity often
- Omit assignments requiring copying in a timed situation
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ENVIRONMENT

- Assign preferential seating
- Alter physical arrangement of room
- Reduce/minimize distractions:
  - visual  auditory  both
- Special ed. teacher in regular class
- Special ed. aide in regular class
- Special ed. teacher consults with:
  - student  reg. ed. teacher  both
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESENTATION OF SUBJECT MATERIAL

- Emphasize teaching approach:
  - auditory  visual  tactile  multi
- Use individual/small group instruction
- Use specialized curriculum
- Use parallel curriculum
- Tape lectures for playback
- Demonstrate concepts
- Use manipulatives
- Emphasize critical information
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## MATERIALS

- Provide taped textbooks
- Highlight textbooks/study guides
- Use supplementary material
- Give assistance in note taking: \_\_\_\_\_
- Type handwritten teacher material
- Provide special equipment: \_\_\_\_\_ format
- Use laminated materials
- Use adapted/modified textbooks
- Allow use of calculator/computer

## GRADING

- Modify grading system: \_\_\_\_\_
- Modify weights of course components: \_\_\_\_\_
- Modify inappropriate course objectives/outcomes (See IEP)

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Lower reading level
- Give directions in small, distinct steps
- Allow copying from paper/book
- Use written backup for oral directions
- Lower difficulty level
- Shorten assignment
- Reduce paper-and-pencil tasks
- Read directions to student
- Give oral cues or prompts
- Record or type assignments
- Adapt worksheets, packets
- Maintain assignment notebook
- Use school/home assignment sheet
- Use alternate assignment
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## REINFORCEMENT AND FOLLOW THROUGH

- Use positive reinforcement
- Use concrete reinforcement
- Check often for understanding/review
- Arrange for peer tutoring
- Plan cooperative learning experiences
- Provide language experience
- Give immediate feedback
- Request parent reinforcement
- Have student repeat directions
- Make/use vocabulary files
- Teach study skills
- Use study guides to organize material
- Reinforce long-term assignment time lines
- Repeat review/drill
- Use behavioral contracts
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## TESTING ADAPTATIONS

- Allow student to answer orally
- Use short-answer format
- Provide taped test  Use multiple-choice
- Read test to student  Write different test
- Modify format  Shorten test length
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_





## Ashley's Pullout Activity Plan

Timeframe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** To understand that she can choose among activities but that once she makes a choice he has to stick with it for a period of time.

### Sequence of Activity:

1. A. makes a choice from the choice book
2. A. selects the materials she needs for that choice from the shelf
3. A. sticks with the choice she made for 10 minutes
4. A. stops the activity when the timer rings

**Time Period(s):** frequently throughout every day-whenver an oportune moment arises

**Location:** Vary location daily

(sped, library, comp. lab, 5th gr clsrn)

### Activity Choices:

1. states puzzle
2. simple machines activity box (ramps, levers, pulleys)
3. alphabet cards
4. name game
5. choices that other 5th grade students make

### Friends' Goals:

1. cue A to make choices, get materials
2. redirect A when she gets off task
3. cue A to stop when bell rings

	Choice #	Gets Materials	Attends	Stops
<b>M</b>				
<b>T</b>				
<b>W</b>				
<b>R</b>				
<b>F</b>				

#### Coding:

Enter choice #, level of assistance required for making choice, getting materials, attending and stopping

V=Verbal prompt

PP= Physical prompt

HOH=Hand over hand

NA – No assistance

**Calvin's Communication, Academic & Physical Activities:**

**1. Calvin will use big mac switch to communicate a want / need**

Classroom Activity	Total trials	# Independent	# Assisted	Assistance Type

**2. Calvin will make a choice between a like and a dislike using big mac switch**

Options presented	What Calvin chose:	# Independent	# Assisted	Assistance Type
/				
/				
/				

**3. Calvin will greet peers using his talker:**

Message	Times Played / Opportunities	Type of assistance (circle)			
		PP	HOH	Verbal	No assistance
Hello					
What's up?					
Hi					

**4. Calvin will use sign/gesture for:**

Current Words:	Level of Prompting		
	Hand over hand	Verbal	Independent
Food			
Drink			
Bathroom (need to go)			
All done			
Stop			

**5. Goal: Calvin will eat lunch unassisted**

Current Objectives:	I	Min.	Mod.	Max.	Dep.
Get spoon					
Scoop					
Lift to mouth					
Clear utensil					
Return utensil to plate					



**6. Goal: Calvin will participate in typical classroom activities:**

	<b>Classroom Activity:</b>	<b>Calvin's Activity:</b>
Hour 1 Occupational Skills		
Hour 2 Communication		
Hour 3 Choir		
Hour 4 Personal Skills		
Hour 5 Lunch		
Hour 6 Computers		
Hour 7 Life Skills		
Hour 8 P.E.		

