

Virtual Learning Accommodation and Modification Options

Accessibility of Instruction

This tool is intended to support teachers as they proactively plan virtual instruction to increase access and engagement for all learners, including those with learning disabilities or limited English language proficiency. Below are some general strategies for ensuring accessibility during virtual learning.

High-Tech Accessibility Options

Virtual Learning	Accessibility Considerations	Resources
Operating System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color filters • Color contrast • Screen readers • Resize icons, text, mouse and more • Magnify • Voice control • Text-to-speech and speech-to-text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chromebook accessibility features • Microsoft accessibility features • Mac accessibility features
Web Browser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom or magnify • Make text larger or smaller • Text-to-speech • Change font, size, and colors • Caret browsing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chrome accessibility features • Internet Explorer accessibility features • Firefox accessibility features
Delivery Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed captioning • Automatic transcripts • Screen reader • Text-to-speech and speech-to-text • Braille display 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G-Suite Platform accessibility features • Zoom accessibility features • Skype accessibility features

Accommodations

Accommodations change **how** the student is taught or expected to learn. They provide necessary access during instruction and assessments and neither change the construct being assessed, nor compromise the integrity or validity of the assessment or content. They are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s disability or limited English language proficiency. They do not reduce learning expectations, if based on need.

Accommodation		Virtual Learning Options	
<i>Presentation</i>			
Large print		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change your computer settings (Settings-->Ease of Access -->Make text bigger) 	
Text read aloud or on audio tape		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign audio books (e.g., Epic!, Storyline Online, Newsela) Enable your computer/device to read text (e.g., Read Aloud Google Chrome Extension) 	
Provide a designated reader		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable your computer/device to scan paper assignments and read aloud (e.g., Reader+, Read Text of Scanned Documents, KNFB Reader) 	
Present instructions orally			
Reduce number of items per page		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preview the assignment. Reduce repetitive questions (e.g., odds, evens, 1-5) This should not change the complexity of the task just the number of items completed 	
Provide a copy of the notes/outline		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many video chat platforms allow you to add automatic transcription Take a picture of your notes and send it to the student Have another student take a picture of their notes and share it Share your digital notes 	
Get a written list of instructions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type up a clear, concise list of step-by-step instructions and share it with the student 	
Provide graphs and visual aids such as graphic organizers and webs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate visual aids during lessons Record yourself creating a graphic organizer or web using whiteboard apps (e.g., ShowMe, Educreations) and share with the student Take pictures of visual aids used and send it to the student 	

Accommodation		Virtual Learning Options	
<i>Response</i>			
Allow verbal responses as needed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable 'Voice Recorder' on your computer to allow the student to record their verbal response A student can send their voice recording to the teacher via Google Classroom, Edmodo or email 	
Answers to be dictated to a scribe		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable your computer to perform voice to text (e.g., Voice to Text a Google Chrome Extension) 	
Permit responses to be given via computer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For paper and pencil assignments allow the student to complete their response on a computer 	
Permit spelling and grammar assistive device for writing assignments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable spell and grammar checker on Microsoft platforms, Google platforms, etc. 	
Use a calculator or table of "math facts"		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply a calculator from the school or teach the student how to use the calculator app on their device 	

Accommodation		Virtual Learning Options	
<i>Timing</i>			
Provide a daily schedule		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since virtual learning allows for more flexibility with time, create a daily schedule with required times for online learning (e.g., video lesson, chat discussion) • Reach out to the parents and work collaboratively to create a daily schedule that meets the needs of the student 	
Allow extra time to respond to questions in class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide think time during virtual learning before requiring a response • Have a student type/submit their answer once they have it instead of giving a time restriction for their response 	
Allow frequent breaks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a document outlining suggestions for when to take breaks and generate ideas with the student about what they can do during their breaks • Share student breaks document with the parents/care giver • First/then statements (e.g., first complete ____, then you may ____) 	
Extend allotted time for a test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the student that they have additional time to complete an assignment/test 	
Allow additional time to complete an assignment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the student to approximate the amount of time they may need for an assignment/test 	
Accommodation		Virtual Learning Options	
<i>Setting</i>			
Provide preferential seating		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferential seating means that a student's seat is placed in a location that is most beneficial for his/her learning • Talk with the student and/or parents about where in their home may be the best place for the student to work 	
Provide a space with minimal distractions			
Provide special lighting or acoustics			
Test in small group setting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home learning is already a small group setting 	
Use sensory tools such as an exercise band that can be looped around a chair's legs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the parents/care giver to pick up sensory tools the student used at school to use at home • Create a list of sensory tools that are commonly found at home (e.g., sand, beads, Velcro, weighted blanket) • 	

