

Accommodations

Leveling the Playing Field
Presented by
Mark Brugger for IDA-UMB

Mark Brugger

Program Manager, Community and Educator Engagement

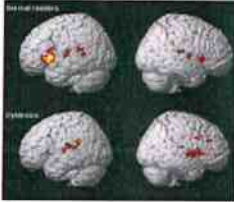
- Dyslexic from a family of dyslexics
- Concurrent conditions:
 - Auditory processing disorder
 - Visual processing disorder
 - Dyspraxia - verbal/motor
- Former university case manager for Visually Impaired and Learning Disabled Students
- Community School Advocate; SEPTSA Board member
- Parent of Special Needs Child
- Trained (Associate Level) by an Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioner and Educator Fellow.
- Completed coursework in special education advocacy through NSEA!
- Telecom and Technology Entrepreneur

In this workshop, you will

- Learn why accommodations matter for students with dyslexia.
- Understand the concept of "fair"
- Understand the legal basis of accommodations under IDEA and Section 504
- Discuss matching accommodations to needs and types of accommodations
- Discuss communicating and collaborating for implementing and monitoring accommodations
- Discuss ways to talk to children about accommodations

Why Accommodate For Dyslexia? Brain Processing Differences

- Extra time required due to an organic difference
- Word formation areas not typically functioning
- Reliance on other systems
- Not automatic
- Accuracy requires more time



Johanna Pechel, Helsinki Medical Imaging Center, Finland, 2006


Where do Accommodations Fit? Why do Accommodations Matter?

Champion
+ **Accommodation**
+ **Remediation**
= **Success**

CARS 


When is Equal Unfair?

- When a person has been identified as having a disability that impacts a particular area or performance and is given the same environment, tools, parameters, techniques as non-impaired individuals.



**Accommodations:
Crutch or Scaffold/Ramp**

- Remove the barriers and allow for growth, change, learning in an appropriate environment
- Some accommodations may be viewed as just different means to the same end – not unequal, just different. Nothing wrong with different means to same end.
- Eye Reading = Ear Reading



Marilyn Bartlett v. NY State Board of Law Examiners (2001)

- "Just as a person in a wheelchair can use an above-ground entrance to gain access to a building if a ramp is available, an individual with a learning disability can draw meaning from high level text if she is allowed the time she requires to slowly decipher each word. To such an individual, time is her ramp." *Sonia Sotomayor, United States Supreme Court Judge*

Legal Basis of Accommodations for Students with Dyslexia

- Section 504** is the federal law enforced by the US Department of Education's **Office of Civil Rights**
- Section 504 is an **anti-discrimination** statute
 - "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall solely by reason of her/his disability, be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."
- Who is qualified?** Section 504 regulation defines a person with a disability as "any person who: (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment."
- Includes participation in school related and **extracurricular activities.**

Legal Basis of Accommodations Limitations

- Medical diagnosis or impairment does not **automatically qualify** a student for 504 accommodations.
- Condition must **substantially limit** major life activities.
- Districts can **re-evaluate students** and determine that the impairment no longer substantially limits the ability to learn
- **School determines 504 eligibility**, and parents can use due process hearing if they disagree, and later a formal OCR complaint.
- Initial consent for evaluation by parent is required. A periodic re-evaluation (triennial review) is required, unless school waives it with parent consent.

Accommodations - Performance

- Accommodations provide opportunity for those with disabilities to reach maximum potential performance
- Accommodations, if used by those with do not truly need them, have far less impact -- Because they are not leveling the playing field and don't need them to reach their potential


Example*/Extra-Time Given for Reading Comprehension:

- Those with Learning Disabilities: 13% tile ----> 76% tile
- Those without Learning Disabilities: 82% tile ----> 83% tile

* The Effect of Extra Time on Reading Comprehension Scores for University Students With and Without Learning Disabilities" Runyan J Learn Disabil 1991: 24 (2), p. 104


Accommodations for Instruction

- **504 plans** can sometimes include accommodations that resemble utilization of specialized instruction or methodologies.
- Typically, **no goals or objectives** assigned like in an IEP.



