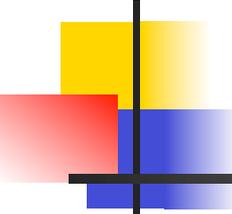


# Accommodations and Strategies for Children with Hearing Loss

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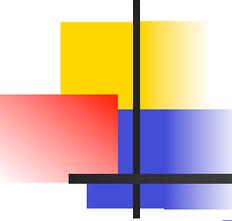
Honore I. Weiner, Ed.D., CCC-SLP  
Education Specialist  
The Decibels Foundation  
[hiweiner@aol.com](mailto:hiweiner@aol.com)



## What are accommodations?

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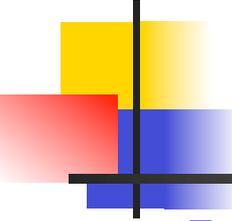
- Are intended to improve the child's *access* to speech: hearing and understanding what is said.
- Auditory management is the first priority for children with hearing loss.
- Noise and reverberation are barriers to speech perception.
  - Noise: any sounds that interfere with what a listener wants to hear.
  - Reverberation: Sound reflecting off the surfaces and persisting in a space: an echo.
  - The combination of noise and reverberation is the worst possible condition for children with hearing loss.
- An FM is an accommodation because it improves access.



## Accommodations: what teachers need to do

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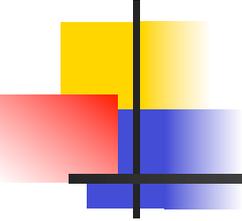
- Control the acoustic environment to the degree possible; maintain a consciousness about noises that present barriers to hearing/understanding and make appropriate adjustments.
- Assure effective use and monitoring of the FM system.
- Repeat contributions – questions, comments, answers – of students and other adults.
- Repeat/clarify announcements presented over the PA system.
- Provide access to visual (speechreading) cues; avoid talking while your back is to students, e.g., writing on the board.
- Provide ‘wait time’ for the child to process information, fill in gaps, and formulate a response.

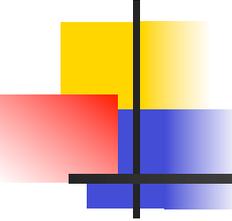


## More accommodations

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- Apply framing strategies:
  - introduce new topics clearly;
  - relate topic to previous knowledge/learning;
  - clarify topic switches;
  - provide an explicit frame of reference: What is important about this?
- Use appropriate rate and intonation; apply *acoustic highlighting* to aid in identifying important linguistic elements.
- Probe for comprehension and determine if there are any breakdowns, misperceptions, or misunderstandings by asking a variety of well-formed questions (not yes/no questions), e.g., What are you supposed to do? What did \_\_\_ say about \_?

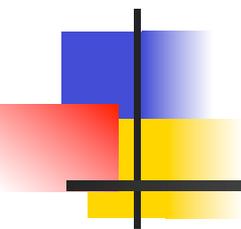
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- 
- Preteach, reinforce and review key vocabulary and concepts.
  - Control the linguistic load of instructional presentation: adapt the length and linguistic complexity of language; reword and rephrase using simpler syntactic forms.
  - Identify and explain non-literal and figurative language; include alternative meanings: What *else* can it mean?
  - Provide notes so that the child can focus on listening; children with hearing loss cannot listen at the same time they are writing.
  - Assure captioning for instructional videos.
  - Provide visual references.



# Conversational repair strategies

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- Recognize conversational breakdowns and model/teach conversational repair strategies:
  - Asking for repetition: Could you say that again?
  - Asking for clarification: I don't understand. Can you say that in another way?
  - Identifying what was not understood: What did you say you did after the ball game?
  - Request clarification about the topic/reference: Who/what are you talking about?
  - Identifying barriers to listening/comprehension" It's too noisy here. Can we move to the hallway?



# Accommodations and Strategies for Children with Vision Loss

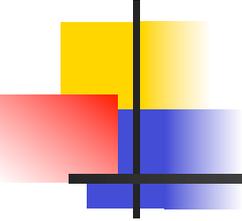
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Tracy Evans Luiselli, Ed.D.

