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Attending to Specialized Reading Instruction for Adolescents With Mild Disabilities

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Abstract: [...] there have been increased efforts to authentically and frequently include more students with disabilities in the same curricular opportunities afforded their peers without disabilities. [...] students who were already struggling to read were likely to continue that struggle through high school.

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Full Text: Adolescents with mild disabilities whose goals on their individualized education programs (IEPs) indicate increasing their reading level and comprehension skills must receive that specialized instruction. However, special educators focused on students' success on the general education curriculum and progress on high-stakes assessments may perceive competing messages regarding their instructional focus. For example, when special and general educators are co-teaching mathematics, English, science, and social studies, when is the specialized reading instruction delivered? Research has identified effective reading methods for adolescents with mild disabilities; teachers need to be aware of cautions about and conditions for providing adolescents with disabilities the specialized reading instruction stipulated on their IEPs. Content can assist special educators in examining their school's programming and conditions so that they can attend to providing specialized reading instruction for adolescents with mild disabilities.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) mandates that all students be included in states' test results. Consequently, there have been increased efforts to authentically and frequently include more students with disabilities in the same curricular opportunities afforded their peers without disabilities. NCLB seeks to promote equity in assessment for all students because it requires:

* Assessment of each student's progress.
* Public reporting of assessment results.
* Disaggregation of assessment data, enabling scrutiny of results from subgroups of students, including students with mild disabilities.
* Pedagogical actions responsive to students' data.

Students with mild disabilities (e.g., specific learning disability, emotional or behavioral disorders) benefit from NCLB requirements when schools and states use these students' assessment data to increase students' access to the general education curriculum. Prior to NCLB, many school systems and state assessments did not routinely include students with mild disabilities. As a result, these students' exposure to the general education curriculum was usually limited. The students would not be taking the tests; they were not counted. Now, far more attention focuses on students with mild disabilities learning and achieving the general education curriculum. Now, their scores count. The students' progress and performance count even more because their assessment scores influence the scores of both states and individual schools.

Although routinely including students with mild disabilities in assessments taken by their typical peers is a positive move, such participation must occur in a manner that provides students with challenging learning opportunities on the general education curriculum content (Deshler et al., 2004) - and so that students are not left behind in accomplishing goals on their IEPs. That is, students with mild disabilities must continue to receive the specialized services stipulated on their IEPs while also participating and progressing in the general education curriculum.
For example, researchers who examined the content of IEPs for high school students with reading disabilities found that, as students enter the middle and high school years, they were less likely to receive services based on significant reading deficits (Catone & Brady, 2005). Consequently, students who were already struggling to read were likely to continue that struggle through high school. Archer, Gleason, and Vachon (2003) noted that many secondary students' reading levels range from 2.5 to 5.0 grade levels. Clearly, these secondary students would benefit from instruction that focused on increasing their reading levels. Reading level alone, however, does not sufficiently encompass many skills required for academic competence after elementary school. Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) noted that adolescents with strong basic reading skills still required reading instruction that taught them to decode the more complex and discipline-based vocabulary and comprehension representative of both secondary content courses and postsecondary careers.

In this article, we focus on cautions about and conditions under which adolescent students with mild disabilities (e.g., specific learning disability, emotional or behavioral disorder) can make the reading progress stipulated on their IEPs (see box, "Cautions and Conditions"). As students' ability to read increases because of the specialized instruction they receive from special educators, they are more likely to independently access content in their general education classes. In order to contextualize these cautions and conditions, the premise about whether adolescents can be taught how to read and comprehend at higher levels than where they were by the time they entered secondary grades (i.e., middle and high school grades) must be established. Absent this premise, the cautions and conditions we provide lose relevancy and power. Most important, absent establishing this premise means adolescents' potential and capacity to increase independent reading may inadvertently become a foregone conclusion. Establishing the following premise is crucial: Adolescents with mild disabilities have the potential and capacity to increase those skills when they receive the specialized reading instruction stipulated on their IEPs.

Promoting Hw Premiso: Adolescents WHh MIM Disabilities Can Increase Reading Skills

Some researchers have reported that special education students have not benefited as much as anticipated when provided with reading instruction (e.g., Moody, Vaughn, Hughes, & Fischer, 2000). Moody et al. (2000) found that the special educators they studied primarily used whole-group instruction and infrequently provided differentiated instruction. This is not "specialized reading instruction." Sufficient instruction should include research-based practices such as instruction in small interactive groups, questioning that includes both literal and inferential responses, and individualized control of task difficulty so that each student is sufficiently challenged (Morgan, Moni, & Jobling, 2006; Vaughn, Gersten, & Chard, 2000).

Manset-Williamson and Nelson (2005) investigated two groups of middle school students with significant delays in skills essential for reading (e.g., decoding, fluency, comprehension, and language processing). These groups participated in intensive tutorials on comprehension strategy instruction, with one tutorial more explicit than the other. Within a 5-week period, both groups increased decoding and fluency skills comparable to gains expected by typical youngsters in half a year. The group taught using the more explicit comprehension strategy instruction made greater gains.

Additional research has focused on the need for adolescents with mild disabilities to use a variety of reading and comprehension strategies to successfully understand and respond to tasks required in content-area classes (Conley, 2008; Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, & Scammacca, 2008). In the middle and high school grades, students' success in content classes can be dependent on their capacity to learn from content-heavy exposition, or nonfiction materials. These articles, manuals, and textbooks are often more difficult to comprehend because they are laden with minimally related facts and information (cf. Jitendra, DeatlineBuchman, & Szcesniak, 2005; Jitendra et al., 2001; Lovitt & Horton, 1994; van Garderen, 2006). Additionally, students need both literal and inferential comprehension competence. For inferential comprehension instruction, Fritschmann, Deshler, and Schumaker (2007) taught adolescents with learning disabilities and mild intellectual disabilities how to use an inference strategy. Fritschmann and colleagues used
multiple measures to determine the impact of strategy use on the students’ reading performance. On one measure, students increased reading comprehension scores by 2.8 grade levels. The students were initially taught the inference strategy using controlled reading level materials (i.e., content written at their instructional reading level) so that they could focus on acquiring proficiency using the inference strategy without also having to focus on decoding unfamiliar vocabulary. As students’ proficiency with the strategy was established with controlled reading level material, the levels increased. By the end of the research, students had mastered using the inference strategy with grade-level material.

Archer et al. (2003) described success with several strategies designed to increase the decoding skills of adolescents who are struggling readers. Students who can decode multisyllable words are well situated to focus on comprehending what they read rather than struggling with pronouncing the vocabulary. Among the strategies Archer et al. described are teaching students how to decode by finding patterns in words, such as part-by-part decoding instruction (pronunciation); and syllable-type instruction (e.g., patterns in words, such as vowel combinations of ai, oa, ed) combined with morpheme instruction (prefixes, roots, suffixes).

When provided specialized reading instruction, many adolescents with mild disabilities can learn how to read and comprehend at higher and higher order levels. IEPs that stipulate special educators provide specialized reading instruction likely also note that accommodations for reading can be used. For example, when most students in a general education content class are required to read chapters independently to acquire content knowledge and respond to comprehension questions, adolescents with disabilities may use the accommodation of an electronic text to listen to the chapter. The expectation for adolescents with disabilities and their peers is the same: acquire content knowledge and respond to comprehension questions. The accommodation of listening to the content replaces, for the short-term, the long-term need for adolescents to independently access material via reading.

The short-term use of accommodations promotes opportunities for adolescents with disabilities to learn and demonstrate knowledge of content via avenues other than their identified disability in reading. Accommodations (e.g., electronic texts, illustrations) enable students to replace independent reading with a format that still permits access to the content. However, accommodations are not replacements for the specialized reading instruction specified by a student’s IEP.

Four Cautions About Replacing Specialized Instruction With Accommodations

#1: Avoid Replacing All Specialized Reading Instruction With Accommodations

Cavanaugh (2002) noted that reading is one of the most basic activities requiring accommodations for students with disabilities. She described electronic texts and eBooks as commonly needed accommodations. Such accommodations are appropriately used so that the students can access the same curriculum as their peers in a mode other than reading. These accommodations are important to continue, but it is also important to examine what else may be occurring for students. Caution #1 reflects the need to ensure that accommodations do not replace specialized reading instruction. Reasons that can impact outcomes for students with mild disabilities and prohibit learning that is commensurate to their peers include:

* Adolescents who receive accommodations instead of specialized reading instruction may become overly reliant on those materials.
* The students (and school personnel) may circumvent their reading problem instead of facing it and increasing their reading skills.
* At some point, circumvention may be warranted, but only if all stakeholders determine this avenue should be pursued. Accommodations are appropriate in addition to or after specialized reading instruction is provided, but not instead of. Be vigilant that wholehearted decisions to accommodate rather than ameliorate reading problems are not made.

