



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities

April 2014

President's Message



Dear CLD Members,

It is with great sadness that I write this letter. The fields of learning disabilities and bilingual special education have lost an outstanding scholar and a wonderful person, **Dr. Janette Klingner**, who passed away on March 20th. We will miss her.

Preparations for CLD's 36th Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities on October 2-3, 2014, in Philadelphia continue. We are honored to have **Dr. Naomi Zigmond**, the 2014 J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer, as our keynote speaker. The Conference Committee, Vice President Diane Bryant, and the Local Arrangements Committee are working hard to make this another fabulous conference. This year's proposal applications were completed electronically and were due on March 14, 2014. I hope you sent your proposal and/or are planning to attend the conference.

The CLD Board of Trustees (BOT) will soon release CLD's new mission and vision statements. Thank you to all members who contributed to this task. CLD elections for the office of Vice President have been completed. Let's welcome the new member of our Executive Committee, **Mary Beth Calhoon**, CLD's 2014-2015 Vice President. I want to encourage you to join one of CLD's standing committees or run for office. We need candidates for the Vice President and Secretary positions for the 2015-2016 academic year. Please consider become more involved with CLD and be a candidate for one of those positions. Please contact me (swatson@odu.edu) if you are willing to serve in one of those positions.

We have a new Student Chapter at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Thanks go to **Theresa Dorel** for organizing this new chapter.

Please continue supporting CLD's efforts to enhance the education and quality of life of individuals with learning disabilities. Remain a CLD member, join one of our committees, and help CLD recruit new members.

This is my final message for the *LD Forum* as CLD President. I would like to thank each one of you for allowing me to serve as CLD's 2013-2014 President. I want to acknowledge the outstanding work and the great support I received from CLD's BOT and Director **Linda Nease**. Their dedicated efforts and great assistance helped me continue to work on the important mission of this organization. Thank you!

Please join me in welcoming our incoming President, **Steve Chamberlain**. I look forward to seeing you in our future conferences. Again, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Silvana Watson
2013-2014 CLD President

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Editor's Note: This column provides readers with immediate access to evidence-based strategies on current topics that can easily be transferred from the pages of LD Forum into effective teaching practice in CLD members' classrooms. Authors who would like to submit a column are encouraged to contact the editor in advance to discuss ideas. Author guidelines are available on CLD's website and from the editor, Cathy Newman Thomas (thomascat@missouri.edu).

5 Ways To ... Adapt Classroom Materials

Greg Conderman
Northern Illinois University

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004) requires that students with disabilities participate in the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible. Consequently, many students with disabilities are increasingly receiving more of their instruction in inclusive settings, where they are expected to meet rigorous academic and social-behavioral standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

As students with disabilities receive more instruction in general education classrooms, they will encounter numerous written assignments (e.g., study guides, exams, worksheets, homework assignments) that place demands on their reading, writing, mathematical, organizational, and study skills (Deshler & Schumaker, 2006). With a few minor but significant changes, teachers can successfully differentiate these assignments for students with disabilities without sacrificing content or standards. This skill is timely because students with disabilities are being held accountable for rigorous content, but many teachers are not well prepared to differentiate instruction (Holloway, 2000).

This column describes five categories of adaptations useful for differentiating items such as study guides, worksheets, assignments, or projects. The mnemonic **ADAPT** helps general educators, special educators, and paraprofessionals remember the five broad categories of adaptations that are applicable across grades and subjects. When making these adaptations, teachers need to first identify their instructional outcomes (Smith, Gartin, & Murdick, 2012) to ensure that the adaptations do not sacrifice the instructional intent.

