

Idaa • Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

# What is a Learning Disability?

Understanding Dyslexia & Other Learning Disabilities

Michele Pentyluk  
Registered Psychologist  
E: pentyluk@gmail.com

1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Objectives

- To provide an overview of different types of learning disabilities and how they differ from other developmental disabilities
- To describe how learning disabilities including dyslexia are diagnosed
- To outline the kinds of information typically included in psychoeducational assessment
- To review the difference between interventions, modifications, and accommodations for students with learning disabilities

ldalberta.ca

2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# ???

Questions are welcome, but I cannot offer opinions about your child or specific situations within your child's school.

ldalberta.ca

3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What is a learning disability?

Step 1: morph the onco  
 Step 2: hucup the stroho  
 Step 3: s9es the tim  
 Step 4: Siltand Refrim  
 Step 5: mics it

mlee mlee racinthe  
 mlee plee orocle  
 theas wus wP.

31  
 48  
 -19  
 20

ldalberta.ca

4

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What is a learning disability?

www.ldalberta.ca

5

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Learning Disability Defined**  
LDAC Canada

**People with Learning Disabilities:**

- Refer to a number of disorders which can affect how a person acquires, organizes, retains, understands or uses verbal or nonverbal information.
- Generally have average to above average intellect and reasoning.
- Are fully able to learn given the right intervention.

ldalberta.ca

6

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Continuum and Scope**

Learning disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following:

- **oral language** including listening, speaking and understanding
- **reading** including word recognition and comprehension
- **written language**
- **mathematics**

ldalberta.ca

7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Learning Disabilities ARE NOT:**

- Caused by poor teaching, poor parenting or lack of motivation.

However, these factors can complicate the challenges faced by people with learning disabilities

- The same as pervasive developmental disabilities, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, brain injury or ADHD...

All these conditions can result in difficulties with learning

ldalberta.ca

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Learning Disabilities vs Producing Difficulties**

- Producing difficulties are different from learning difficulties;
- Producing difficulties reflect poor use of Executive Functions (EFS).

ldalberta.ca

9

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Meet Charlie and Josh

10

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

**Directive capacities of the mind:**

- Multiple in nature, not a single capacity
- Cue the use of other mental abilities
- Direct and control perceptions, thoughts, actions, and to some degree emotions
- Part of neural circuits that are routed through the frontal lobes

**What Are Executive Functions?**



ldalberta.ca

11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Executive Functions**

Appropriate Metaphors for Executive Functions:

- A Team of Conductors and Co-Conductors of a Mental Ability Orchestra, or
- The Coaching Staff of a Mental Ability Football Team



ldalberta.ca

12

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

**ADHD and Executive Functioning**



Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms reflect delayed development in the brain regions that manage executive functions, especially the prefrontal cortex

ldalberta.ca

13

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ADHD and Executive Functioning**

ADHD affects core executive functions such as:

<b>Working Memory</b>	<b>Time Management</b>	<b>Inhibitory Control</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Organization</b>
Difficulty holding information	Trouble estimating and meeting deadlines	Impulsivity and difficulty resisting distractions	Struggles with organizing tasks and materials

ldalberta.ca

14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ADHD and Childhood Academic Impairments**

- **Poor School Performance (90%+)**
  - Reduced productivity is greatest problem
  - Accuracy is only mild below normal
- **Low Academic Achievement (10 -15 point deficit)**
  - May be deficient even in preschool readiness skills
- **Learning Disabilities (24-70%)**
  - Reading (8-39%)
  - Spelling (12-30%)
  - Math (12-27%)
  - Handwriting (60%)
  - Reading Comprehension (through impact on working memory)

