

Test Modification Tips

There are many ways to modify tests. Some common modifications are:

1. reducing matching to 5 or 10 per set
2. reducing multiple choice answers (maybe 3 choices instead of 4)
3. giving a word bank
4. for essay or short answer--have the student choose 3 from a list of 5 or so
5. allowing a note card to be used (really good for memory-intense subjects)

You can also provide students extra time to finish they won't rush or worry about getting done.

There are lots of ways to modify tests. You need to find out which modification works best for the student and go with it. It is often best to have several different formats that the student is comfortable with.

Here are a few ideas:

#1. Try to include questions and styles of questioning that will take into account the students' level of language acquisition. Things like matching, filling in the blanks (with a wordlist provided) and labeling maps or diagrams work well for special education students who may still need visual reinforcement for their English. Multiple choice is not recommended for ESL (English as a second language) students because it relies on understanding subtleties of English that are often beyond the student's grasp.

2. Give students preparation sheets before major tests that indicate what should be studied, where the information can be found, and suggest ways to study. Some students should be able to keep notes, but don't expect them to rely solely on their own notes for study as their grammar, spelling, and general literacy skills may not allow them to prepare notes well enough for serious study.

3. Discuss methods students can use to study for tests in class. Demonstrate how to use graphic organizers, lists, and other memory aids to the class. Using practice tests or pre-tests to check learning is a great way to help all students prepare for tests.

4. Always explain how to complete a test and include sample questions and answers on the test sheet for each type of question. Go over the main parts of the test with the class and discuss how to correctly complete each type of question.

5. Clearly show how many marks each section/question is worth and discuss strategies for test taking, with the class, before the test.

6. You may also grade the test according to your understanding of the student's writing/vocabulary ability. For example, on a math test your student may answer a problem correctly, but misspell or have difficulty writing the statement. You might choose to give them full marks anyway, since you know their writing skills do not match their math skills.