**7. Goal: Calvin will get on and off bus unassisted**

	<b>I</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Mod.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Dep.</b>
Off (am)					
On (pm)					

**Anecdotal Messages from School:**

**Messages from home:**

**Key:**

**I = Independent**

**Min = 75% Calvin**

**Mod = 50% Calvin**

**Max = 25% Calvin**

Aram's Daily Communication Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal # (s)	Adaptation # / used for _____	* Level of Independence	* Prompts Provided
<b>1, 2, 3</b>	1. outlining / reading worksheet – cut and paste	<i>mod</i>	<i>PP</i>
<b>2, 3</b>	6.& 7. keyboarding during writing time	<i>min</i>	<i>PP</i>
<b>4</b>	10. lying on carpet – during storytime- Aram signaled answers to teacher questions with his right hand	<i>max</i>	<i>VP</i>
	Anecdotal Comments: This is a real step forward for Aram – he really did more of the cutting than ever before... Keyboarding required significant physical prompting – probably close to 95% but not quite 100%		

\* Key

Dep. = Dependent (100% paraeducator)

Min.= Minimum independence (75% paraeducator, 25% Aram)

Mod. = Moderate independence (50% paraeducator, 50% Aram)

Max. = Maximum independence (25% paraeducator, 75% Aram)

Indep. =Independent (100% Aram)

VP = Verbal Prompt

PP =Physical Prompt

**IEP Goals for Aram:**

1. Acquire independence in tasks of daily living
2. Participate in general education curriculum
3. Improve eye/hand coordination
4. Strengthen left side

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classroom Adaptations for Aram** (based on his IEP)

1. Outline handouts for coloring or cutting with 1/4" marker. Provide hand-over-hand guidance when Aram starts to cut, but reduce guidance as he acquires proficiency.
2. Present materials to Aram to the right of his visual field (because of a left-field deficit approximately 45 degrees from midline).
3. Whenever manipulative objects are used in class, direct A to grasp objects and provide hand-over-hand guidance as necessary for him to grasp objects to strengthen his thumb and index finger grasping. As proficiency increases, reduce guidance.
4. Offer bead stringing as an optional activity when A has completed assigned tasks, or during class times when he is unable to participate in typical instructional activities. The purpose is to practice patterning and to improve visual/motor activities. Encourage independence by using a plastic straw supported with clay on the table. Guide him to use self-talk about the patterns (as directed).
5. A's ability to write is limited, so while the rest of his class writes sight words, he writes only one or two words then changes to the use of letter stamps to put words on paper.
6. Computer adaptations: use enlarged numbers and letters on keyboard and screen
7. When other students are writing, paraeducator or teacher takes dictation from A, or assists with the use of a tape recorder to record his story / ideas. As his keyboarding skill increases, replace dictation and tape recording with keyboard his ideas.
8. Provide physical prompts paired with verbal prompts. Then, fade the physical prompts and use only verbal prompts when A uses the bathroom, or is dressing to go outdoors to encourage his independence in removing and replacing his elastic waist clothing.
9. Use verbal prompts to remind A to keep his left hand on the tabletop or to use both hands when carrying objects. Remind him to self-monitor and use self-talk.
10. Whenever other students are working on activities on the floor, put A in a prone position on hands and knees and ask him to pick up or manipulate objects with his right hand. This encourages him to put weight on his left side and build strength on that side. Make a game of it, involve other children, to avoid the appearance of A being different.

## **PROBLEMS RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT PROXIMITY**

- Interference with ownership and responsibility by general educators
- Separation from classmates
- Dependence on adults
- Impact on peer interactions
- Limitations on receiving competent instruction *Exceptional Children*
- Loss of personal control
- Loss of gender identity
- Interference with instruction of other students *Exceptional Children*

## **TEN INTERACTIVE STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Return books to the library with a friend.
2. Recycle with a rotating buddy.
3. Straighten books in the library with a friend.
4. Stuff mailboxes in the office or the classroom with a friend.
5. Water plants with a friend.
6. Prepare snack with a buddy.
7. Pass out papers with a partner.
8. Collect homework, books, or music with a partner.
9. Buy supplies for home economics class with a friend.
10. Sharpen pencils with a partner.

