Accommodations:
Instructional and Testing Supports for Students with Disabilities

Want more information about an IRIS Module before diving into the resource itself? Module Spotlights are a great place to start. Learn about the module’s main topic, expert contributors, and key resources and activities, all in one place.

Helping Every Student Succeed

More than ever, school personnel are responsible for providing high-quality instruction to all students. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have increased the expectation that students will participate in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible. More, all students are expected to take part in state and district testing.

Despite these heightened expectations, however, students with disabilities often face challenges or barriers that inhibit their ability to access and demonstrate learning. Teachers can address these barriers by providing instructional accommodations, but what are accommodations? How do they differ from modifications or interventions and strategies? And are they fair to other students?

About the Module

iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/acc

In this significantly updated and expanded module from the IRIS Center, we’ll lead you through each of those important questions. More specifically, users will find:

- Information on how instructional and testing accommodations help students with disabilities gain access to the general education curriculum and to assessments
- Details and specific examples of the four main accommodation categories: presentation, response, setting, and timing & scheduling
- Guidance on how to select an appropriate accommodation and to later evaluate its effectiveness through the use of objective data
- Audio interviews with notable experts in the field, including the University of Maryland’s Margaret McLaughlin, Rutgers University’s Ryan Kettler, the University of Minnesota’s Martha Thurlow, and the Advocacy Institute’s Candace Cortiella
Accommodations in Action

It’s one thing to simply define accommodation categories. It’s another thing entirely to see them in action. This module not only features specific examples of each category, it also shows how those accommodations might be used to address learning barriers among students of different age groups and disability categories.

Featured Activities

Designed to be interactive, this IRIS Module offers users multiple opportunities to get hands-on experience with components of the resource’s main subject matter. In this module, users will be asked to:

- Determine whether a support the teacher implements for a given student is an accommodation, modification, or strategy/intervention
- Identify the target skills being assessed and the access skills required to demonstrate the target skills
- For different students with different challenges, select an accommodation category and an accommodation from that category that would best address the barrier and learning goal
- Review and graph data of a student’s behavior and compare the implementation data to the baseline data to evaluate whether the accommodation had the desired effect on the student’s performance

What Are IRIS Modules?

The signature resource of the IRIS Center, IRIS STAR Legacy Modules offer in-depth looks at topics like differentiated instruction, assessment, behavior and classroom management, high-quality IEPs, mathematics, reading, and many others of importance to educators in today’s classrooms. These resources present their content in a variety of engaging formats: text, video demonstrations, audio interviews with experts and practicing educators, and interactive activities.

What Is IRIS?

IRIS develops and disseminates free online open educational resources (OERs) about evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices. Intended for use in personnel preparation and professional development, these instructional resources are designed to help current and future educators improve the learning and behavioral outcomes of all students, especially struggling learners and those with disabilities. Visit us at iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu