Instructor's Guide for Assessment Accommodations

Topic Area: Assessment

Module: Assessment Accommodations

Case Study: Jared: Laborer to College Student

Summary: Jared is a seventh grade student with a severe learning disability. Despite years in special education classes, he is unable to read even simple text. Frustration and embarrassment have taken their toll on his self-esteem. Jared's father tells him his only prospect for employment after high school is a job requiring him to use his hands. He really doesn't want to be a farmer or work in construction, but after years of failure, Jared believes this is his only option for the future. Although he doesn't know it, seventh grade will change the course of his life. His teachers have been working to accommodate for his reading and writing difficulties rather than continuing to try to remediate them. By using technology just acquired by the school district, the way Jared learns and tests will never look the same.

Characters and Roles:
- Jared, seventh grade student with a severe learning disability
- Beverly, Jared's mother
- Ms. Marshall, Jared's special education teacher
- Lee Bell, district technology expert
- Mr. Barth, principal

Tools:
- Presentation
- Response
- Bloom's Taxonomy

Artifacts:
- Audio Recording of Test Being Read
- Copy of Test

Glossary Terms:
- Accommodation

Web Sites:
- www.ldonline.org
- www.nichcy.org
- http://seriweb.com/
- http://www.wrightslaw.com
- http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/sped/projects/ose/information/
- www.nationalreadingpanel.org
Discussion Points:
- What accommodations can be made for students who have difficulty reading, writing, and/or spelling?
- Discuss whose responsibility it is to provide accommodations for students with special needs?
- How much time should a regular education teacher be expected to devote to providing accommodations for a student with special needs?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of providing accommodations that require special computer programs and technological support?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking high stakes assessments via the computer?

Activities:
- Invite a technology expert to discuss and demonstrate accommodations that are available in your district for students with special needs.
- Explore text reader programs and submit a proposal for your district to purchase one for students with special needs to use.
- Debate the topic of using taking high stakes assessments on line.
- Host a technology fair for the community, so people can learn more about educational software and programs that can be helpful for students with special needs.
- Plan a panel discussion with secondary students with special needs, classroom teachers, and special education teachers as the members to discuss their experiences with assessment accommodations.

Reflective Question: Scene 2, Question 3 - What considerations must Ms. Marshall make when planning for extra time as a testing accommodation for Jared? There are several considerations teachers must make when planning for testing accommodations that take additional time. First of all, students should be in an environment in which they will not be distracted by other students who are finishing the test early or adults who are working with groups of students. They should not miss direct instruction in the classroom or activities like lunch. Students who are old enough can make their own decisions about when they would like to use additional time to complete assessments. Before school, after school, or during study halls are possibilities.

Connections:
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Reading Comprehension
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Reading Acquisition
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Writing
- Topic Area: Assessment; Module: Grading