Accommodations are...

- Techniques or provisions made in how a student can access learning or information
- Strategies and tactics that validly demonstrate learning
- Methods used that alter the academic setting or environment
- Based on individual strengths and needs
- May vary in intensity and degree



Determining Accommodations

- Identifying specific challenges from the disability or dyslexia
 - Impact on **specific tasks** and activities
 - Impact on **performance** as a whole



- Take Action

Determining Accommodations Paradigm

Addressing Specific Barriers due to Disabilities		
INPUTS	PROCESS	OUTPUTS
- Materials	- Calculation	- Tests
- Instruction	- Attention	- Reports
- Resources	- Processing	- Oral
- Etc.	- Etc.	- Etc.

Accommodations do NOT:

- Substantially change the **instructional level**
- Change the **content** to be learned
- Change the **amount** of information that is to be learned

Modifications change the level, content and amount of information to be learned.

Where are Accommodations Utilized?

- Instruction
- Testing
- Homework
- After School Activities
- Core Subjects/Electives
- Occupational Areas



Accommodations can support Remediation:

- Accommodations paired with instruction can support learning literacy skills and information
 - Spell Checker
 - Ex/Log correct spelling of word after 5 uses and then try to master that word without spell checker
 - Grammar Checker
 - Ex/Log areas of correction type and then learn what rules are being applied
 - Audiobooks with text
 - Learn phonics – sounds of a spelled word
 - Learn prosody – patterns of inflection for punctuation

**Communicating with School
Tips for Adult Advocacy**

- Be Specific with Request
- Match to Need/Situation/Area
- Communicate Early and Often
- Formally document when/how/who
- Email, Write, Hand-out your child's 504
- Research → Test/Monitor → Evaluate
- Learn Together what works!

**Communicating with School
Tips for Adult Advocacy**

- Firm and Polite
- Align with Great Teachers/Tutors
- Brainstorm/Be Creative
- Listen!
- Show Appreciation
- Follow up/Follow through
- Meet w/ teacher/tutor and child together
- Use progress reports to evaluate performance

**Collaborating with School
on Accommodations**


Do's	Don'ts
Get professionals to explain why it's needed. Utilize evaluations, educator reports, tri-annuals and experts.	Create a laundry list that is not matched to your child
Focus on the child's goals, strengths and weaknesses, "individualization" and "educational impact"	Use neighbors or other children's accommodations as a reason – "But Mike has this"
Use accommodations, given with at least a minimal frequency. Practice and get used to them.	Give them up easily. School/Life changes, and they can be hard to get back. Giving them up or not using them can have consequences (HS time crunches, college, testing)
View them as normal and natural part of life – "wearing glasses"	View them as a "crutch" or "weakness"

Collaborating with School on Accommodations

Do's	Don'ts
Expect it will take time to see results from the changes	Expect a miracle to happen
Review accommodations together with student, parent, and teacher to figure our most appropriate times to incorporate	Force an accommodation on a student that is not working after evaluating effectiveness
Check in with teachers and child at least monthly	Wait until the end of the school year to see if the accommodation is working
Make adjustments as needed	Base changes on emotions, but base them on the observed need of the child


Areas for Accommodations

- Physical Arrangements
- Instructional Presentation
- Assignments & Homework
- Tools & Materials
- Tests




Physical Arrangements

- Special Sound System
- Avoid distracting stimuli
- Sit student near positive role model
- Preferential seating or seating near teacher
- Increase distance between desks or enlarged workspace area
- Classroom with less children, more space
- Decrease distance between teacher and student when giving instructions; increase eye to eye contact




Instructional Presentation

- Allow students to record lessons and lectures for replay
- Break long presentations into short segments
- Emphasize multi-sensory teaching
- Provide outlines or teacher notes for lessons
- Pair students to check work or support instruction
- Provide peer note taker
- Provide visual aides
- Utilize advanced organizers or study guides
- Allow student to NOT read out loud in front of peers/class