1 **A**bbreviate written products or assignments. Among students with disabilities, 96% have some type of communication or language-based disability that makes it difficult for them to remember and retrieve information; produce quality written and oral products, especially when under pressure; and understand complex verbal and written instructions and abstract language (Wagner & Blackorby, 2002). To address these language issues, teachers can add a word bank for fill-in-the-blank items and change recall tasks such as listing, short answer, or essay items to recognition questions such as multiple choice, true–false, or matching, as long as such changes do not compromise the instructional intent (Friend & Bursuck, 2012). Also, teachers

can adjust language on worksheets, study guides, and quizzes by omitting unnecessary words and replacing complex words and phrases with words students already know (Conderman & Bresnahan, 2010). In addition, students are also more successful with study guides, quizzes, or other written assignments when teachers use (a) basic sentence structures, such as active voice rather than passive voice, and (b) bold or italic pronouns to emphasize their association with a previously introduced noun (Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2010). Examples of several of these adaptations, as well as those discussed later in this article, are shown in Table 1.

2 **D**etermine Writing Demands. Many students with disabilities also have difficulties with writing, spelling, and written expression (Mercer & Pullen, 2009), so reduce copying and writing demands as much as possible, keeping the learning goal in mind. One way to accomplish this is through the use of technology. For example, teachers can provide students with a hard copy or electronic access to math problems, lectures, or other assignments. They can also use assistive technologies with word prediction programs, speech-to-text capabilities, outlining skills, highlighting and pasting options, and spelling and grammar checkers that support and bypass written expression challenges (Friend & Bursuck, 2012). Teachers can also adjust writing demands in students' daily work and on assessments, as long as the adaptations do not sacrifice the learning objective. For example, students can write vocabulary words next to definitions rather than copy lengthy dictionary definitions on study guides (Conderman & Bresnahan 2010). Similarly, if writing skills are not being assessed, students can write bullet points as short-answer or essay responses, draw their response, develop a graphic organizer (Boyle & Scanlon, 2010), or dictate responses, which often results in a significant increase in response length (Reid & Lienemann, 2006). Students can also take guided notes, which they find less frustrating, feel are less confusing, and complete more accurately than when using conventional note-taking systems (Konrad, Joseph, & Eveleigh, 2009).

(continued on page 3)

Table 1. Examples of Adaptations

Suggestion	Original	Adaptation
Abbreviate Written Products or Assignments		
Omit unnecessary words	What is the name of the specific symphony that made musical composer Beethoven quite famous?	What symphony made Beethoven famous?
Replace complex words with words students know	What is the chief agricultural industry in Illinois?	What is the main farming business in Illinois?
Use basic sentence structures	The bill was vetoed by the President.	The President vetoed the bill.
Determine Writing Demands		
Reduce copying for vocabulary definitions	Using the glossary, write the definition of: 1. photosynthesis - 2. chlorophyll -	Look at page 87 of our science text. Which word means: 1. The process used by plants to convert light energy into chemical energy? _____ 2. The green pigment in algae and plants? _____
Allow flexibility with written answers if writing skills are not being assessed	In a short answer of at least five complete sentences, describe the three rights of people guaranteed in the United States Constitution.	Draw pictures that show the three rights of people guaranteed in the United States Constitution.
Use guided notes	Take notes on the lecture of "The Cell Cycle."	Write a word in each blank as you listen to the lecture on "The Cell Cycle." 1. All living things are composed of _____. 2. When cells divide, we say they have _____.
Encourage the use of technology	Find and then write three details from the article that support the main idea. After listening to the lecture on Westward Expansion, write three ideas that you found interesting.	Use the copy and paste function on your laptop after you find three details from the article that support the main idea. After listening to the lecture on Westward Expansion, using the electronic version of notes given to you, highlight three ideas you found interesting.
Add Clarity to Directions		
Add clarity to new tasks	Complete the matching section below.	Match the definitions in Column A to their vocabulary words in Column B by writing the letter of your choice on the blank next to each number.
Use self-monitoring cues	Complete and submit the study guide for Section 4.1 Animal Adaptations.	Check off each step as you complete it: 1. Read Section 4.1 on Animal Adaptations _____ 2. Write complete and neat answers to all questions on the study guide on Section 4.1 Animal Adaptations _____ 3. Double check that you wrote complete and neat answers to all questions on the study guide _____ 4. Submit the completed study guide to Mrs. Mae by Friday, Feb. 18th _____
Present the Big Ideas		
Eliminate unnecessary details	1. Where was gold first found? 2. Who was the first person to discover gold? 3. In what year was gold first discovered in California?	What is the main idea of the passage on the Gold Rush?
Focus on main concepts	List, in order, the seven classification systems explained on page 145.	Why do scientists use classification systems?
Tie in Various Scaffolds		
Include page numbers	1. Where was gold first found? _____	(p. 23) 1. Where was gold first found? _____
Use first letters as cues	1. Who was the first person to discover gold? _____	1. Who was the first person to discover gold? J_____ M_____
Allow the use of manipulatives	Complete the following math problems: 1. 52 + 23	Use your base 10 blocks to complete the following: 1. 52 + 23

