

Did You Know?

Accommodations

Accommodations are practices and procedures that ensure that educators, as well as students and parents, have a valid measure of what students with disabilities know and can do. Accommodations use is applied to classroom instruction. In addition, students with IEPs, 504 plans, and ESL plans may be provided with assessment accommodations. Accommodations do not reduce expectations for learning. Accommodations provided to a student during state assessments must also be provided during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments. However, some instructional accommodations may not be appropriate for use on certain statewide assessments. It is critical that educators become familiar with state policies about the appropriate use of accommodations during assessments.

Handbooks

- [2019 Accommodations Guidelines](#)
- [2019 Accommodations Guidelines for ELs](#)
- [2019 Read Aloud and Scribing Guidelines](#)

Forms

- [2019 PSSA TDA Scribing Accommodation Form](#)
- [2019 Unique Accommodation Form](#)
- [2019 Confidentiality Agreement for Interpreters Form](#)

FAQ

Test Prep Strategies

Test prep consists of the teaching and learning of the standards throughout the school year. At this time of year, we often hear about schools devoting an entire month to test prep. Tim Shanahan (2018) expressed the following thoughts regarding prep for standardized tests. "Reading Comprehension tests measure how well students can read a collection of texts...The path to better reading scores? Teach kids to read. It works like magic. Devote substantial time to teaching phonemic awareness (preK-1), phonics (preK-2), oral reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing. Make sure kids are being taught to read grade level texts..." <https://shanahanonliteracy.com/blog>

Some strategies you can review with your students during a brief instructional period prior to a standardized test include the following:

- Learn the structure and directions for the test
- Mark your answer sheet carefully
- Use your test booklet for scratch paper
- Pace yourself
- Practice the online test tutorial (for online testers)

Professional Learning

"The three overarching categories in The New Art and Science of Teaching emanate from a perspective of what must occur in students' minds to learn effectively. Specifically, (1) they must receive feedback, (2) they must receive content instruction that triggers specific types of thinking, and (3) they must have a psychological context in which their basic needs are met."

Included in the 2017 edition are two new design questions:

- How will I design and administer assessments that helps students understand how their test scores and grades are related to their status on the progression of knowledge they are expected to master?
- Throughout all types of lessons, what strategies will I use to help students continually integrate new knowledge with old knowledge and revise their understanding accordingly?

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Our monthly ELA Assessment eBLAST will focus on providing the following: insight around standardized assessment, professional learning for ELA classroom instruction and assessment, professional opportunities, and a question/answer section.

Email questions to:

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The official graphic for PDE approved TDA resources. Make sure you see all three together!



"The ELA period is an ideal time to provide students with opportunities to develop empathy, communication, and collaboration skills while improving literacy skills. ELA curricula centered on engaging topics and rich reading material allow students to connect on a deep and substantive level, enabling them to better understand each other and academic content."

<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/blog>

A Perfect Match: The Power of Blending
Literacy and Social and Emotional
Learning

by [Shanahan et al.](#)



Table I.4: Elements Within the Ten Design Areas

Feedback	Content	Context
Providing and Communicating Clear Learning Goals 1. Providing scales and rubrics 2. Tracking student progress 3. Celebrating success Using Assessments 4. Using informal assessments of the whole class 5. Using formal assessments of individual students	Conducting Direct Instruction Lessons 6. Chunking content 7. Processing content 8. Recording and representing content Conducting Practicing and Deepening Lessons 9. Using structured practice sessions	Using Engagement Strategies 23. Noticing and reacting when students are not engaged 24. Increasing response rates 25. Using physical movement 26. Maintaining a lively pace 27. Demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm 28. Presenting unusual information 29. Using friendly controversy 30. ...