Accommodation	Virtual Learning Options
<i>Organization</i>	
Use a timer to complete a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide options for timers at home (e.g., kitchen timer, phone timer, Visual Countdown Timer app, Visual Timer app)
Mark texts with a highlighter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a task in Microsoft Word or Google Docs and highlight areas to assist with organization (i.e., math key words, reading clue words, the question being asked)
<i>Other</i>	
Provide redirection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use precise language to reinforce, remind, and redirect
Use nonverbal signals to re-engage a student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can use eye contact, a facial expression, proximity (move closer), tap on desk, gesture

Modifications

Accommodations change **how** the student is taught or expected to learn, modifications change **what** the student is taught or expected to learn. Modifications change the content of the standard, which will mean identifying standards that are fundamentally related but also developmentally appropriate. Many modifications sound or look similar to an accommodation, therefore it is critical that the teacher(s) ensure the modification implemented changed **what** the student was taught or expected to learn.

For example, providing a scribe during instruction can be either an accommodation or a modification depending on the goal of the lesson. A scribe would be an accommodation if the intent of the writing is to assess the student's understanding of a book or topic. However, it is a modification if the intent of the writing is to measure the student's ability to write the letters, use appropriate punctuation, and correctly format the paragraph or story. The scribe has changed the expectation of the student forming the letters correctly by eliminating this requirement in this activity.

The table below is intended to support implementation of modifications needed as indicated within the student's IEP or ILP. Understanding the difference between modifications and accommodations will help the team determine if the strategy is appropriate.

Communication

Communication, the foundation for all learning, is delivered and received in multiple ways and often simultaneously. For individuals *without* communication challenges, the act of exchanging ideas, information, or feelings with another person can appear effortless; however, for some students, this essential skill requires significant support. Communication is dependent upon a person's (1) access to the message (hearing, reading, watching, touching); (2) their ability to understand the structure and meaning of the shared language, whether it be spoken or written words, sign language, or other symbolic representations; and finally, (3) the ability to generate some type of response to the message that will be understood by another person. For students with complex needs, their mode(s) of communication and access to necessary communicative supports must be considered in the lesson design, delivery, and assessment of student understanding. Additionally, lessons should always focus on improving the student's acquisition and development of language with a shared goal toward communicative independence across settings and partners.

