



## Curriculum Adaptations

It is important to correlate adaptations with the IEP. In other words, we are not adapting for adaptations sake but, to meet the student's needs as identified on an IEP.

<p><b>a. Curriculum as is.</b> This is the type we forget most frequently. We need to constantly be looking at the general education curriculum and asking if the students on IEPs may gain benefit from participating in the curriculum as is. We need to keep in mind that incidental learning does occur. Curriculum as is supports outcomes as identified in standard curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Move in this direction only when necessary</b></p> 
<p><b>b. Different objective within the same activity and curriculum.</b> The student with an IEP works with all the other students in the classroom participating in the activity when possible but, with a different learning objective from the other students. This is where the principle of partial participation fits. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student with a short attention span staying on task for 5 minutes.</li> <li>• Using a switch to activate a communication device to share during a class discussion.</li> <li>• Expressing one's thoughts by drawing in a journal instead of writing.</li> <li>• Holding a book during reading time.</li> <li>• Understanding the effect World War II has on the present rather than knowing the names and dates of key battles.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>c. Material or environmental adaptations.</b> The material or environmental changes are utilized so that participation in the general education curriculum by the student with the IEP may occur. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 spelling words from the weekly list instead of the standard 20.</li> <li>• Completing a cooking assignment by following picture directions rather than written directions.</li> <li>• Changing the grouping of the class from large group to small groups (possible with the additional support staff).</li> <li>• Changing the instructional delivery from lecture to the cooperative learning format.</li> <li>• Using a computer to write an assignment instead of paper and pencil.</li> <li>• Reading a test to a student.</li> <li>• Highlighting the important concepts in a textbook.</li> <li>• Having the student listen to a taped textbook.</li> <li>• Using enlarged print.</li> <li>• Using an assistive technology device</li> <li>• Using visual cues such as picture and/or word schedules for those who have difficulty staying on task.</li> <li>• Using a note taking guide listing the key concepts during a lecture.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>d. Providing physical assistance.</b> Assistance from another person may be needed for a student to participate in a classroom activity. If possible, it is better to use natural supports (peers) as these will be the people always present in the student’s life. If the use of peers is not possible, then either the support teacher, the paraprofessional, the classroom teacher, the classroom aide, or a parent volunteer may provide the assistance. Most peers and staff will need training in the correct way of providing physical assistance. In addition, we need to keep in mind the principle of partial participation. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting a computer for a student with an IEP to use.</li> <li>• Guiding a hand during handwriting.</li> <li>• Assisting in activating a switch.</li> <li>• Completing most of the steps of an activity and having a student with an IEP do the remainder.</li> <li>• Pushing a student in a wheelchair to the next activity.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Move in this direction only when necessary</b></p> 
<p><b>e. Alternative/substitute curriculum.</b> This is sometimes referred to as functional curriculum as it usually involves the acquisition of “life skills”. The decision to use alternative/substitute curriculum is a major change and needs to be reflected on the IEP. This decision should be carefully made after weighing all of the pros and cons of using an alternative curriculum. The alternative curriculum may or may not take place in the general education classroom. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community-based instruction (which all students may benefit from!).</li> <li>• Learning job skills in the school cafeteria.</li> <li>• Learning how to use a communication device.</li> <li>• Doing laundry for the athletic department.</li> <li>• Learning cooking/grooming skills at the home.</li> </ul>	

Overlap does occur among the five types of curriculum adaptations.

*McFee, K. & Torrey, Z. (1992-1995). ABC’s of inclusion. A VI-B project awarded to HPEC by the Kansas State Board of Education.*