**New England Consortium of  
Deafblind Projects**

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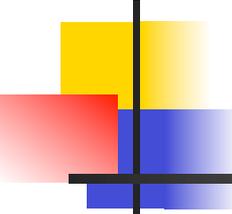
[Tracy.Luiselli@perkins.org](mailto:Tracy.Luiselli@perkins.org)



# Personnel

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- Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)
- Deafblind Consultant
- Low Vision Specialist
- Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M)

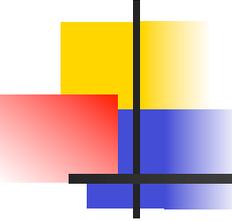


# Environmental Considerations

## – Thoughts for the Classroom

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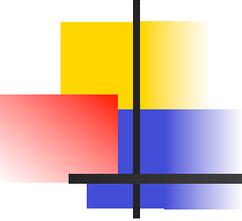
- Teacher/speaker location (away from windows to avoid glare)
- Overhead lighting in all learning areas (class, hallways, lunchroom, auditorium, library)
- Use of shades
- Task lighting (lamp, directed lighting, penlight/iPhone for dark or dimly lit areas; stickup light in locker/cubbies)
- Seating: near the front and slightly to the side - view teacher and peers
- Smartboard/White Board/Overhead Projector
- Floors – neutral



# More Environmental Considerations

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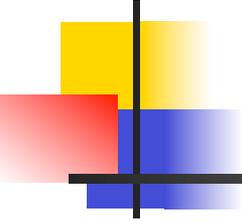
- Furniture Arrangement: organized, free of clutter, drawers closed
- Organization of personnel items (desk, books, notebooks, sticky labels)
- High contrast labeling of key classroom areas (ex: reading corner, computer area, tissues, markers, completed work box)



# Material Modifications:

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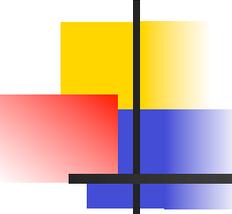
- High contrast (ex: math manipulatives – yellow cubes on a dark tray; yellow overlay for print materials to increase contrast)
- Individual copies of wall hung materials (schedules, poems, class reminders)
- Labeling personal materials – notebooks, cubbies, lockers
- Math (Sharpie pen to outline measurement items – rulers, protractor, compass, counting manipulatives)
- High contrast tag for backpack



## More Materials:

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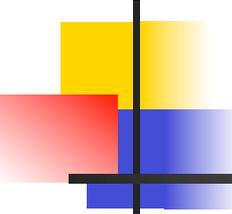
- Brightly colored tape for caution areas and to indicate changes in terrain/drop-offs (top of stairs)
- Computer: laptop, iPad, keyboard with large letters, dark blue background with yellow letters, keyboarding skills program; scanning software



# Reading and Print Size:

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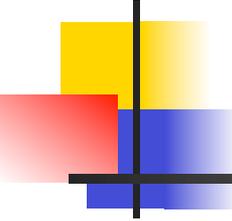
- Ongoing assessment
- Requires a team approach to monitor
- Consider reading fluency and comprehension
- Consider “crowding” – often an issue with math worksheets and workbooks (ex: may need additional line between problems)
- Enlarge print size only after careful assessment of reading and ophthalmology exam/low vision assessment
- Generally 12-18 size font (**Comic sans, Verdana**)
- Oral reading – look for omissions, substitutions, attention to punctuation
- Red Flags: squinting, moving toward materials, avoidance, headaches/fatigue after short periods of time
- Paper – good quality
- Contrast – Contrast - Contrast



# Accommodations and Techniques:

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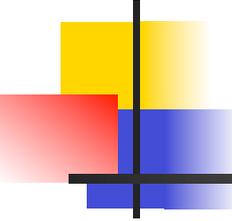
- Learning Media Assessment (LMA)
- Familiar versus Unfamiliar Environments: Unfamiliar environments - often significant difference in level of independence and level of comfort – requires close attention to additional exposure and learning time (ex: field trips)
- Many children accommodate using other skills (hearing, tactile cues, location of other people/landmarks)
- Sign language: keep signs small and concise; increase duration
- Tactile cues: may need more direct hands on experience to teach concepts (science - concepts of density and mass)
- Sighted guide: when lighting is inadequate
- Provide additional time to complete work: require  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of problems that peers are assigned to equalize the length of time spent on homework



# More Accommodations and Techniques:

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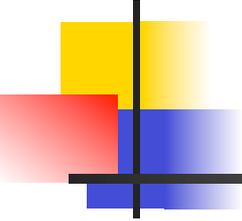
- Fatigue: arrange school day schedule – include more breaks in the afternoon; avoid large group discussion in the afternoon
- Homework Club – review instructions; probe understanding of requirements
- Organization: mark off completed problems
- Use dark pencil/marker – look for erasable dark markers
- Describe visual changes in environment (“....the new science workbooks are on the top shelf to the right; “oh look – Mrs. Henry is here to help with our new computers” )
- Light adaptation: additional time to adjust to changes in lighting (hat, tinted lenses)



# Technology Considerations:

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- Assistive Technology Evaluation
- Laptop, iPhone, iPad
- Smartboard/Whiteboard
- Low Vision Devices (Transformer - reduces need to shift from near to far)



# Resources:

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- State group for TVIs and O&M Instructors
- Assistive Instructional Materials (AIM)
- American Printing House for the Blind (APH) – low vision materials
- Bookshare
- e-Books