Modification	Virtual Learning Options
<p>***Reminder, modifications change what the student is taught or expected to learn. Depending on the task, the following could be an accommodation rather than a modification.</p>	
<p>Presentation</p>	
<p>Modified content general strategies <i>Reminder: Modified content is aligned to the student's grade level and age appropriate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the course requirements for grades 5-12 (https://www.tn.gov/education/student-support/special-education/special-education-tools-resources.html). The course requirements will help you in identifying the essential, core concepts to help guide the modifications. Leverage high quality instructional materials, if available, that are designed to provide modified instruction aligned to the standards Provide a similar assignment. For example, in math, students are multiplying polynomials. A modification could be to multiply single-digit numbers. In ELA, students are asked to compare two different novels. A modification could be identifying the story elements from one of the novels including characters, setting, plot, climax/problem, and conclusion. Provide time with the teacher or paraprofessional to guide the student, provide targeted feedback, and ensure the modifications are appropriate. Consider providing students the opportunity to opt-out of an assignment, lesson, or learning activity. Many students who need modifications will have deficits in the skills needed to access and participate meaningfully in virtual school (I.e., communication, fine motor skills, self-advocacy, sensory needs, pragmatic language, organization and planning, writing/typing). The online learning will therefore require the students to work on both content and non-content skills at the same time. This can cause escalated levels of stress and frustration.
<p>Modified content: ELA <i>Reminder: Modified content is aligned to the student's grade level and age appropriate.</i></p>	<p>Reading suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify the reading material complexity, length, and/or vocabulary. (i.e., reduce the vocabulary, minimize sentence length, reduce sentence complexity, shorten the passage, reduce the number of pronouns/characters, reduce the dialogue, add visual cues, etc.) Provide the text in a different format, (e.g., comic strip, summary, with picture cues, auditory and visuals). Utilize videos or movies that add context and visuals to the text. Modify the vocabulary or simplify language by reducing pronouns. Modify the comprehension expectations focusing on explicit questions, reflections, connections to self or within text, big ideas, and/or main characters. <p>Writing suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a sentence or partial sentence for students to complete or extend. Provide an outline, web, or graphic organizer for the student Focus on developing ideas verbally and allow a scribe to write or type. Empower students to "write" a story they read to you on a video or call to develop sequencing, language, variety of sentence structures, character development, etc. <p>Language suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on a part of speech (ex: adjectives) within simple sentences.

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<p>Modified content: math <i>Reminder: Modified content is aligned to the student's grade level and age appropriate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on a syntactic category or language pattern (e.g., asking a question, making requests, answering requests, idioms). Use real numbers, whole numbers, or reduce the number complexity (e.g., 2-digit numbers instead of multi-digit, whole numbers instead of decimals). Reduce the steps in solving the math problem (e.g., single operations rather than 3, 1 variable instead of 2). Reduce large measurements to ones that the student can physically manipulate (i.e., change meters to centimeters to build models of the problem to aid in solving). Provide formulas and calculators or online formula calculators.
<p>Provide alternate aligned materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a novel of the same theme written in a way that provides the needed modifications to vocabulary, text complexity, text length, etc. but is also age/grade appropriate. Use model(s) to demonstrate a concept rather than write about it or a complete a traditional assessment. Provide the data in a simple chart or graph. Provide 2-4 answer choices when asking a question.
<p>Give directions in alternative format</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide directions in different/multiple formats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual step-by-step Video directions Single step at a time Prompt (verbal or visual).
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize online images or resources for communication symbols, core communication boards, or communication apps (fees may be charged). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boardmaker symbols Tap-to-Talk LAMP Words for Life Proloquo2Go Snap Core First
<p>Response</p>	
<p>Modified product</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on one element of a larger product Change the product expected to align to the course requirement or lesson expectation(s) Provide the pieces for a project for the student to compose (e.g., quotes or types facts they choose from to create a presentation board, models of the human body the student explains or puts in order).
<p>Timing</p>	
<p>Modified Timing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break the project into single steps to complete. Provide the project directions at the start of the unit to provide the student more time to divide up the work.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide extra think time. Use a timer, a minute of thinking is a lot more of a pause than we traditionally provide in school. • Provide fewer units of study, projects, books, writing assignments, etc. to provide additional time for processing and learning.
<p>Setting</p>	
Modified Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce expectations for online engagement. • Allow for alternate time of day and student choice of work order. • Schedule private work session time with the general education teacher, special education teacher, paraprofessional, etc. • Encourage a flexible environment (i.e., sitting, laying down, standing, or other sensory strategy) to maintain engagement.
<p>Organization</p>	
Modified organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the daily work expectations in a checklist or task chart. • Provide the notes or outline for the student. • Utilize graphic organizers. • Collaborate with the parent to ensure the student has the materials needed for each lesson prior to the lesson start.
<p>Other</p>	
Modified rubric/scoring/grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify the assessment scale to ensure the grade aligns to the expectations communicated to the student. • Modify the rubric to focus on one or two areas. • Modify the rubric expectations within each area. • Modify grading to pass/fail or participated/did not participate.