

Accommodations vs. modifications

Use this chart to know the difference between these two types of supports.

Setting	Accommodations (changes to <i>how</i> a student learns)	Modifications (changes to <i>what</i> a student is taught)
Classroom instruction	Students with a reading disability might have an audio version of the book that the rest of the class is reading. Students with attention problems might get seated next to the teacher, but still do the same work.	Students might get lower-level reading assignments or shorter writing assignments. They might continue to learn a basic skill while classmates move on to more advanced work.
Classroom tests	Students might get a “designated reader” who reads test questions aloud. Or be able to give answers in the easiest form for them – written or spoken. But the test isn’t different.	Students might be tested on less material or less complex material. For example, they may have a different list of spelling words to study than their classmates do. So, the test is different.
Standardized testing	Students might get more time, or be able to take the test in a quiet space. Ideally, the accommodations would be the same ones they use to take classroom tests.	Students who are far behind may take an “alternative assessment” that’s different from the standard exam. It might have fewer questions or different material.
PE, music, and art class	Students might get accommodations like the ones for classroom learning. These might include frequent breaks, preferred seating, or extra time for projects.	Students might not have to do an assignment that’s unreasonable for them. For example, they might not be required to learn to read music in music class.