**FACT**

Barkley, 2005

15

---

---

---

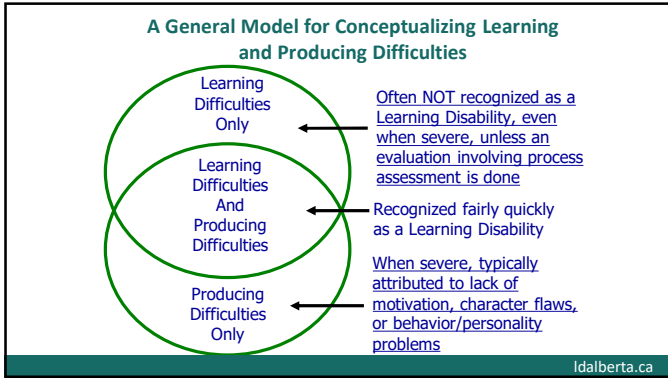
---

---

---

---

---



16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Executive Functions and School**

- Although executive functions are used to guide cognitive processing involved in new learning, new learning situations are structured in ways that reduce the need for strong executive direction.
- In contrast, demonstrating what has been learned usually requires significant involvement of executive control processes.

ldalberta.ca

17

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Students with Skills Deficits or Learning Disabilities**

- Provide direct, targeted instruction in the area of weakness.
- Establish what accommodations may be required to ensure equal access to the curriculum.

ldalberta.ca

18

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Students with EF Deficits

Provide the student with as rich an “executive function environment” as possible.



ldalberta.ca

19

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Supporting the development of EFs



- Develop and apply, as needed, interventions involving **external control**.
- Monitor the use of these interventions closely to determine when to begin the gradual or complete withdrawal of external control so that internal control can be engaged and demonstrated.

ldalberta.ca

20

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Environmental Modifications and Teaching Strategies for Specific Executive Skills		
Executive Skill	Environmental Modification	Teaching Strategy
Response Inhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase external controls</li> <li>• Restrict access</li> <li>• Post home or classroom rules and review regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prompt the child (external to internal)</li> <li>• Teach wait/stop</li> <li>• Teach delayed gratification (apps: Token Board, Starfall/First)</li> <li>• Discourage “multi-tasking”—e.g., build in technology breaks rather than having kids combining homework with technology use</li> </ul>
Working Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use orthotic memory devices</li> <li>• Principle of “off-loading”                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda books/calendars</li> <li>• To do lists (paper, white board to post prominently)</li> <li>• Electronic devices &amp; apps (Wunderlist, Nudge, BugMe!)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directions/First experience (prompt them to access it)</li> <li>• Generate options for reminders and have them choose (or elicit options from student)</li> <li>• Mentally rehearse association between cue and working memory</li> </ul>
Emotional Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce or eliminate triggers</li> <li>• Give child a script to follow</li> <li>• Remove child from problem situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach kids to recognize situations or early signs</li> <li>• Graded exposure/guided mastery</li> <li>• Teach coping strategy</li> <li>• Rehearse the strategy repeatedly until it is internalized</li> <li>• Use Hand Times Board</li> <li>• Teach mindfulness meditation</li> </ul>
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General rule: Limit flexibility demand</li> <li>• Reduce novelty</li> <li>• Highlight similarities</li> <li>• Provide a template</li> <li>• Put in place a default strategy</li> <li>• Turn open-ended tasks into closed-ended tasks</li> <li>• Make steps more explicit</li> <li>• “Normalise” errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase support</li> <li>• Prevent expectations</li> <li>• Walk them through the task</li> <li>• Give plans or rules for managing situations</li> <li>• Think aloud</li> <li>• Teach error factor</li> </ul> <p>Change tolerance by gradual exposure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce change (lightening both preferred to non-preferred)</li> <li>• Introduce new situations</li> </ul>



21

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Executive Skill	Environmental Modification	Teaching Strategy
Task Initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide cues/prompts</li> <li>Reduce perceived effort/task demand</li> <li>Walk through first step—build behavioral momentum</li> <li>Make help readily available</li> <li>Establish set time to do non-preferred tasks</li> <li>App: Lickety Split</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the child select cueing system</li> <li>Help the child limit initial demand</li> <li>Help the child select reinforcer</li> <li>Help the child make a plan for doing the task</li> </ul>
Sustained Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce distractions (seating arrangements, white noise)</li> <li>Prompt to attend (look, listen, respond)</li> <li>Modify/limit task length or demand (end in sight)</li> <li>Build in variety/choice</li> <li>Choose best time of day</li> <li>Immediately reinforce (pay attention to them while they're paying attention)</li> <li>App: Lickety Split</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach self-monitoring/peer coaching</li> <li>Have the child identify something to look forward to</li> <li>Teach mindfulness meditation</li> </ul>
Planning/Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate what a plan is</li> <li>Help child design a plan/template</li> <li>Provide planning tools (calendar, agenda book, apps – e.g., Choiceworks, CanPlan)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk through the planning process (use a template)</li> <li>Have them apply plan to a simple task and gradually prompt to do more of the planning themselves</li> <li>Ask questions to get child to prioritize (What do you need? What should you do first?)</li> </ul>

