

Selecting Accommodations: A Five-Step Process

Book Study Guide

Introduction:

Each team charged with developing an individual educational plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan must consider the student's need for accommodations, including assistive technology (AT). Sometimes accommodations are selected with little understanding of their potential impact. Consequently teams may choose unnecessary or inappropriate accommodations that may even have a detrimental effect on the student's performance (Vansciver & Conover, 2009).

To ensure that the accommodations are matched to student needs, teams may use a systematic problem-solving process to increase the likelihood that accommodations they select will have a positive impact on student performance. The *Selecting Accommodations Process* incorporates the SETT Framework to consider the Student, the Environments, and the Tasks required for active participation, and finally, the system of Tools needed by the student (Zabala, Bowser, & Korsten, 2004, November/2005, January). The intent is to support student participation and achievement.

Selecting Accommodations: A Five-Step Process is written to assist members of IEP teams or persons who develop Section 504 plans for students with disabilities in using a problem-solving process as they select instruction and assessment accommodations for students with disabilities. Each step includes a description of the process and specific actions team members might take. Forms and an annotated list of resources are provided for each step.

Overview of Book Study Guide

This guide is designed as a companion to *Selecting Accommodations: A Five-Step Process*. The activities in this guide encourage the reader to delve deeper into the content, experience the decision-making process, and employ the process to make informed decisions about accommodations for students with disabilities.

This guide provides a series of activities that can be used during large group professional development sessions, in a smaller professional learning community, or as an individual. The exercises may be adapted to suit specific professional development requirements. The following activities are provided for each step of the process. A final follow-up activity guides the participants as they use the process for a new student.

Preview

Participants are oriented to the step and process by linking to background knowledge and purpose.

Read and Reply

Participants respond to questions that guide them through the content of each step.

Apply: Keisha

Participants discuss the example provided in the book.

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Apply: Scenario

Participants work in pairs or triads to apply the step to a new scenario. The scenarios represent students at different grade levels and with different learning needs.

Reflection

Participants reflect how they may use the procedures identified in the step.

Preview for Book Study

These questions may be used to open the discussion about selecting accommodations at the initial session of the book study.

- What factors must be considered when selecting accommodations for students with disabilities?
- What practices are currently used by IEP teams when they identify accommodations for students with disabilities and committees who identify accommodations for students who are eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?
- What are the current concerns or issues about the ways accommodations are selected and implemented?

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Step 1. Gather Information

The members of the team gather information before the meeting to ensure that they have the most current data about the student. The SETT Framework (Student, Environment, Tasks, and Tools) is used to organize the information that the team will use to make accommodation decisions. This step also includes suggestions for compiling the information for efficient use in the meeting.

Preview Activity

Think about a time when you made decisions about accommodations for a student with a disability. What information did you and your team use to make decisions?

Read and Reply

- Why it is important to review a comprehensive set of data about the student's strengths and needs when selecting accommodations?
- How do factors in the student's environment impact decisions about accommodations?
- How are problematic tasks and accommodations related?
- What constitutes a system of tools for a student with disabilities?
- How can teams make sure that all necessary data is gathered and organized for efficient use in the planning meeting?

Apply It: Keisha

In Step 1: Gather Information, information obtained about Keisha is described. What have you discovered about Keisha in the following sections:

- Keisha's Information (See pp. 10–12)
- Keisha's Environment (See p. 14)
- Keisha's Tasks (See p. 16)
- Keisha's Tools (See p. 18)

Use the *SETT Framework Organizer* form to compile relevant information about Keisha.

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Apply It: Scenario

Review the information you have about the student in your new scenario. What have you discovered about your student:

- Student:
- Environment:
- Tasks:
- Tools:

Use the *SETT Framework Organizer* form to compile relevant information about your scenario.

Reflection: So What?

What questions do you have?

How can you make use of the procedures and forms in Step 1: Gather Information?

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Step 2. Identify Problems

The team will determine if a student needs accommodations through an analysis of the information gathered in Step 1. This problem-solving approach focuses on the curriculum expectations and activities that are problematic for the student.

Preview Activity

How did your team identify the specific needs of the student that could be addressed through accommodations?

Read and Reply

- How does the team determine which subject/developmental areas and tasks are problematic for the student?
- How does the team determine which critical elements of the tasks might be addressed through accommodations or specially designed instruction?
- How does the team consider instruction and environmental factors when considering the student's need for accommodations?

Use the *Analysis of Problematic Task* form to practice identifying critical elements for a task.

Apply It: Keisha

In Step 2: Identify Problems, the team analyzed the information they gathered. What did they determine about Keisha's needs in the following sections:

- Keisha's Area of Concern (See p. 28)
- Keisha's Problematic Tasks (See p. 30)
- Comparison of Keisha's Performance and Task Demands (See pp. 32–34).
- Analyze Keisha's Instructional and Environmental Factors (See p. 35)
- Keisha's Need for Accommodations (See p. 37)

Use the *Summary of Evaluation Results and Consideration of Accommodations Needs* form to record results of analysis Keisha's accommodation needs.