#2: Ensure Opportunities for Achievement Versus Appearance of Access

The physical presence of adolescents with disabilities in general education classrooms may provide the
appearance of access to general education curriculum. Evidence of access must go beyond appearance to include substantive evidence of learning. Stakeholders - including students with disabilities - feel multiple pressures. A primary pressure involves the need to focus intensively and sometimes exclusively on curriculum assessed on high-stakes tests, sometimes to the exclusion of content not assessed on these tests. These pressures result in mixed and sometimes competing priorities for what students with disabilities are taught (which may not be synonymous with what students with disabilities learn) across a school day, semester, or year. For example, some adolescents with disabilities receive curriculum instruction across the school day in general education classrooms, taught by special educators and general educators. These instructional situations are often referred to as co-teaching arrangements or inclusion settings. When reviewing some of these students' schedules, there appears to be no time during the school day when specialized reading instruction occurs. If there is not corresponding IEP content noting the need for specialized reading instruction, such schedules may be appropriate, and are likely meeting the legislative mandate for access to general education curriculum. By physical presence in general education classes, the requirement for adolescents with disabilities to access the general education curriculum may seem achieved. However, it is important to scrutinize at a deeper level to determine whether sufficiently challenging learning of the general education curriculum is also occurring (Deshler et al., 2004).

#3: Avoid Reliance on Programs as Specialized Reading Instruction

Sometimes school systems purchase specific reading programs to be used for adolescents with disabilities. Certainly, the intent of that financial investment is to provide special educators with programs and materials for specialized reading instruction. However, special educators should not rely entirely on any single published reading program for specialized reading instruction. We are not saying that commercial materials should not be used; we are saying specialized reading instruction is more than can be accomplished by one program or material.

Special educators who rely on a single reading program for specialized instruction for all students with disabilities must be attentive that the methods are sufficiently individualized for each student (Dennis, 2008). That is, one published reading program seldom stands alone for each adolescent requiring specialized reading instruction. Published reading programs provide varying amounts of materials and guidance for special educators, and some programs have been designed for adolescents with specific types of reading issues. Certainly, the availability of well-developed programs provides special educators with choices to use as a base for instruction. However, effective special educators also employ responsive decision-making skills when teaching adolescents how to read. No reading programs should be used independent of special educators' diagnostic skills and clinical judgments.

#4: Focus on the Long-Term Need for Students to Read

Despite today's emphasis on state and school assessments, emphasis should not obviate or replace the more valued future outcome that adolescents with disabilities learn how to read before they graduate from high school. For students who need intensive and systematic instruction to increase their reading level, something in the school day must be replaced with that opportunity for those students. Otherwise, the priority on this year's test scores for many students who require specialized reading instruction results in a short-term focus at the expense of the more valued life outcome of learning how to read. For administrators, teachers, parents, and students who realize the high stakes involved in their decision making, each year's educational focus is a conundrum. Yet the reality exists that many students with disabilities have the potential and capacity to learn how to read at higher levels before they graduate from high school. The International Reading Association (2006) noted that after students graduate and pursue undergraduate studies or career opportunities, they need to independently read and comprehend a wide range of reference materials (e.g., technical manuals, print information, complex charts and graphs). Students are expected to judge the credibility of sources, evaluate arguments, develop and defend their own conclusions, and convey
complex information in ways that will either advance scholarship in a discipline or contribute to workplace productivity—skills well beyond the reach of poor readers.

Adolescents with mild disabilities who struggle with reading is not a simple issue, nor is the issue simply about students having basic decoding and comprehension skills. If students with mild disabilities are not taught how to decode multisyllable words or the complexities of comprehension before graduation, they may never reach their potential in careers that require use of technical vocabulary and multiple comprehension skills.

Four Conditions for Specialized Reading instruction

When an adolescent's IEP stipulates the need for instruction that focuses on personal student strengths and needs, federal law requires this instruction. In addition to the four cautions to consider, there are four conditions that must be met to satisfy that this is indeed happening.

#1: Is Specialized Reading Instruction Prioritized/ Not Compromised?

Despite inherent problems in helping students for whom success in the early grades has been minimal, Scammacca et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis of research on struggling adolescent readers provided evidence that students with mild to severe reading problems—whether the student's problems are at the word level or at the text level—can achieve gains when receiving specialized reading instruction. In a classic case of the tail wagging the dog, the major problem is often scheduling. Scheduling frequently poses a challenge in the secondary school. Amidst the pressures for scheduling courses with high-stakes assessment, students' programs often do not reflect a priority for specialized reading instruction (Catone & Brady, 2005).

Nonetheless, adolescents with mild disabilities whose IEPs stipulate specialized reading instruction must receive such instruction. What do students "give up" to receive specialized reading instruction? An elective that they enjoy and with which they experience success? Or a content area, such as science, where school personnel desire intensive instruction and increased achievement on high-stakes assessments? These are not easy decisions to make, and require everyone on the IEP team to focus on the students that adolescents with disabilities need both within and beyond the school year (i.e., beyond each annual IEP review period). The decisions require that the IEP team examine deeply what the purpose of "free and appropriate public education" is, and why the specialized reading instruction noted on the IEP should occur now, during the public education years. Evidence that specialized reading instruction is occurring should be available from sources such as reviewing lesson plans and school-day schedules, observing how the instruction is delivered, and examining data that indicate progress is occurring.