Assignments & Homework

- Allow computer printed or typewritten work
- Allow projects to be presented orally or recorded
- Provide models of completed tasks
- Grade assignments on content rather than form
- Do not grade spelling
- Give extra time for completion
- Provide written list of assignments (agenda or email)
- Reduce homework/written work



Tools & Materials

- Provide Audiobooks for textbooks
- Recorded text and materials handed out in class
- Provide text-to-speech software
- Provide for automated spell or grammar check
- Provide calculator
- Use highlighting of visual reading materials
- Provide graph paper or scrap paper
- Provide math tables
- Provide graphic Organizers

Testing


- Provide for extra time
- Provide notecards with information for studying
- Allow take home exams
- Allow open book exams
- Allow student to take test orally
- Allow for larger print/different print test materials
- Avoid "scantron" answer sheet
- Read directions aloud
- Provide quiet testing area
- Grade in collaboration with Special Educator

Talking To Your Child About Accommodations

- Explain their accommodations
- Challenges with resistance
 - Being different is OK
 - Standing out
 - Feeling successful
 - Understanding why it helps
 - How to ask for help
- Share the benefits and outcomes
 - Less stress
 - Improved academic performance
 - Reach goals

Common Accommodations

- Each student is different and their needs will be different
- Some students may only require minimal accommodations while others may require more intensive, support, and assistance
- Use Accommodation lists as a guideline



Learning Ally logo

Accommodations Example - Audiobooks

Parents see a difference:

- 97% of parents surveyed say Learning Ally has helped their child
- 92% would recommend Learning Ally to a Friend




Students have choices:

- 65% Textbooks in our 80,000 + audiobook library
- 35% Popular Titles

Students feel the difference:

- 76% Improved Reading Comprehension
- 67% Increased Reading Motivation
- 61% Improved Self-Confidence



Information from Tullis, Katzberg, and John Hopkins University study © 2011



Audiobooks Enhance Learning

- Help with attention and retention of reading skills
- Enhance motivation
- Increase reading and vocabulary comprehension
- Depicts dialect and language

***Excerpt from "Kill a Mocking Bird" by Harper Lee**




Audiobooks Support Learning

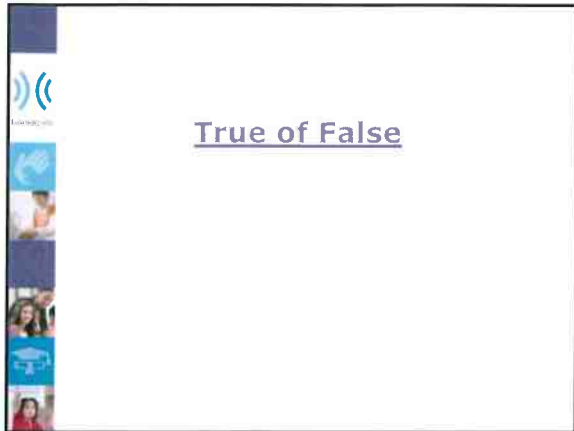
In the Classroom:

- Active Listening
- Sustained Silent reading
- Guided reading Groups
- Literacy Stations
- Lesson Plans

Out of the Classroom:

- Add books of interest and read independently
- Listen to homework assignments
- Listen to books on Chromebooks, PCs, Macs, and tablets, or phones





True or False



Give Breaks...

Do not allow to fidget with rubber band...

Avoid doing work by a window with a view of outside...

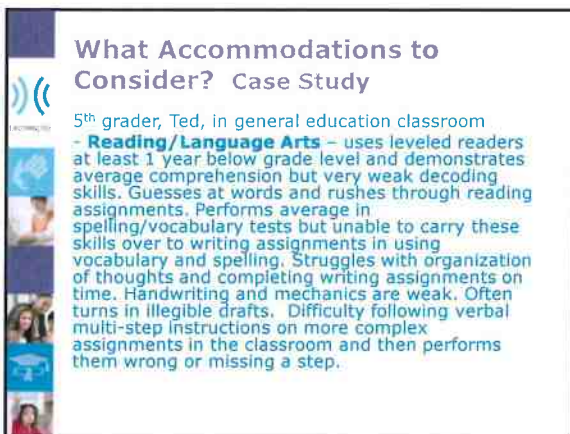
Sitting on large exercise ball, instead of chair will distract student...