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Apply It: Scenario

Review the information you have about the student in your scenario. What have you determined about your student:

- Area(s) of Concern

- Problematic Tasks

Use the *Analysis of Problematic Task* form to identify critical elements for the problematic task for your scenario.

- Comparison of Performance and Task Demands

Use the *Analysis of Problematic Task* form to identify the student's current performance of the critical elements of the problematic task for your scenario.

- Analysis of Instructional and Environmental Factors

- Need for Accommodations

Use the *Summary of Evaluation Results and Consideration of Accommodations Needs* form to record results of analysis the accommodation needs of your scenario.

Reflection: So What?

What questions do you have?

How can you make use of the procedures and forms in Step 2: Analyze the Problem?

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Step 3. Select Accommodations

The team reviews student difficulties with problematic tasks to consider a range of possible Tools (accommodations, strategies, and services). The team then applies criteria to select the accommodation.

Preview Activity

How did your team select the specific classroom and testing accommodations for the student?

Read and Reply

- How does the team decide which type of accommodations is needed by the student?
 - Presentation
 - Responding
 - Scheduling
 - Setting
- What additional procedures may be needed if the student requires assistive technology?
- What are the benefits of applying a set of criteria when selecting accommodations for a student?
- What additional factors must be considered when selecting testing accommodations?

Apply It: Keisha

In Step 3: Select Accommodations, the team reviewed Keisha's needs and used the accommodations selection criteria to make decisions. What did they determine about Keisha's accommodations in the following sections:

- Possible Accommodations for Keisha (See pp. 47–48)
- Keisha's Accommodations (See pp. 53–54)

Review the *Selection Criteria* form on page 54 for Keisha to see how the team based their decision for her accommodation.

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Apply It: Scenario

Review the information you have about the student in your scenario. What have you determined about your student:

- Possible Accommodations
- Accommodations Selected

Use the *Selection Criteria* form to record possible accommodations and determine which accommodation is appropriate for the student in your scenario.

Reflection: So What?

What questions do you have?

How can you make use of the procedures and forms in Step 3: Select the Accommodation?

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Step 4. Document Decisions

The team documents the need for Tools (accommodations, strategies, and services) on the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

Preview Activity

How did your team document the specific classroom and testing accommodations needed by the student?

Read and Reply

- What documentation is required for accommodations needed by students with disabilities?
- How can the team provide additional information that teachers might need to implement the accommodations?

Apply It: Keisha

In Step 4: Document Decisions, the team documented Keisha's need for accommodations. What information did they include?

- Keisha's Accommodations (See pp. 62–63)

Apply It: Scenario

Review the information you have about the student in your scenario. What information would you document?

- Accommodations

Reflection: So What?

What questions do you have?

How can you make use of the procedures in Step 4: Document Decisions?

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Step 5. Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate Accommodations

The team develops an implementation plan that outlines procedures for acquiring and maintaining, providing training, and Implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness.

Preview Activity

How did your team ensure that the accommodations were implemented? How was the impact/effect of the accommodations monitored and evaluated?

Read and Reply

- What is the purpose of an implementation plan for accommodations? How will the plan vary depending on the complexity of the accommodation?
- Why is it important to think about the needs of the student and the needs of the teachers/parents in learning how to use the accommodation?
- How can the impact/effect of the accommodation be measured?

Apply It: Keisha

In Step 5: Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate Accommodations, the team made a plan to follow-up Keisha's use of the accommodations. What did they decide?

- Acquiring, Maintaining, and Supporting the Use of Graphic Organizers for Keisha (See. p. 69)
- Training Keisha and Others on the Accommodation (See p. 71)
- Integrating Keisha's Accommodation (See p. 72)
- Monitoring and Evaluating Keisha's Use of Accommodations (See. p. 74)

Use the *Implementation Plan for Simple Accommodations* to make brief notes about what needs to occur to implement, monitor, and evaluate Keisha's accommodation.

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Apply It: Scenario

Review the information you have about the student in your scenario. How would you implement, monitor, and evaluate the student's use of the accommodation?

- Acquiring, Maintaining, and Supporting the Accommodation
- Training the Student and Others on the Accommodation
- Integrating the Accommodation
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Student's Use of the Accommodation

If time allows, use the *Implementation Plan for Simple Accommodations* or the *Implementation Plan for Complex Accommodations/Assistive Technology* to make brief notes about what needs to occur to implement, monitor, and evaluate the accommodation for the student in your scenario.

Reflection: So What?

What questions do you have?

How can you make use of the procedures and forms in Step 5: Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate the Accommodation?

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Application of the Selecting Accommodations Process

Apply the five-step process to select accommodations for a student you know.