



The World of A.T. Assistive Technology



Educational Equity For All

September 2015

Assistive Technology: Teaching Functional Skills to Disabled Students using Software Technology

https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Assistive_Technology_in_Education/Life_Skills

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Assistive Technology: What Every Educator Needs to Know

This reference guide is designed to help educators better understand the value of Assistive Technology (AT) in increasing all students' access to the general education curriculum and improving the teaching/learning process for students with special needs. Checklists or parts of the most useful AT hardware and software applications and tools are provided in the guide, with focus on meeting the needs of students with mild to moderate disabilities.

What is Assistive Technology?
The federal government has operationalized Assistive Technology (AT) as "... any item, piece of equipment, or product, whether acquired commercially, off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities." (Public Law 105-467)

Furthermore, AT is defined as "... any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device." (Public Law 105-206)

AT involves either the training of teachers, paraprofessionals and parents on the use and operation of the hardware and/or software programs, consultation services for teachers that also are included as part of AT services.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
Assistive Technology supports the theory of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by enabling teachers to design instruction that meets the individual needs of all students.
• Multiple means of engagement (motivating learners and capturing their interest in the learning)
• Multiple means of representation (presenting students with a variety of ways to acquire information and knowledge)
• Multiple means of expression (providing alternative ways for students to demonstrate what they know)
• Multiple means of engagement (motivating learners in a variety of ways, thereby increasing the likelihood of retaining, students and capturing their interest in the learning)
All AT hardware devices and software programs can be used to address one or more of these UDL principles.

Who Benefits from Assistive Technology?
Although most Americans benefit from the use of computer technology in their everyday lives, not nearly every one of the technology tools that are used to bridge Americans with disabilities to education with special learning needs. Today, as a result of major advances in the field of AT, students with a wide range of special needs, including those with hearing/visual, visual, developmental, emotional/behavioral and learning disabilities, autism and language delays, can take advantage of a plethora of technological tools. To maximize opportunities for learning, educators need to be knowledgeable about the various AT applications available, as well as ways to increase student access to the most appropriate tools.

With the increased reliance of students with disabilities on general education classrooms, it is essential for Child Study Teams, IEP teams, ITC teams and other senior understanding teams to consider when AT assessments and services may best support these students in their educational programs. Furthermore, the manifestation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), as well as state regulations mandates that AT be considered for each student who is identified as having special education needs.

Who Performs an AT Assessment?
Parents of students with disabilities must be made aware of their right to request an AT assessment for their child in order to determine their need for computer access under the use of assistive technology devices or services. Teachers who feel that a student qualifies for an AT assessment should forward an assessment request to the student's case manager or the special education staff member responsible for the student's IEP. Please check with your school district regarding specific procedures for requesting an AT assessment.

Because there is no standard assessment procedure or protocol, AT assessments often are conducted between school districts. Some schools have an assistive technology specialist on staff to conduct the assessment, while others use a team approach which may include consultation with related services personnel (i.e., speech/language therapists, occupational therapists, etc.). Also, some parents may contract with occupational or pedagogical organizations to perform AT assessments.

Low-Tech Options
Although this reference guide focuses on most high-tech tools, educators requesting a student's need for AT should not overlook ways in which "low-tech" can be used to address a student's needs. Low-tech options include:
• Because they are easy to implement and require little training, many cases, a whiteboard and an eraser are usually considered low-tech options. They are also an effective way to test out and compare a variety of options.
• Some students and popular low-tech items include pencil grips, high-contrast tape and paper, highlighters, talking or picture-based calculators, and talking calculators are some of the supports that must also qualify as low-tech AT tools.

