

JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

Fact Sheet Series

Sample Accommodations Situations and Solutions for Students with Disabilities

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A service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy

JAN'S ACCOMMODATION FACT SHEET SERIES

SAMPLE ACCOMMODATION SITUATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) receives accommodation questions about students with disabilities in classroom environments, such as public schools, post-secondary schools (including college or technical school), continuing education, vocational schools, and internships/employment. These questions come from the students themselves, academic advisors, instructors, and family members. These callers want to know about accommodation ideas that will work in educational environments. JAN provides basic educational and training instructional strategies that facilitate learning among students with disabilities in classroom or training sessions.

Primarily, JAN consultants provide information on accommodations that assist with inclusion, equal opportunities, and transitioning from school to work. Nearly one million students with disabilities attend undergraduate college courses and nearly 90,000 attend graduate school (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "The 1995-96 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study" at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/digest2001/tables/dt212.asp>).

The most common type of disability for school-age children is specific learning disabilities, but individuals who are working and attend training or extended learning courses, may also need accommodations. Students with disabilities are of all ages and have a variety of impairments. Students may have difficulty performing certain functions due to motor, mobility, cognitive/neurological, psychiatric, and sensory impairments. JAN consultants provide this publication as a way to share accommodation situations and solutions from educational settings. For a more in depth discussion, access JAN's publications at <http://askjan.org/media/atoz.htm>. To discuss an accommodation situation with a consultant, contact JAN directly.

Situations and Solutions:

A **middle school student** with **cancer** experienced fatigue and nausea during the afternoon. As an accommodation, JAN suggested transferring the student to core subjects like math, science, and reading that were scheduled in the mornings, allowing afternoons off. Another accommodation idea was to let the student complete his lessons at home while listening on the telephone or Internet.

A **high school student** with **muscular dystrophy** had difficulty moving to the front of the room to write on the board. As an alternative to writing notes on the board, JAN suggested providing an LCD pen-tablet system that allowed the student to make comments from her desk and project them to the front of the room.

A **technical and vocational education student** with a **sleep disorder** experienced problems managing his internship and other responsibilities, such as working and classroom assignments. As an accommodation, JAN suggested scheduling classes on M-W-F or T-TH and using the non-school days for his internship.

An **architecture student** with **quadriplegia** had difficulty using the computer for computer-aided design (CAD) and mathematics. JAN provided information on speech recognition programs for CAD and illustrating equations.

A **high school junior** who had difficulty speaking due to a **stroke** had difficulty communicating verbally with other students. JAN suggested using a portable communication aid.

A **computer tech student** is **deaf**. To best communicate with his instructor, JAN suggested providing a sign language interpreter during class sessions and lectures. To communicate with classmates during class sessions or activities, JAN suggested using a communication board, such as the Alpha Smart, so the students can type responses among each another.

A **student** with **dyslexia** is taking classes at the local junior college. She has difficulty reading print material, such as textbooks, written class assignments, and the syllabus. As an accommodation, JAN suggested ordering textbooks on tape from Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic. JAN also suggested the instructor provide class assignments and syllabus on tape.

A **student** with **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder** was taking a GED preparation class at the night school in his town. He had difficulty paying attention to detail and was easily distracted when taking timed practice test drills. JAN suggested relocating this student to an area of the classroom where visual distractions are minimal (i.e., front of room, away from window, at a study carrel). JAN also suggested restructuring the test drills to be untimed or providing the student with his own timer so he could mark time without watching the teacher. For taking the GED, JAN suggested providing accommodations such as: allowing extra time and providing a private or semi-private environment in which to take the test.

An **undergraduate student** with **expressive writing disorder** had difficulty writing class assignments such as journal entries, reflective papers, and research papers. JAN suggested using the word processing tool Inspiration to help the student organize, draft, and write his papers or other assignments.

A **student in medical school** who had a **learning disability** in reading was also a poor speller. She had difficulty reading and spelling medical terminology and prescription names. JAN suggested using the Franklin eBookman handheld, loaded with the PDR, the Merck Manual, and a medical dictionary.

A **student** with **dyscalculia** was studying cosmetology. She had difficulty measuring liquid products to color clients' hair. She also had difficulty reading a clock, and was unable to mark time as it passed. JAN suggested modifying the bottles the student used to mix the liquid (e.g., making a red line on the bottle indicating a "fill to here" measurement) and using a talking timer available from Maxi-Aids to tell her what time it was, or how long the timer was set.

An **electrical technician student** who was **colorblind** had difficulty discerning red, yellow, and orange electrical tape and wire caps. JAN suggested labeling the tape dispensers and cap containers so the student could read the colors of the products instead of identifying the product by color.

A **student** with a **back injury** was enrolled at a truck driving school. The individual had difficulty sitting for long periods. JAN suggested providing the student with a truck that had a vibration-absorbing driver's seat, which had heavy duty air suspension and adjustable shock dampening, and a portable lumbar cushion for driving exercises. While in the classroom, the student was allowed to walk around. In addition, he was provided an adjustable desk that adjusted from a sitting to standing position with an electric button.

A **student** studying **air conditioning repair** had a knee injury that made training activities involving cleaning an AC unit difficult. Typically, individuals accessed ACs from a standing position, which was painful for the student. The individual was accommodated with an adjustable worktable, and anti-fatigue matting was placed at the student's workstation.

A **student** who had one **arm amputated** was studying woodworking. The individual had difficulty manipulating a vise with one hand. The individual was provided a foot-controlled vise that allowed him to hold the wood with one hand and use the foot pedal to tighten and loosen the vise.

A **journalism student** with **carpal tunnel syndrome** had difficulty entering text into the computer and administering telephone interviews simultaneously. JAN provided information on speech recognition software and a headset with a switch that integrated speech computing and traditional telephony applications. The individual was then able to switch between talking on the telephone and entering text into the computer with the touch of a button.

A **student** studying to be an **x-ray technician** incurred a **cervical injury** that caused pain when wearing a protective apron. JAN provided information on lightweight lead aprons.

A **middle school student** enrolled in a computer class was **deaf** and typically communicated using American Sign Language (ASL). To effectively receive the lecture from the instructor, JAN suggested providing an ASL interpreter during class and using an Internet or Intranet Instant Messaging (IM) service to communicate. To communicate with classmates, JAN suggested using index cards for writing notes, the

computer as a communication tool, IM, or a portable augmentative communication device.

Resources Specifically for Students with Disabilities

American Council on Education

One Dupont Circle NW
Washington DC 20036
Direct: (202) 939-9300
Comments@ace.nche.edu
<http://www.acenet.edu/>

Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

107 Commerce Center Drive, Suite 204
Huntersville NC 28078
Voice and TTY: (704) 947-7779
Fax: (704) 948-7779
ahead@ahead.org
<http://www.ahead.org>

HEATH Resource Center

George Washington University
2134 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20052-0001
Toll Free V/TTY: (800) 544-3284
Direct: (202) 973-0904
Fax: (202) 994-3365
askHeath@gwu.edu
<http://www.heath.gwu.edu>

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Toll Free: (800) USA-LEARN or 872-5327
TTY: (800) 437-0833
<http://www.ed.gov>

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