22

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Executive Skill	Environmental Modification	Teaching Strategy
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate principle of off-loading with example from their lives</li> <li>Work with them to create schema, template or picture/photograph</li> <li>Show organizational tools and have them try them out (e.g., Inspiration)</li> <li>Structure the environment to promote organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help them walk through the process. Have them motorically practice it (a long-term process, requiring that they put a system in place that's monitored, initially on a daily basis).</li> <li>Give them choices of organizational systems and have them choose/modify the one they like best.</li> <li>Ask students to evaluate current systems and challenge them to improve them.</li> </ul>
Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make schedules and time limits explicit</li> <li>Work with kids to make a schedule to follow and prompt each step of the way                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Picture schedules</li> <li>Clocks, alarms</li> <li>Tablet/phone apps (Choiceworks, Promotions)</li> <li>Timers (app: Sand Timer; <a href="http://www.timetimer.com">www.timetimer.com</a>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help kids learn what time means (time gaps in behavioral contingency).</li> <li>Show them ways to mark time and let them practice.</li> <li>Practice how to estimate how long it takes to do something.</li> <li>Help them to follow schedules (daily events to homework plans).</li> </ul>
Goal-Directed Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish goals with kids</li> <li>Reward kids for persistence (sticking with difficult tasks)—use verbal reinforcers as much as possible</li> <li>Make sure the goal or benchmark is in sight</li> <li>Apps: Token board, iEarnedThat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out to kids how they already set goals but they may not know what they are. Define goals as something that people want to get better at or so change.</li> <li>Ask kids to set small, achievable goals, or a goal for something they want to do outside of school, or set class goals.</li> </ul>
Metacognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specify what is to be evaluated and how (goal or objective)</li> <li>Evaluate performance for the student</li> <li>Provide sample to match or error-monitoring checklist</li> <li>Embed metacognitive questions into instructor/conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help child decide on how performance will be evaluated</li> <li>Have the child evaluate her performance</li> <li>Compare evaluations</li> <li>Teach students to ask questions                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What's my problem?</li> <li>What's my plan?</li> <li>Am I following my plan?</li> <li>How did I do?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

23

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---




---

---

## Types of Learning Disabilities

**Learning Disabilities in:**

- Reading
- Writing
- Math

ldalberta.ca

24

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

## Types of Learning Disabilities



**Dyslexia**  
A language-based disability that affects both oral and written language. It may also be referred to as reading disability, reading difference, or reading disorder. Dyslexia does not refer to a reversal of letters. This characterization of dyslexia is common but inaccurate. It is a phonological processing disorder that results in significant difficulty decoding (i.e., sounding out) and encoding (i.e., spelling) words.

**Dysgraphia**  
A severe difficulty in producing writing that is legible and written at an age-appropriate speed.

**Dyscalculia**  
A severe difficulty in understanding and using symbols or functions needed for success in mathematics.

ldalberta.ca

25

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Specific Learning Disorders (SLD)

[The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Fifth Edition \(DSM-5\)](#)

The DSM-5, was developed by the American Psychiatric Association. DSM-5 uses the umbrella term, '**Specific Learning Disorders (SLD)**' and then areas of impairment and specific difficulties:

ldalberta.ca

26

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

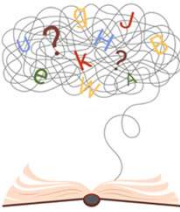
---

---

---

## SLD with Impairment in Reading

- Word reading accuracy
- Reading rate/fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Includes Dyslexia



ldalberta.ca

27

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Challenges in Learning to Read