Causton-Theoharis, J. & Malmgren, K. (2005). *Building Bridges: Strategies to Help Paraprofessionals Promote Peer Interaction*, Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 23.

# **TEN STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE STUDENT-TO-STUDENT INTERACTIONS**

1. Ensure that the student is in rich social environments.
2. Highlight similarities between the student and peers.
3. Re-direct student conversation to the student with a disability.
4. Directly teach and practice interaction skills in natural settings.
5. Use instructional strategies that promote interaction.
6. Teach others how to interact with the student with a disability.
7. Make rewards for behavior social in nature.
8. Give the student responsibilities that allow for interactions with peers.
9. Systematically fade direct support.
10. Make interdependence a goal for the students.

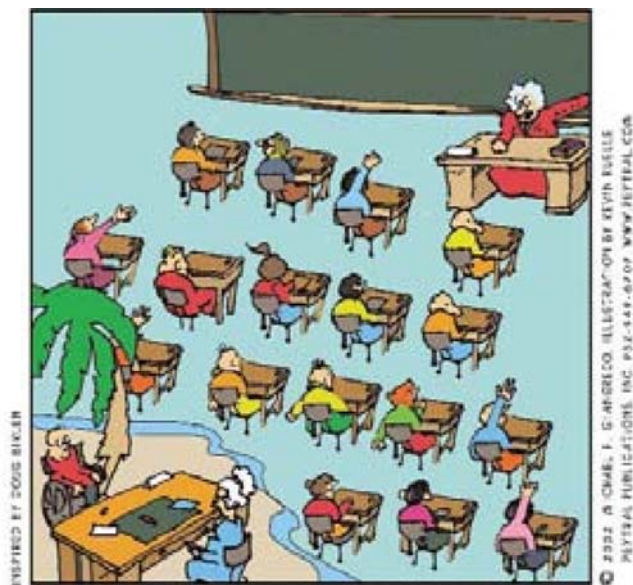
Causton-Theoharis, J. & Malmgren, K. (2005). *Building Bridges: Strategies to Help Paraprofessionals Promote Peer Interaction*, Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 20.

## **TEN BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS THAT ARE SOCIAL**

1. Shoot baskets with a peer.
2. Invite a friend to sit with you at lunch.
3. Go to the movies after school with other students from class.
4. Make bead necklaces with a friend during study hall.
5. Select two peers to have lunch with the teacher.
6. Play a math game with other students.
7. Play computer games with friends.
8. Pop popcorn with a peer and deliver it to the class.
9. Read with a selected friend in the library.
10. With a friend, play a game of Uno against the principal.

Causton-Theoharis, J. & Malmgren, K. (2005). *Building Bridges: Strategies to Help Paraprofessionals Promote Peer Interaction*, Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 23.

<i>Category of Effect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Separation from Classmates	Student with a disability and paraprofessional are seated together in the back or side of the room, physically separated from the class.
Unnecessary Dependence	Student with a disability is hesitant to participate without paraprofessional direction, prompting, or cueing.
Interference with Peer Interactions	Paraprofessional can create physical or symbolic barriers that interfere with interactions between a student with disabilities and classmates.
Insular Relationships	Student with a disability and paraprofessional do most everything together, to the exclusion of others (i.e., teachers and peers).
Feeling Stigmatized	Student with a disability expresses embarrassment/discomfort about having a paraprofessional; makes him or her stand out in negative ways.
Limited Access to Competent Instruction	Paraprofessionals are not necessarily skilled in providing competent instruction; some do the work for the students they support.
Interference with Teacher Engagement	Teachers tend to be less involved when a student with a disability has a paraprofessional because individual attention is already available.
Loss of Personal Control	Paraprofessionals do so much for the students with disabilities that they do not exercise choices that are typical for other students.
Loss of Gender Identity	Student with a disability is treated as the gender of the paraprofessional (e.g., male student taken into the female bathroom).
May Provoke Problem Behaviors	Some students with disabilities express their dislike of paraprofessional support by displaying inappropriate behaviors.



**ISLAND IN THE MAINSTREAM**  
 MRS. JONES AND MRS. COOPER ARE STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY FRED DOESN'T FEEL LIKE PART OF THE CLASS.

Giangreco, M., Yuan, S., McKenzie, B., Cameron, P. & Fialka, J. (2005) *"Be Careful What You Wish for..." Five Reasons to Be Concerned About the Assignment of Individual Paraprofessionals*, Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 28-34