(continued on page 4)

3 Add clarity to directions. Because students with disabilities often have processing and reading comprehension issues, they need support in understanding task requirements, even when directions appear to be clear for other students. Therefore, teachers should add clarity to new tasks, adjust written directions (Boyle & Scanlon, 2010), provide an example of the task (Conderman & Bresnahan 2010), and have students verbally paraphrase directions before they begin their assignment (Friend & Bursuck, 2012). Test and assignment directions that specify requirements with sufficient detail (e.g., “In at least three complete sentences, describe three advantages of living in Iowa”) and bold or italicize special words such as *not*, *all of the following except*, *compare and contrast*, and so forth (Conderman & Bresnahan, 2010) provide needed explicit support for students who often miss details. Furthermore, checklists, cue cards, and self-monitoring sheets for assignments that include multiple steps or parts help students remember steps and encourage independence (Daly & Ranalli, 2003).

4 Present the big ideas. Sometimes when developing study guides, quizzes, or other assignments, teachers emphasize details; consequently, students miss the big idea of a lesson or unit of instruction. Focusing the assignment on big ideas helps students grasp important principles to make connections among facts and concepts (Coyne, Kame’enui, & Carnine, 2007). Teachers can differentiate study guides, worksheets, and assessments by eliminating some details and emphasizing the main and most important ideas, concepts, and vocabulary terms. In addition, visually presenting ideas and concepts through graphic organizers (Ellis & Howard, 2007) provides an organized schema for students who need a different way to process information.

5 Tie in various scaffolds. Even with the previously described adaptations, students often still need individualized scaffolds—or supports—to help them access the curriculum and work independently. While developing assignments, teachers can plan to use various supports, such as peer tutors; page numbers; the first letter of words for fill-in-the-blank items; color coding; visuals; graphic organizers that students can complete before, during, and after task completion; manipulatives; models; calculators; number lines; posters; charts; rules; and self-correcting materials that provide just the right amount of individualized support for student success (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). As a way of encouraging self-regulation, teachers should encour-

age students to use only the supports they really need when they need them. The end goal, of course, is for students to work as independently as possible by gradually removing such scaffolds as and when appropriate.

Concluding Thoughts

As students with disabilities increasingly receive more of their instruction in inclusive settings, they require various adaptations to succeed and display their understanding of critical content. The ADAPT strategy serves as a mnemonic for professionals to remember five categories to consider when adjusting study guides, worksheets, assignments, and assessments. To ensure student success and independence, adaptations should be (a) individualized, (b) periodically evaluated to ensure that the student needs them and finds them useful, (c) written into the Individualized Educational Program (IEP), and (d) communicated with all team members. These guidelines help ensure that students receive consistent adaptations across settings while maintaining sufficient challenge and rigor when accessing the general education curriculum.

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Next LD Forum Editor Selected



continue to be an informative resource for CLD members. Welcome, Joe!

