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Summer 2016

Accommodating Reading Deficiencies

Reading Deficiencies Defined

Depending on cognitive abilities and/or disabilities, students may not be able to access written information in the school and work environments. Cognitive and processing limitations may make it difficult to understand, recognize, and visually discern letters, numbers, signs, and symbols. Entire words or strings of letters may be unrecognizable. Cognitive and processing limitations refer to limitations in recognizing and taking in information through the senses (i.e., auditory processing and visual processing limitations). Students with severe cognitive and processing limitations impacting their ability to read are often identified as having a learning disability.



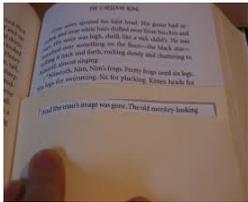
Other conditions that may impact reading can go beyond learning disabilities such as large gaps in instruction, speech and language disorders, anxiety disorders, attention disorders, and even misuse of technology. Often, students mask their inability to read and write by avoiding any activities or assignments that involve printed materials. In part, the challenge is to help students overcome the fear of reading by providing safe reading experiences coupled with research-based instructional strategies and accommodations.

Functional Limitations and Accommodations

Functional limitations as a result of reading deficiencies and/or disabilities can often range from mild impact to severe impact. Mild impact can include students who have difficulty reading, comprehending, and summarizing longer passages or text. More severe impact may include students who have great difficulty decoding and comprehending or students who cannot read at all. These students often have severe processing deficits, as well as difficulties with written and verbal expression. Therefore, it is critical to consider accommodations and strategies that are flexible and able to address all levels of functioning. A series of webinars, *Reading 100 and 200: Methods to Accommodate and Support Reading Deficiencies*, was recently offered and are available on the Job Corps Disability Web site. In the webinars, the center-wide impacts of mild, moderate, and, and severe reading deficiencies are identified and addressed with a focus on independence and employability.

Accommodating Reading Deficiencies (cont'd)

The following table outlines some common functional limitations and possible accommodations or strategies to support students with reading deficiencies, including specific learning disabilities in reading.

<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Comprehension Difficulties</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peer tutor or mentors ➤ Graphic organizer ➤ Check for understanding (who, what, where, when, why, how) ➤ Videos or other visual representations ➤ Connect printed materials to life experiences or prior knowledge 	<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Decoding Difficulties</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assistive technology ➤ Screen readers ➤ Decoding programs ➤ Reading pens ➤ Model “good reader” strategies (look at pictures, table of contents, chapter headings, maps, diagrams, and bold print words)
<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Fluency Issues</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide guided, repeated oral reading ➤ Provide opportunities for independent silent reading ➤ Use highlighters, colored overlays, large print, and tracking tools 	<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Visual Processing Deficits</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use audio input (players and recorders) while reading the same information ➤ Use reading guides (tools to help track and stay focused on the page) ➤ Provide quiet space to minimize distractions
<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Memory Difficulties</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide memory devices (mnemonics, visualization) ➤ Allow the use of graphic organizers 	<p><u>Functional Limitation</u> Writing Difficulties</p>  <p><u>Accommodations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow verbal responses ➤ Use of reference materials (dictionary, word prediction software)

Reading Support in Action at Job Corps

Some Job Corps centers have a membership with Bookshare, the world's largest online library of copyrighted content for people with qualified print disabilities. Center staff use their BookShare accounts to provide access to digitized reading materials such as Job Corps workbooks and manuals. *See Disability Resources for more information on BookShare.*

- Alaska: Staff used BookShare to create audio books in CNA, Accounting, and Culinary.
- Whitney M. Young: Staff used BookShare to create audio books in Pharmacy Tech and CNA books have been ordered.



Students at Pinellas JCC using GIST to build reading comprehension skills

Reading Support in Action at Job Corps (cont'd)

- Pittsburg: Staff used BookShare to create digitized printed materials in the academic and TABE classrooms.
- Weber Basin: Trade instructors used BookShare to place trade book on disks that can be used on computers.
- Long Beach: TABE instructors used BookShare to create digitized test support materials.

Larré Davis, a former Special Education Teacher, Reading Instructor and current Academic Manager/Disability Coordinator at Pinellas Job Corps, encourages “culture building” as a framework for academic support—specifically reading instruction. She refers to her approach as *Build a Love for Learning One Book at a Time*. Some of reading resources that Pinellas uses for reading support include GIST, a summarizing reading strategy that can be used for any content area, and Blueford Series Audio Books (www.blueford.org), a collection of young adult audio novels focused on contemporary urban America.

