



Specialized Instruction

is ...focused, goal driven, targeted/explicit instruction addressing a deficiency in the students' academics, behavior, or education environment.

Specialized instruction that is individually designed may be more intensive, systematic instruction based upon individual needs to learn skills (academic or behavior) that typically developing children acquire naturally or with minimal instruction. For example, a student with a writing disability may need written language support in both English and Social Studies with more intensive instruction provided in the English classroom with a less intensive level of support for Social Studies.

Specialized instruction is more functional in nature based upon individual need for support, which includes:

- Direct instruction;
- Additional scaffolding and explicit instruction at a pace tailored more to the needs of the student, with additional teacher wait time for a response after querying a student;
- More time on a specific skill/behavior to practice and review;
- Multiple opportunities to respond to instruction;
- Additional practice and frequent progress monitoring, at least several times per week; and be
- Focused, goal driven and targeted instruction that addresses a deficiency in the students' academics, behavior, or education environment.

Assistive technology both high and low tech and the use of a supplementary /intervention curriculum are additional instructional supports determined by individual needs and used to achieve success in reaching the goals.

In addition to the previously described components **of specialized instruction** that apply to most students with disabilities, there are some that apply to specific categories of students with disabilities.

- For example, for students with blindness or low vision, the “specially designed instruction” may take the form of reading materials in Braille, large print, or audio recordings, and instruction in the use of a cane for mobility.

Braille



Large Print



Audio



Digital Text



- For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, the instruction may involve sign language, hearing aids, and/or computer-based supports.



- For students with emotional or behavioral disorders, instruction may require highly structured classrooms and teaching routines and use of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS).

Under **IDEA**, special education means "specially designed instruction". Specially designed instruction is adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child...the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to:

- Address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and
- Ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the **...standards...that apply to all children.**
- **Specially designed instruction describes** the types of unique instructional services needed by a child or youth with a disability to accomplish IEP goals and objectives that support achievement of the general curriculum standards. These services include alterations, modifications, and adaptations in:
 - instructional methods,
 - materials,
 - techniques,
 - media,
 - physical setting, or
 - environment.

In **IDEA**, **specialized instruction** involves environmental design and activities that encourage the learner's achievement of skills in various developmental disciplines, including cognitive processes and social interaction.

- Specialized instruction encompasses *curriculum planning* and *furnishing family support*, as educators and parents work together analyzing data to determine need-based teaching methods and strategies.
- Implementation of appropriate modifications and accommodations ideally enhances the student's skill development in identified areas of need.

Research-based or evidence based instruction is needed for those students with the most severe learning problems. The following link has a searchable data base and details about an intervention's level of effectiveness and the age groups for which it is designed. <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/ebp/>

Frequent **progress monitoring** is essential for students with disabilities in particular, and the link that follows offers a tools chart that presents information about academic progress monitoring tools. <http://www.intensiveintervention.org/chart/progress-monitoring>

The National Center for Learning Disabilities offers a lists of **apps for students with learning disabilities** who have trouble with study skills like getting and staying organized—a **crucial executive function skill**, the link is as follows <http://ncl.org/students-disabilities/assistive-technology-education/apps-students-ld-organization-study>

The Northern Michigan Disability network offers **iPad apps for students with learning disabilities** at the following link: <http://disabilitynetwork.org/technology/40-amazing-ipad-apps-for-the-learning-disabled/#.U3OHpCXD-00>

The following link leads to a blog containing a compiled list of apps for children with developmental disabilities. <http://sixestate.com/apps-help-children-with-developmental-disabilities/>