I would like to thank the applicants who applied for the *LD Forum* editor position. After careful consideration, Joe Morgan, an assistant professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, was selected to fill the position starting July 1, 2014. We are confident that under Joe's leadership *LD Forum* will

Judy Voress
Communications Chair

Dr. Joseph Morgan is honored, and excited, to serve as the editor of *LD Forum*. Dr. Morgan is an assistant professor of special education and coordinator of special education programs in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. In this role, he researches and teaches topics related to the provision of access to the general education curricula for students with learning disabilities and emotional and behavioral disorders, the implementation of culturally and contextually relevant social skills interventions for these populations of students, and evidence-based interventions to support the academic achievement of high-needs stu-

dents with disabilities in urban environments. Dr. Morgan is currently serving as the research advisor for Downtown Achieves, a collective impact partnership of the City of Las Vegas, the Clark County School District, and various nonprofit organizations in southern Nevada. The focus is on increasing the achievement of students in the urban core of Las Vegas. Additionally, he researches effective pedagogical methods and systems for preparing highly effective special educators to work with students with disabilities in urban public school environments. He is currently the co-project director of a federally funded project focused on special education program improvement at UNLV.

Nationally, Dr. Morgan currently serves as an editorial review board member of *Intervention in School and Clinic* and the *Journal of Special Education Technology*. He is an active member of the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD), where he serves as co-chair of the Technology Committee. In this capacity, he works closely with the Technology Committee to oversee the revision of the CLD website and the development of online proposal submission systems for the annual conference. He also serves on the Communications Committee as the social media coordinator to disseminate organizational information to followers on Facebook and Twitter.

36th Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities



J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer and Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Naomi Zigmond, University of Pittsburgh
“Learning Disabilities: Past, Present, Future”

*C*oncurrent skill-building sessions on research, interventions, teacher preparation, and policies for students with LD

*P*resident's awards reception and interactive poster session on evidence-based practices

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*Sponsor the 2014
CLD Conference!*

The conference committee is *now accepting sponsorships* for the 2014 CLD Conference in Philadelphia, PA. Would your company or institution be interested in sponsoring an award, a coffee break, Leadership Academy training, or another specially tailored event or product offering? We have many great options to increase visibility for your group to showcase programs and/or share materials, and sponsorship is very important to our conference success.

For more information and a copy of the sponsorship packet, please contact:

Heather Haynes-Smith (hhaynessmith@twu.edu).

**Committee/Chapter
Reports and News**

TEXAS★STATE UNIVERSITY **CLD Chapter**

The Texas State CLD Chapter has been accepting nominations for **CLD Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award–Texas Chapter**. Submissions to the Texas Chapter were due by April 11. For further information, please e-mail *Min Kim, TCLD President* (minkimedu@gmail.com).

Editors' Note

This issue of *LD Forum*
was edited by
Assistant Editor
Kimberly Coy.



Award Nominations

The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) announces that for both the **2014 CLD Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award** and the **Floyd G. Hudson Service Award** the submission due date is **May 15, 2014**.

Outstanding Teacher of the Year

This award recognizes outstanding teachers who are CLD members and who consistently provide quality instruction to students with learning disabilities. These teachers, selected by local chapters, provide direct services to students. They are dedicated to implementing evidence-based instructional practices and collaborating with classroom teachers and other service providers to greatly improve the quality of education for all students who struggle academically. State chapter submission processes and due dates vary. Please check with individual state chapters. State chapters forward their selected Teacher of the Year to the LDC and Executive Committee.

All award recipients are guests at the annual international conference. The recipients receive a complimentary conference registration and a one-year membership renewal. During the conference award program, the recipients will be presented a certificate of recognition and an honorarium.

The online submission link is under construction, but should be available at www.cldinternational.org by early April. For inquiries regarding nominations from states without a CLD chapter, contact, [Colleen Reutebuch](mailto:ckreutebuch@austin.utexas.ed), LDC co-chair (ckreutebuch@austin.utexas.ed).

