

# SPECIAL EDUCATION PARTICIPANT'S ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Strategies for Paraprofessionals Supporting  
Instruction of Students with Disabilities – Part 1



## Table of Contents

Session Objectives (Slide 4) .....	2
Pause and Reflect: Review of Supplementary Aids and Services (Slide 9) .....	2
Accommodations (Slides 10-11).....	4
Modifications (Slide 12).....	5
Accommodations and Modifications (Slide 13) .....	5
Pause and Reflect: Common Strategies (Slide 21) .....	6
Reflection and Session Takeaway (Slide 23) .....	6

## Session Objectives (Slide 4)

Participants will...

- Understand the variety of supports and services available to students with disabilities, as well as the paraprofessional's role in implementation.
- Identify general support strategies that can be used in the classroom.

## Pause and Reflect: Review of Supplementary Aids and Services (Slide 9)

**The following categories of supplementary aids and services are available to students with disabilities in order to facilitate participation in their least restrictive environment (LRE).**

*Note: This list is meant to be representative, but not exhaustive, of the kinds of supplementary aids and services that are available to students with disabilities.*

### **Environmental**

- Provide preferential seating.
- Assigned seating (e.g., classroom, cafeteria, bus, etc.).
- Adjust classroom configuration.
- Use study carrels or quiet areas.
- Use visuals to define areas of the classroom (e.g., carpet squares, tape on floor, etc.).
- Reduce/minimize distractions (e.g., visual, spatial, auditory, movement).

### **Instructional Pacing**

- Allow extra time for assignment completion.
- Allow breaks during and/or between assignments/activities.
- Plan intentionally varied activities.
- Eliminate requirements for timed completion of assignments.

### **Content Presentation**

- Provide recordings of class sessions for review.

- Highlight main ideas and key information.
- Preview and review critical concepts.
- Pre-teach vocabulary.
- Provide visual supports and/or graphic organizers.
- Rephrase instructions.
- Use manipulatives in math.

### **Materials**

- Ensure ample white space on printed materials.
- Provide access to copy of class notes.
- Use large print.
- Provide digital and physical copies of worksheets or handouts.

### **Specialized Equipment & Procedures**

- Adapted materials and tools (e.g., “talking” calculator, adapted scissors, etc.).
- Communication switches.
- Modified keyboard.
- Augmentative and alternative communication device (AAC).

### **Assignment Modifications**

- Give directions one step at a time, in multiple formats as appropriate (written, verbal, visual).
- Reduce paper/pencil tasks.
- Allow student to respond in orally (recorded) or typed formats.
- Avoid grading spelling, grammar, etc., if not directly related to the standard being assessed.

### **Testing Adaptations**

- Read directions and/or test questions aloud.
- Allow small group or individual testing.
- Modify test *format* (not content) to reduce visual complexity or confusion.

### **Self-Management Strategies**

- Provide visual daily/weekly schedules.

- Check often for understanding; have student repeat directions.
- Teach skills in multiple settings to encourage generalization.

Adapted from: Causton, J., & MacLeod, K. (2021). *The Paraprofessional's Handbook for Effective Support in Inclusive Classrooms*. Brookes Publishing.

## Accommodations (Slides 10-11)

**Accommodation** – a change in *how* students access information and demonstrate learning (*without* substantially changing the instructional level, content, or performance criteria).

Type	Barrier	Accommodation	Examples
<b>Presentation</b>	The way information is presented (e.g., text, verbal instruction).	Allow students to access information in ways other than standard visual or auditory.  Change the way that information is presented.	Large-print books/materials  Visual cues (e.g., color-coding)  Audio books
<b>Response</b>	The way in which a student is required to respond (e.g., writing, speech).	Allow students to complete assignments through ways other than typical verbal or written responses.	Speech-to-text software  Scribe  Digital recorder
<b>Setting</b>	The characteristics of the environment (e.g., noise level, lighting).	Allow for a change in the environment or in how the environment is structured.	Preferential seating (e.g., near teacher, away from the door)  Testing in a separate location
<b>Timing and Scheduling</b>	The timing and scheduling of instruction (e.g., time of day, length of assignment).	Allow changes to when and how long students have to complete tasks.  Allow assignments to be broken down into smaller sections.	Extended time to complete task.  Frequent breaks  Shorter testing sessions

## Modifications (Slide 12)

**Modification** – a change in *what* students are expected to learn (e.g., the instructional level, content, and/or performance criteria).

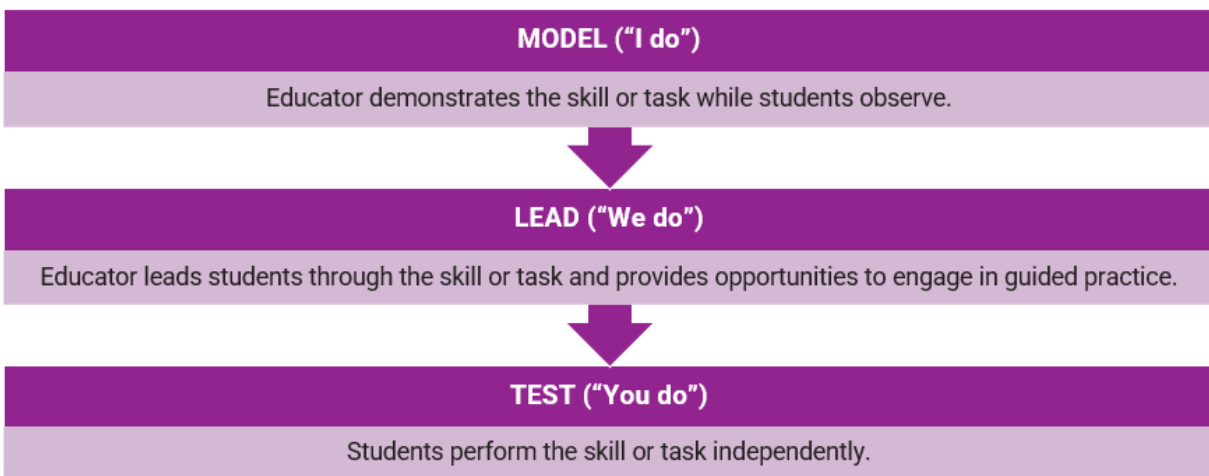
Barrier	Example Modification
Reading printed text	Alternate assignment
Decoding text	Read a lower-level book
Lacks prerequisite skills to complete task	Provide less complex or lower level task
Writing responses	Shorter assignment

## Accommodations and Modifications (Slide 13)

How would you describe the difference between accommodations and modifications?

What has been your experience with supporting students with accommodations and modifications?

## Model-Lead-Test Strategy (Slide 16)



## Pause and Reflect: Common Strategies (Slide 21)

What other strategies have worked well for you while supporting students during instruction?

## Reflection and Session Takeaway (Slide 23)

What is your biggest takeaway from today's session? What are you looking forward to implementing?