

## Lesson 2: Understanding Accommodations and Developing Knowledge of Self

### Guidelines for Lesson Administration

These lessons can be administered to individuals or small groups of students. If working with groups of students, it is highly recommended that participating students and their parents/guardians provide consent for participation and that there is a detailed description of the lesson contents and what information will be shared amongst participants. If working with groups of students, careful consideration will be needed to protect privacy and respect individual confidentiality as much as possible. It is the lesson administrator's responsibility to ensure that the lesson plan delivery conforms to school district policies and provincial/federal laws.

### Qualifications for Lesson Administration

It is recommended that these lessons be administered by an educator who has some training in special education policies, practices, and assessment.



#### Preparation Required Prior to Lesson Administration

Students who participate in this lesson should be aware that they have a learning disability and have a very basic understanding of how their learning disability impacts their learning. It is recommended that an educator reviews the student's IEP and psychoeducational assessment in an individual meeting prior to commencing lesson number one.

### OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Test, Fowler, Wood, Brewer & Eddy (2005) indicate that for students to become successful self-advocates, students need a knowledge of self, a knowledge of rights, and the communication skills to advocate. This second lesson will have students further understand what accommodations they can or should access based on what they have learned about their personal strengths and weaknesses. Many researchers and educators have identified this type of lesson as critical to the development of self-advocacy skills (Prater, Smith Redman, Anderson & Gibb, 2014; Hart & Brehm, 2013; Summers, White, Zhang & Gordon, 2014).

### OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to define an accommodation.
2. Students will develop a further understanding of which accommodations would benefit them.

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3. Students will be able to select the appropriate accommodation that they need to successfully complete a task.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

1. Handout #1: *Common Accommodations & How They Help*
2. Handout #2: *Recognizing Accommodations*
3. Completed Handout #2 from Lesson 1
4. Electronic Devices with access to the Internet
5. Online Accessibility Features as needed (Ex. Text to Speech Software)
6. Handout #3: *Accommodations Reflection Sheet*

**LESSON: (60 minutes)**



***Incorporating Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning:*** *When beginning the lesson with a small group, you may wish to acknowledge that you are learning on the traditional territory of the local First Nation through a circle process. The process can also be used to support connection and belonging.*

1. Review Prater, Smith Redman, Anderson & Gibb's (2014) definition of Self-Advocacy and its importance:

**Self-Advocacy:** To speak up and ask for what you need

**Importance of Self-Advocacy:** Self-Advocacy helps you take charge of your life and be more independent

2. Review how every person has strengths and needs. Introduce the idea that once people know their stretches, they can begin to self-advocate for help and support in school in the form of an accommodation. Share Prater, Smith Redman, Anderson & Gibb's (2014) definition of an accommodation and their definition of self-advocacy behaviour:

**Accommodations:** Changes that can be made that will help you succeed or reach your goals (sometimes called adaptations). They can be used to overcome academic obstacles.

**Self-Advocacy Behavior:** A key component of self-advocacy behavior is recognizing when an accommodation is needed.

3. Share the learning intention with the class:

*Learning Intention: Students will be able to recognize when an adaptation is needed and how it can help.*

#### 4. Activity #1: Common Accommodations and How They Can Help

- a) Provide a paper or electronic copy of Handout #1. Review the list of accommodations that are *commonly* used by students and have them complete the assignment.



*UDL Note: Providing all students with a digital copy to complete will assist those students with learning disabilities who need support with easier access to text to speech programs, word processing, and spell checking features.*

- b) When reviewing the response, prompt students to use the graphic organizer they completed in lesson 1 to consider their stretches and think about which accommodations might assist them in the classroom.

#### 5. Activity #2: Recognizing Accommodations



*Educator's Note: The goal of this activity is to learn what specific accommodations have been recommended to students and assist them in recognizing when an accommodation can be accessed.*

- a) Provide a paper or electronic copy of Handout #2: *Recognizing Accommodations*. Read the instructions for Part A aloud and then model the activity by completing the first row for students. Have students complete Part A and review responses.
- b) Direct students to complete Part B of the activity. Remind students that they have accommodations specified in their IEP and psycho-educational assessments. Students should be aware that these accommodations should be provided in all of their classrooms and that they have a right to request them in class.
- c) To maintain confidentiality and privacy, have students hand in the graphic organizer.

6. **Conclusion:** To conclude, have students recall the definitions of self-advocacy and accommodations. Remind them that they have certain rights as a student, including accessing accommodations, and that these rights will be reviewed in the next lesson.

Students who need more practice can work on Handout #3: *Accommodations Reflection Sheet* at a later time.

### Extension Activity#1: Identifying the Supports I Need

- a) While educational experts often suggest accommodations and supports, students and their families can be overlooked and may be able to provide additional contextual information to the challenges they face, as well as creative solutions. The latter have the most experience thinking laterally and overcoming obstacles. Provide students with the graphic organizer below.

Obstacles/Challenges in School	What might help?

Use the information produced to personalize or add accommodations to a student's IEP.



*Educator's Note: At an educational conference for Inclusion Outreach on April 26th, 2018, Kunz & Van der Klift (2018) argue that students and families can provide invaluable information and personalized suggestions when creating plans of supports. The researchers suggest asking questions such as: "What can I do to support you?" to generate a more personalized plan. For students who struggle with identifying supports, they suggest providing a menu of options and asking "What would be most helpful?"*

### Extension Activity #2: Accommodations Matching Activity

- a) Students who are younger (Grades 7-10) may need more explicit support with understanding accommodations and identifying when and how to use them. When helping students to determine when and where they receive accommodations, Hart & Brehm (2013) suggest that teachers "model and discuss these topics with students in detail" (p.43). Hart & Brehm (2013) suggest that teachers "create activities that require students to match their learning needs, related accommodations, and time/location when the accommodations can be used" (p.43). Have students complete the graphic organizer below. The third column is critical to having students consider the logistics of accessing an accommodation. When and where will the accommodation be used? In a classroom or a resource room? In which subject areas? Where are the resources or technology located? How can they be accessed?

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<b>My Learning Need</b>	<b>My Accommodation</b>	<b>When and Where I Can Use My Accommodation</b>

Sample Accommodations Matching Activity. From Hart & Brehm (2013, p.44).

**ASSESSMENT**

1. Successful completion of the activities