Floyd G. Hudson Service Award

This award is presented for outstanding performance and commitment by a professional who works in the field of learning disabilities in a role outside of the classroom. This CLD member, working in a leadership capacity, enhances the professional learning of others in the field and impacts the lives of persons with learning disabilities. Only chapter presidents or members of the Board of Trustees can submit nomination packets.

Outstanding Researcher Award

To promote and recognize research, the Council for Learning Disabilities annually presents an award for an outstanding manuscript-length paper on learning disabilities based on a doctoral dissertation completed within the last five years. The submission must **not** be under consideration for, or the recipient of, another award. The award recipient will receive

a plaque and a \$500 honorarium to be presented at the 2014 International Conference on Learning Disabilities to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Because the paper will be considered for publication in *Learning Disability Quarterly*, it cannot be simultaneously submitted to or already published in another journal.

Three hard copies of the APA-style paper (max. 35 pages in length) should be submitted to:

Dr. Deborah K. Reed

The Council for Learning Disabilities, Research Committee
Florida Center for Reading Research
2010 Levy Ave., Ste 100
Tallahassee, FL 32310 850-645-0510

In addition, one electronic copy of the submission should be sent to Dr. Reed (dkreed@fcrr.org).

Deadline for submission of papers: Must be received by **May 1, 2014**.

The winner will be notified by August 15, 2014.

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CLD Information Central

CLD Mission, Vision, & Goals

Mission Statement: The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) is an international organization that promotes evidence-based teaching, collaboration, research, leadership, and advocacy. CLD is composed of professionals who represent diverse disciplines and are committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities and others who experience challenges in learning.

Vision Statement: Our vision is to include all educators, researchers, administrators, and support personnel to improve the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities and others who experience challenges in learning.

External Goals

1. Promote the use and monitoring of evidence-based interventions for individuals with learning disabilities (LD) and others who experience challenges in learning.
2. Foster collaborative networks with and among professionals who serve individuals with LD and others who experience challenges in learning.
3. Expand our audience to educators, researchers, administrators, and support personnel.
4. Promote high-quality research of importance to individuals with LD and persons who experience challenges in learning.
5. Support leadership development among professionals who serve individuals with LD and others who experience challenges in learning.
6. Advocate for an educational system that respects, supports, and values individual differences.

Internal Goals

1. Ensure efficient, accountable, responsive governance to achieve the CLD mission.
2. Mentor future CLD leaders.
3. Maintain sound fiscal planning and practice.
4. Recruit and retain CLD members.
5. Increase the diversity of our organization.

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Infosheets

Infosheets provide concise, current information about topics of interest to those in the field of learning disabilities. Current Infosheets are available for viewing and download at <http://www.cldinternational.org/Infosheets/Infosheets.asp>

Contact Information

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Overland Park, KS 66210
phone: 913-491-1011 • fax: 913-491-1012
Executive Director: Linda Nease

CLD Publications Invite Authors to Submit Manuscripts

Learning Disability Quarterly

The flagship publication of CLD, LDQ is a nationally ranked journal. Author guidelines may be accessed at:
<http://www.cldinternational.org/Publications/LDQAuthors.asp>

Intervention in School and Clinic

ISC, a nationally ranked journal with a historical affiliation to CLD, posts author guidelines at:
<http://www.cldinternational.org/Publications/ISC.asp>

LD Forum

The official newsletter of CLD, *LD Forum* accepts manuscripts for its **Research to Practice** and **5 Ways to...** columns. Author guidelines are available at:
<http://www.cldinternational.org/Articles/RTP-5.pdf>

Infosheets

Research summaries on current, important topics, Infosheets are aligned with CLD's tradition of translating research into practice to make it accessible and useful to practitioners. Author guidelines may be accessed at:
<http://www.cldinternational.org/Infosheets/Infosheets.asp>