- Many children face reading difficulties due to inadequate teaching methods.
- Evidence-based instruction is often missing in classrooms.
- Language-based learning difficulties can go unnoticed.
- Untreated learning difficulties hinder reading development.



ldalberta.ca

28

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

Increasingly Strategic

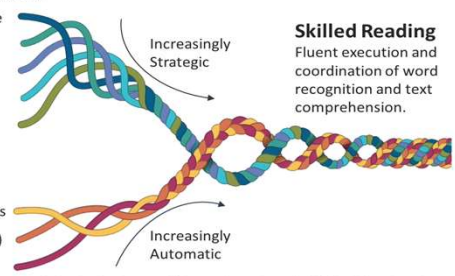
### Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition

Increasingly Automatic

### Skilled Reading

Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.



Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-130 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) Handbook of Early Literacy. NY: Guilford Press.

ldalberta.ca

29

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

### How the Brain Learns to Read - Prof. Stanislas Dehaene



ldalberta.ca

30

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### How the Brain Learns to Read with Dr. Carolyn Strom

Dr. Cheryl Lundy Swift

Dr. Molly Ness

ldalberta.ca

31

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Dyslexia (International Dyslexia Association)

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin.

- difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.
- result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.

Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

ldalberta.ca

32

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Understanding Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a neurobiological learning disability affecting word recognition, spelling, and decoding abilities.

**Word Recognition Challenges**  
Individuals with dyslexia often struggle with accurate and fluent word recognition, impacting reading abilities.

**Spelling and Decoding Issues**  
Poor spelling and decoding abilities are common among those with dyslexia, stemming from phonological deficits.

**Unexpected Language Deficits**  
Dyslexia's phonological component deficits are often unexpected relative to other cognitive skills.

ldalberta.ca

33

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Understanding Developmental Language Disorder

- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) affects communication skills.
- Individuals with DLD struggle with expressive and receptive language.
- DLD can impact social interactions and academic performance.
- Early identification and intervention are crucial for better outcomes.



ldalberta.ca

34

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Structured Literacy Intervention

<b>explicit</b> (directly taught)	<b>systematic</b> (logically ordered skills; simple to complex)
<b>cumulative</b> (new learning building on prior learning)	<b>diagnostic/responsive</b> (progress is monitor; instruction is adjusted)

ldalberta.ca

35

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### SLD with Impairment in Writing

- Spelling accuracy
- Grammar and punctuation accuracy
- Clarity or organization of written expression
- Includes Dysgraphia



ldalberta.ca

36

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### SLD with Impairment in Math

- Number sense
- Memorization of arithmetic facts
- Accurate or fluent calculation
- Accurate math reasoning
  - Includes Dyscalculia



ldalberta.ca

37

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Incidence of Learning Disabilities

Estimates vary, but credible organizations like the National Institute of Health cite a conservative incidence level of learning disabilities as **8-10 out of every 100 people**. NIH estimates have been as high as one out of every seven people.

Using an incidence level of **1 in 10**, the breakdown of the population of Albertans living with learning disabilities is as follows:

Alberta wide: 368,800
School aged: 64,100
Pre-school aged: 19,800

ldalberta.ca

38

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

---



According to Statistics Canada, more children in this country have a learning disability than all other types of disabilities combined.

ldalberta.ca

39

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Causes of Learning Disabilities

Experts are not exactly sure what causes learning disabilities. LDs may be due to:

- **Heredity** – Often learning disabilities run in the family, so it's not uncommon to find that people with learning disabilities have parents or other relatives with similar difficulties.
- **Problems during pregnancy and birth** – LDs may be caused by illness or injury during or before birth. They may also be caused by drug and alcohol use during pregnancy, low birth weight, lack of oxygen and premature or prolonged labor.
- **Incidents after birth** – Head injuries, nutritional deprivation and exposure to toxic substances (i.e. lead) can contribute to learning disabilities.

ldalberta.ca

40

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Prevention



Children who start low stay low. For example, trouble with early word reading skills leads to:

- less time spent reading
- slow vocabulary growth
- missed opportunities to practice comprehension strategies
- negative attitudes toward reading

**The best solution to the problem of academic failure is to allocate resources for early identification and prevention.**

Torgesen, 1998

ldalberta.ca

41

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a process of collecting information. Assessment of learning can happen all kinds of ways. Like when teachers ask a question in class, send home report cards, or set up parent-teacher conferences.