Assistive Technology Reference Guide

This reference guide includes a wide range of AT hardware and software solutions to address a number of areas including:

- Communication
- Writing
- Organization
- Reading
- Multimedia

<http://assistivetek.blogspot.com/p/assistive-technology-reference-guide.html>



101 Ways to Use a Sequential Message AAC Device to Access the Curriculum

ELA/Reading Comprehension

- Recite a repeated line in a story/play/poem/speech
- Read from a story, chapter book, newspaper, magazine
- Name the characters in a story
- Sequence events in a story/chapter
- Give important details in a story/chapter / recall facts
- Ask questions (who, what, where, etc) of others about a story/chapter
- Give "stage directions" to others in a play
- Follow the steps in multi-step directions/task analysis (e.g., recipe, simple machine)
- State the logical order of information in a non-fiction text
- Give timeline information about a person in a biography
- Retell familiar events/stories to include beginning, middle, and end
- Name vocabulary words and define terms

ELA/Writing

- Sequence items to go into a story
- List adjectives/adverbs to go into a story (especially fun with a randomizer)
- Provide vocabulary to be included in a story
- Give details about different parts of a class story

<http://teachinglearnerswithmultipleneeds.blogspot.com/2008/03/101-ways-to-use-sequential-message-aac.html>

FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH

Milk Jug Holder



The Milk Jug Crayon/Marker Holder is a clever way to modify writing utensils for individuals who have fine motor difficulties.

They can also be used to hold drum sticks, scarves or ribbons (for play during music class), glue sticks, or paint brushes.

<http://www.theoatc.org/resources/milkjughandle.asp>



Assistive Technology Adventures: Fine Motor Skills – Apps

<http://assistivetechnologyadventures.blogspot.com/2012/07/blog-post.html>

8 Examples of Assistive Technology and Adaptive Tools

By Amanda Morin

1. Audio Players and Recorders
2. Timers
3. Reading Guides
4. Seat Cushions
5. FM Listening Systems
6. Calculators
7. Writing Supports
8. Graphic Organizers

<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/assistive-technology/assistive-technologies-basics/8-examples-of-assistive-technology-and-adaptive-tools>

LocLine Assistive Technology Kits

For those of us who have, or maybe have just thought about, using LocLine Modular Hose to make switch mounts ModularHose.Com is now offering AT kits! [The kits are designed to use the most common pieces for AT intervention](#) at a lower cost than most other switch mounts. (Around \$25-40 each.)

<http://www.modularhose.com/>

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

http://www.atstar.org/docspdfs/gpat/AAC_Tools_SCD_Chart.pdf

http://www.ala.org/ascla/sites/ala.org.ascla/files/content/asclaprotools/accessibilitytipsheets/tipsheets/11-Assistive_Technol.pdf

<http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic80.htm>



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



FREE Online Professional Development



DATE: September 10, 2015, 11:00 am CST

TITLE:

Autism Spectrum Disorders: Understand Characteristics to Maximize Academic, Social and Behavioral Outcomes

DATE: September 23, 2015, 03:00 am CST -

TITLE:

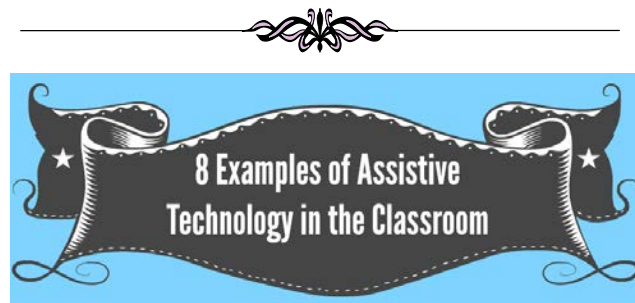
Writing IEP Objectives For Students With Severe Multiple Disabilities

DATE: September 30, 2015, 11:00 am CST

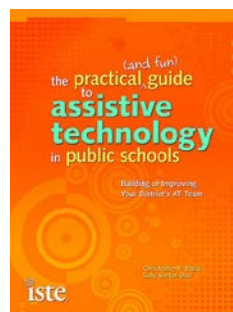
TITLE:

Transition Techniques for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Transform Meltdown to Calm-down

https://www.ablenetinc.com/resources/live_webinars/



<http://www.thinkinclusive.us/8-examples-of-assistive-technology-in-the-classroom/#sthash.11uPxudG.dpbs>



The Practical (and Fun) Guide to Assistive Technology in Public Schools: Building or Improving Your District's AT Team