Large room with distractions for tests...

Do not Use Audiobooks (text to speech) in class when reading

Provide Tutoring...

Divider around desk area...



What Accommodations to Consider? Case Study

5th grader, Ted, in general education classroom

- **Reading/Language Arts** – uses leveled readers at least 1 year below grade level and demonstrates average comprehension but very weak decoding skills. Guesses at words and rushes through reading assignments. Performs average in spelling/vocabulary tests but unable to carry these skills over to writing assignments in using vocabulary and spelling. Struggles with organization of thoughts and completing writing assignments on time. Handwriting and mechanics are weak. Often turns in illegible drafts. Difficulty following verbal multi-step instructions on more complex assignments in the classroom and then performs them wrong or missing a step.

What Accommodations to Consider? Case Study

5th grader, Sally, in general education classroom
- **Math**- Has difficulty in remembering multiplication facts and performing quickly and efficiently basic addition and subtraction compared to typical peers. Rushes through work assignments in class and often fails to show work on how she arrived at answers. Inconsistent in turning in homework assignments completed and on time. Homework writing can be sloppy, as shown with long division and decimal points, causing her to mis-calculate. With word problems, difficulty identifying key information, particularly in longer word problems, and choosing the correct operation to solve. In class, tires easily and needs to be refocused and redirected in the last 15 minutes of almost every session.

Educator Training and Support

On-site training
On-line and on-demand professional learning webinars
How-to Videos
Professional Development

Teacher eby portal to add students and books, and to track progress

Account management and phone support

Student Support and Awards

115 student website

Student webinars

Annual award programs

eNewsletters

LASSA NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

GEAR UP FOR THE GREAT READING GAMES!
 CONTEST PERIOD: JANUARY 8 - FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Sign up to participate!
LearningAlly.org/GreatReadingGames

LEARNING ALLY

Sign up for the Great Reading Games

- > **DOWNLOAD** the educator guide with stats, tips, book lists and more!
- > **GET** your welcome kit, with incentive prizes for students, for the first 300 educators who sign up.
- > **WATCH** the "Get in the Games" webinar to hear from past top 10 school's teachers on how to win.
- > **PREPARE** for social media contests and chats. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* author **Jeff Kinney** to judge the student contest!
- > **LEARN** about school and individual student prizes.
- > **DOWNLOAD** classroom resources and templates to share your

AND, prepare to broadcast Learning Ally's Read Across America Day Meet the Author webinar with **Lauren Tarshis** of the *I Survived* series to your entire student body as we celebrate the closing of the games!

LearningAlly.org/GreatReadingGames


THANK YOU


Bring Learning Ally to your school—
 Call 1-800-221-1098 or
 email: programs@LearningAlly.org


Join the conversation:
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Addendum

 Areas of Accommodations & Tips from Parents





Have **teacher write down** the daily assignments rather than having the student copy from the board. Copying from the board is a disaster waiting to happen. Or, have **teacher sign off on planner** to make sure student successfully copied all assignments.

Bought child her **own load** as school would not supply an individual one.

Audio books for **Accelerated Reader®** points were used successfully in the past.

We can **email** teacher with any questions we have.

Because my child is in middle school with **different teachers & styles** she has not had consistent success in some accommodations.



Learning Ally, iPod, Laptop, Ginger Software, Co-writer, Dragon Dictation. We have researched and **provided all of this to our child**. It was not suggested nor provided by the school, though they have allowed anything I've brought to the table.

Provide colored pens to write notes in **different colors**.

I pay for **electronic book subscription** and will buy speech to text software

Ipad with calendar app, voice to text for notes, downloaded text books.