Screening is a type of assessment that helps teachers identify students who are at risk for not meeting grade-level learning goals.



Screening assessments in the classroom are like health screenings at a doctor's office. They check for warning signs to see if you might be at risk. For example, if you can't read the chart then the doctor is likely to give you contact lenses or glasses so that you can see more clearly. If you can read the chart, then the doctor will send you on your way until your next eye screening.

Screening can provide valuable information to teachers to help struggling readers or those who are likely to struggle in the future.

Parents and caregivers: Talk with teachers about the screening process in your child's school to learn more. If you have questions about your child's progress or results, ask to have them explained to you.

The material adapted from a booklet by a grant in the Alberta Learning and Skills Training Program. © 2010. The copyright is held by the Government of Alberta. All rights reserved. This material is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose without the express written permission of the Government of Alberta.

42

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### How are Learning Disabilities Diagnosed?



ldalberta.ca

43

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Psychoeducational Assessment

1. Parent interview
2. Plan
3. Assessment
  - Review of school documents
  - Observations
  - Child Interview
  - Intellectual or cognitive assessments
  - Achievement batteries
  - Social/Emotional Evaluations
4. Report that includes all findings and recommendations (including interventions, accommodations and modifications)
5. Feedback session with parents and child



ldalberta.ca

44

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Intervention:**  
The act of intervening with the outcome of a condition or process.



ldalberta.ca

45

---

---

---

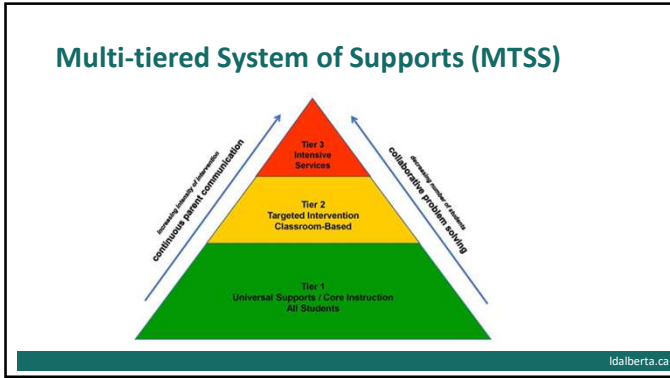
---

---

---

---

---



46

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

No amount or type of screening or assessment is helpful if it is not followed by effective instruction/intervention

ldalberta.ca

47

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Accommodation versus Modification

Accommodations change *how* the student learns the material.

Modifications changes *what* a student is taught or expected to learn.

[www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)

ldalberta.ca

48

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Accommodations versus Modifications

Category	Accommodations	Modifications
Definition	Changes that provide equal access to learning without altering the curriculum.	Changes that alter the curriculum or expectations to meet the student's needs.
Purpose	To provide access to the same educational opportunities as peers.	To adjust the educational content or performance expectations to the student's level.
Examples	Extended time on tests, preferential seating, use of assistive technology.	Simplified assignments, alternative assessments, reduced reading level.
Impact on Learning	Allows students to demonstrate knowledge without being hindered by their disabilities.	Alters the level of instruction and can change what the student is expected to learn.

49

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

### Types of Accommodations

**The four basic types of accommodations used during instruction and assessment are:**

-  Presentation
-  Response
-  Setting
-  Timing/Scheduling

50

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Presentation Accommodations

Allow students to access instructional materials that do not require them to read print materials in standard visual format.