Employability and Independence

Young adults with reading deficiencies are often not prepared to face the challenges of college, work, and independent living. Understanding their strengths and weaknesses is key to self-advocacy, as well as understanding how to get the necessary accommodations they will need after Job Corps. When students with reading deficiencies understand, and are able to communicate what works for them (i.e., accommodations and strategies used at Job Corps), they are better able to transfer those skills to the workplace, college, and life. For example, which

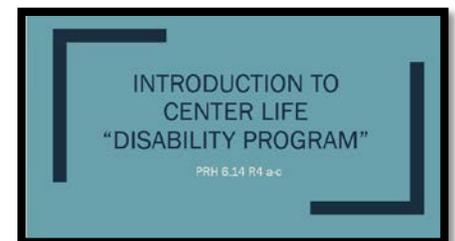
reading apps or other technology will help the student work/live more independently? For more about using technology to improve employability and independence, see the *Spotlight on Assistive Technology* section of this newsletter. For information on preparing students with disabilities for employment and independent living after Job Corps, see the Career Transition Readiness section of the Job Corps Disability Web site.



Disability Resources

New Disability Program SIMON Training

A new SIMON training covers the three requirements in PRH 6.14 R4 for Disability Coordinators to ensure all students have received information about the benefits and supports available through the Disability Program. To access this training, log in to SIMON through CITRIX.



Bookshare

Bookshare is the world's largest online library of copyrighted content for people with qualified print disabilities. Bookshare provides: access to a large and diverse collection of titles for school or pleasure reading, the ability to listen to books with high quality text-to-speech voices, learning multi-modally (see and hear words as they are being read and highlighted), tools to take notes, add bookmarks, look up word definitions, and a dedicated Job Corps library with the most commonly used textbooks. <https://www.bookshare.org/cms>

Job Corps Celebrates Autism Awareness Month

April was Autism Awareness Month and several Job Corps centers engaged staff and students in activities to bring awareness to Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Treasure Island: On April 14th Treasure Island JCC hosted an Autism Awareness Month event. Students were engaged in autism awareness activities and staff received tips for teaching students with autism. Handouts and prizes were provided to participants. Disability Coordinator, Elizabeth Carter reported, a “great turn out by the students and staff.”



Autism Awareness Month event at Treasure Island JCC

Penobscot: Penobscot JCC held a number of activities throughout the month of April to celebrate Autism Awareness Month. Staff were asked to wear blue in reference to the “light it up blue”, a worldwide effort to shine the light on Autism. On dress down days, each staff person dressing down contributed \$2 to be donated to the Autism Walk. Students contributed to a “Someone I Know has Autism” puzzle wall by filling-in puzzle pieces with information about the great attributes of a person in their life with Autism. Staff helped students create tie-dye t-shirts to wear during the Autism Walk.

Ramey: Ramey JCC held a series of Autism Awareness Month activities throughout the month of April. The center placed an information booth in the cafeteria with information on Autism, such as banners, brochures and trifold. Staff and students were provided with a piece of puzzle to decorate and the pieces were used to create an Autism Awareness tree. Miss Villanueva, Disability Coordinator, held an Autism conference. As a final event, the students and staff were part of an aerial picture wearing blue or the official “Alianza de Autismo de Puerto Rico” t-shirt.



Autism Awareness tree displayed at Ramey JCC

Upcoming Webinars

Webinar	Dates/Times *All Times are Eastern
All You Ever Wanted to Know about Applicant File Review and TEAP	June 8, 2016 @ 11 AM and June 9, 2016 @ 3 PM
Disability Coordinator Orientation	June 28, 2016 @ 4 PM and June 30, 2016 @ 11 AM
Reading 300	July 12, 2016 @ 4 PM and June 14, 2016 @ 11 AM

E-mail your comments or suggestions to:
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Spotlight on AT: Reading Deficiencies

When we think about assisting students in supporting reading needs, what are some of the goals we need to keep in mind?

Building Independence – What accommodations promote independence and make the student less dependent upon others?

Accessibility – How can we provide access to all areas of the program?

Employability – What accommodations translate well into the workplace if needed?



Utilizing assistive technology (AT) can help meet all of these goals. Below are some AT examples for low-level readers.

Text Grabber and Translator: Text Grabber quickly scans, translates, and saves chosen text from virtually any printed material. The App includes text recognition in more than 60 languages. Text can be spoken aloud and translated via Voice Over feature.

<http://www.abbyy.com/textgrabber/>



Voice Dream Reader: The highly configurable screen layout suits every reading style from completely auditory to completely visual, plus a synchronized combination of both. Text is easy to rewind and fast forward by sentence, paragraph, page and chapter. The app has a built in dictionary and keeps track of where the user stopped in each book or article. It includes the ability to read internet pages without reading the ads. <http://www.voicedream.com/>



Go Read: This is an accessible e-book reader for people with print disabilities. Go Read is directly linked to the Bookshare library, letting you find, download, and read Bookshare books within seconds. You can use Go Read with or without talk back and enjoy reading Bookshare books with useful features that make reading accessible to people with visual, physical and learning disabilities. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.benetech.android&hl=en>



Regional Disability Coordinators

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