

10 Accommodations to Ask for in the New Year (November/December 2011)

For students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia, accommodations in the classroom can make a world of difference. Here is a list of 10 accommodations that are easy to implement and can help students with dyslexia succeed in school:

1. **Provide a word bank for tests.** Word retrieval issues can impact test scores. Word banks can alleviate this issue.
2. **Provide a copy of class notes.** Sequencing and verbal memory issues, as well as dysgraphia, can make board to paper challenging or impossible. Copies of notes printed from the Smart Board or copies of a peer's notes are easy to provide and can mean the difference between learning and losing the content.
3. **Provide extra time on tests.** The need for this one is obvious.
4. **Read test questions and directions aloud.**
5. **Provide extra white space on tests.** (1.5 or double spacing) This simple word processing change can alleviate tracking issues.
6. **Provide enlarged fonts.** This accommodation benefits students with sequencing issues.
7. **Preview important vocabulary.** An inability to pronounce new words can slow or stop reading comprehension.
8. **Repeat and simplify directions.** Auditory delays can make it difficult for students to get all of the directions the first time.
9. **Allow the use of a computer for written responses.** There are lots of benefits here, including availability of Spellcheck, eliminating issues with dysgraphia, and relatively simple revising and editing.
10. **Don't grade spelling except on spelling tests.** Spelling is often a problem. It shouldn't impact grades on content and skills knowledge unrelated to spelling.

Bonus accommodations: These may be a little bit more difficult to obtain, but may benefit your child.

11. **Group similar concepts together on study guides and tests.** When memorization is an issue, learning and explaining big concepts and supporting facts is more manageable than memorizing isolated details.
12. **Provide recorded books.** Many newer texts are available online; others provide a CD version. Schools can also obtain a Learning Ally membership to download many texts and independent reading books to computers at school. Additional books are available as audio books or Playaways.