Idalberta.ca

51

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Presentation Accommodations

- Audiobooks or text-to-speech tools
- Oral instructions in place of written
- Highlight or color-code key text elements
- Visual aids (charts, pictures, graphic organizers)



ldalberta.ca

52

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Presentation Accommodations

- Enlarged print or simplified texts
- Digital texts with built-in dictionaries
- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and background knowledge
- Guided notes or outlines
- Multimedia supports (audio/video)



ldalberta.ca

53

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Presentation Accommodations

- Engaging and accessible reading materials including:
  - High Interest/Low Vocabulary novels. These books offer engaging, age-appropriate subject matter at a low reading level for struggling readers.
  - [Reading Rockets: Hooking Struggling Readers: Using Books They Can and Want to Read.](#)  
By Lori Rog and Paul Kropp
  - [Reading Rockets. High/Low Books for children](#)
  - Decodable chapter books: Decodable books written for older readers with more complex phonetic patterns and topics of interest.
  - [High Noon Sound Out Chapter Books](#)
  - [The Reading League website](#)



ldalberta.ca

54

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Response Accommodations

Allow students alternatives for completion of activities, assignments, and tests.



Idalberta.ca

55

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Response Accommodations

- Verbal responses or speech-to-text
- Use of word banks, sentence starters, outlines and skeleton notes
- Reduce required written output
- Alternative formats (oral, video, drawings)



Idalberta.ca

56

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Response Accommodations



- Multiple-choice or matching questions
- Accept spelling/grammar errors when not the focus
- Use of a scribe for dictation

Idalberta.ca

57

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Setting Accommodations

Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.



ldalberta.ca

58

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Setting Accommodations

- Quiet, distraction-reduced environment
- Use of noise-canceling headphones
- Preferential seating
- Small-group or one-on-one reading support
- Reading buddy or peer tutor



ldalberta.ca

59

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Timing/Scheduling Accommodations

Change the length of time allowed for completion of a test, project, or assignment and may change the way the time is organized (e.g., breaks).



ldalberta.ca

60

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

### Timing & Scheduling Accommodations

- Extended time for tasks and tests
- Break assignments into chunks
- Frequent breaks
- Schedule reading when student is most alert
- Flexible deadlines



ldalberta.ca

61

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The evolution of intervention and accommodations

**Elementary School:**

**Focus on Basic Skills:**

- Intervention is often the focus to ensure students acquire foundational skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

**Structured Environment:**

- Younger children benefit from a highly structured environment, so accommodations might include visual schedules, frequent breaks, or seating arrangements that minimize distractions.

**Direct Support:**

- There is often more direct support from teachers and special education staff, with accommodations like one-on-one assistance including readers and scribes or small group instruction.

ldalberta.ca

62

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The evolution of intervention and accommodations

**Junior High School:**

**Transition to Independence:**

- Accommodations begin to focus on fostering independence. This might include teaching organizational skills, using planners or digital tools to track assignments, and gradually reducing one-on-one support.

**Increased Complexity:**

- As subjects become more complex, accommodations might include the use of technology (e.g., Chromebooks, calculators, audiobooks), alternative ways to demonstrate learning, and support to organize and plan written work.

ldalberta.ca

63

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The evolution of intervention and accommodations

**Senior High School:**

**Focus on Self-Advocacy:**

- Students are encouraged to take an active role in managing their accommodations. This might include self-advocacy training and learning how to communicate their needs to teachers.

**Preparation for Post-Secondary Life:**

- Accommodations are tailored to prepare students for college or the workforce, such as teaching time management skills, providing access to assistive technology, and offering career counseling.

**Flexible Learning Options:**

- There may be more flexibility in how students complete coursework, such as online classes, modified schedules, or work-study programs.

Idalberta.ca

64

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

## Intervention and Accommodation



Idalberta.ca

65

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Idalberta.ca

66

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**Idaa** • Learning Disabilities  
Association of Alberta  
*The right to learn, the power to achieve.*

**For more helpful resources  
for parents  
visit our website at  
[www.idalberta.ca](http://www.idalberta.ca)**

idalberta.ca

67

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Thank you!**



**Idaa** • Learning Disabilities  
Association of Alberta  
*The right to learn, the power to achieve.*

68

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---