

## ACCOMMODATIONS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: SETTING UP A CLASSROOM FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES

### CHALLENGE

- **Media:** Ms. Milton has just learned that she'll have two students with visual disabilities in her class this year. She is unsure of what types of accommodations to make to her classroom and her teaching approach so that both students' needs and her goals for the class are met. (movie)

### INITIAL THOUGHTS

- What resources should Ms. Milton consult to learn more about Evan's and Emily's needs?
- What should Ms. Milton consider when planning her room?
- What is all this equipment? Where should Ms. Milton put it?

### PERSPECTIVES AND RESOURCES

- Module Objectives (box)
  - After completing the entire Perspectives and Resources section and reviewing the accompanying activities, you will:
    - Identify resources for obtaining assistance with including students with visual disabilities in the classroom
    - Describe key considerations for organizing your classroom to include students with visual impairments or blindness
    - Help students with visual impairments safely navigate the classroom
    - Consult with professionals who will assist you in familiarizing students with the school and classroom environment and who are knowledgeable about the equipment that students with visual disabilities may use
    - Identify and describe the functions of commonly used assistive equipment designed for students with visual impairments and blindness

### 📄 Page 1: Getting Started

- Establishing Your Resources
  - *Link:* "individualized education programs" (definition)
  - Members of the support team (bulleted list with links)
    - ◆ *Link:* Teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI)
    - ◆ *Link:* Orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist
    - ◆ *Link:* Paraprofessionals and other professionals

- Keep in Mind (box)

### 🔍 Page 2: The Individualized Education Program

- Using the IEP as Your Road Map
- Notes from Emily's IEP (table)
- Notes from Evan's IEP (table)
- *Link*: Blank form

### 🔍 Page 3: The Student and the Family

- Getting Student Input (bulleted lists)
  - *Link*: Sample questions to ask students
- Getting the Family's Perspective (bulleted list)
  - *Link*: Sample questions to ask family members

### 🔍 Page 4: The Professionals

- Support from the TVI (bulleted list)
  - *Link*: Sample questions to ask the TVI
- Assistance From the O&M Specialist (bulleted list)
  - *Link*: Sample questions to ask the O&M Specialist
- Aid From Paraprofessionals and Other Professionals
  - Paraprofessional
  - Other professionals

### 🔍 Page 5: Tips for Setting up Your Classroom

- Functional Considerations, Guidelines for Accommodations (box)
- Keep in Mind (box with audio)
  - **Media**: Sharon Sacks discusses the importance of flexible seating (audio)
- *Link*: Safety considerations
- *Link*: Furniture arrangement
- *Link*: Lighting needs
- *Link*: Color and contrast considerations
- *Link*: Materials storage
- *Link*: Bulletin boards/other posted materials
- **Activity**: Help Ms. Milton identify areas of concern (box with link)
  - *Link*: Help Ms. Milton layout her bulletin board for Evan and Emily

### 🔍 Page 6: Helping Students Navigate the Classroom

- **Media**: Sharon Sacks discusses how teachers can alert students with visual disabilities to changes in the classroom environment (audio)
- The O&M Specialist
  - *Link*: Tactile map
  - *Link*: Close-up view of tactile map
- Commonly used techniques for safe travel (box with photos and links)
  - *Link*: Squaring off

- o *Link:* Aligning
- o *Link:* Upper-body protective technique
- o *Link:* Lower-body protective technique
- o *Link:* Trailing
- The Classroom Teacher
  - o **Media:** Betty Hurst describes helping a blind student navigate the classroom (audio)
- Do Use (box with bulleted list)
- Avoid (box with bulleted list)
- **Activity:** Test your knowledge (box with link)
  - o *Link:* Test your knowledge of orientation and mobility skills

### **Page 7: Materials and Devices Used by Students with Visual Impairments**

- *Link:* assistive technology
- Devices (box with links)
  - o Devices to aid use of vision
    - ◆ *Link:* Optical
    - ◆ *Link:* Nonoptical
    - ◆ *Link:* Electronic magnification
  - o Devices to aid access to print materials
    - ◆ *Link:* Braille
    - ◆ *Link:* Audible/ Speech
  - o Devices to aid orientation and mobility
    - ◆ *Link:* Optical
    - ◆ *Link:* Nonoptical
    - ◆ *Link:* Orientation aids
- **Activity:** Help Ms. Milton choose devices for Evan and Emily (box with link)
  - o *Link:* Who is more likely to use each device?

### **Page 8: Tips for Helping Students With Visual Impairments Use Assistive Technology**

- Where Do I Put It?
  - o General Tips (box with bulleted list)
- Do I Need to Know How to Use It? (bulleted list)
- **Media:** Sharon Sacks discusses what teachers should know about assistive technology (audio)

### **Page 9: References, Additional Resources and Information**

- References
- Additional Resources and Information

## Page 10: Credits

- Content Experts
- Module Developers
- Module Production Team
- Module Production Support Team
- Media Production Team
- Media
- Expert Interviews

## ASSESSMENT

- “Please complete the items below” (numbered questions)

## WRAP UP

- Summary
  - Resources for assistance
  - Considerations for arranging the classroom
  - Information about assistive devices
- **Media:** Sharon Sacks discusses the role of the general education teacher with students who have visual impairments (audio)
- Think back to your initial responses to the following questions (box)
- *Link:* Instructional Accommodations: Making the Learning Environment Accessible to Students With Visual Disabilities
- *Link:* Focus on the Playbook: A Collaborative Team Approach for Serving Students With Visual Disabilities