Specialized instruction should take place in a class that meets on a consistently recurring schedule, such as an English class, a study skills period, or a special education reading class. The student's IEP should specify when, where, and how frequently the specialized instruction occurs. Sometimes the place is noted as general education classrooms. Consider a scenario in which an adolescent with learning disabilities receives English instruction from co-teachers, and that student's IEP stipulates that (a) specialized reading instruction occurs in the co-taught English class and (b) accommodations for the student's low reading level should also be used. When the co-teachers use accommodations, such as listening to literature accessed technologically (e.g., digital texts), accommodations are appropriately used as a way the student accesses the general education curriculum by circumventing the reading disability. However, if accommodations are always or often used, and there is infrequent or limited time to provide the reading instruction mandated on the student's IEP, then the condition of sufficient time for specialized reading instruction is not occurring for that student.

Scenarios like the above are complex because co-planning to design and deliver accommodations is desirable. All students benefit when special and general educators collaborate to produce varied and diverse instructional experiences. We are not suggesting that effective co-planning and co-teaching experiences decrease for adolescents whose IEPs specify that specialized reading instruction occur. Nor are we saying that appropriate use of accommodations, as noted" on students' IEPs, should be minimized or eliminated. We continue to ask when, during the school day, is the specialized reading instruction occurring?
#2: Are Pedagogies Matched to Students' Needs?

Inarguably, instruction crafted for a specific secondary student is the most important aspect of an IEP; this condition focuses on ensuring that pedagogy matches the student's needs for level and methods of instruction. Using components of the reading process that the National Reading Panel (2000) identified as essential for effective early reading instruction, Roberts and colleagues (2008) reconfigured the areas into categories more specific to adolescents' needs: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation.

**Word Study.** Instruction in identifying unknown words is similar to the decoding strategies identified by Archer et al. (2003), such as segmenting words into more familiar parts, as well as teaching students how to decode using predictable patterns and learning irregular words.

**Fluency.** Roberts et al. (2008) noted the importance of students' rapid recognition of words, and identified repeated readings of passages with targeted vocabulary words (versus repeatedly reading passages that contain unfamiliar and too difficult terms) as a useful practice, especially when combined with word study and comprehension.

**Vocabulary.** Vocabulary instruction includes directly teaching the contentarea vocabulary terms and definitions (e.g., mitochondria), such as those infrequently encountered in social studies, science, and other content-area classes. It also includes teaching terms that students encounter more frequently (e.g., consequently, furthermore) across a variety of contexts and content areas.

**Comprehension.** Instruction in this area includes teaching students how to answer literal and inferential questions and how to self-regulate, or use metacognitive strategies that enable them to "figure out and fix it" when they realize they are not understanding what they are reading. Students' comprehension increases when they have sufficient prior knowledge about the content, so there are implications for providing and synthesizing background information.

**Motivation.** When adolescents have struggled many years as low-readers or nonreaders, motivation plays an important role. Guthrie and Davis (2003) identified several motivational techniques to use with older students, such as teaching from a range of interesting materials, providing reading choices, focusing on real-world situations, teaching students strategies for reading and understanding, and implementing group or team activities that promote positive interdependence toward reading goals.

Regardless of a student's particular difficulties, intervention methods vary, and effective techniques and strategies do not require extensive expense for materials. Research in fluency, for example, suggests an important link to comprehension (Devault & Joseph, 2004; Dudley, 2005; Rasinski et al., 2005). Teachers can readily find short radio-type scripts (more familiarly known as Readers Theatre scripts) on the Internet or develop their own from content materials; these are useful for improving fluency at all age levels through adult (Powell-Brown, 2006). Table 1 provides a guide for categorizing a student's area of need, responsive interventions, and exemplars of interventions found to be effective in research and in practice (cf. Boardman et al., 2008; Jitendra, Edwards, Sacks, & Jacobson, 2004; Scammacca et al., 2007).

#3: Do Data Support Effectiveness or Needed Change of Pedagogy?

Information on the student's IEP provides initial diagnostic information regarding areas of need, such as noting reading level, including vocabulary development and comprehension. Updating diagnostic information regularly is important because often next year's IEP is developed months before this year's IEP is scheduled to end. Diagnostic information should provide special educators with essential information from which to begin instruction:

* **Specific skills:** the student knows (e.g., decoding content vocabulary, comprehension of literal and inferential questions when both recalling and locating information, fluency in oral reading).
* **Analysis of skills the student needs to learn** (e.g., oral reading miscue patterns, types of comprehension questions answered at instructional reading level).
* **Observation of student response** when asked to complete tasks that are too easy, on target, and too difficult
for the student (e.g., shows frustration, willing to risk-take, gives up).

* Prior knowledge of subject matter to be studied (e.g., content-area texts the student is most likely to
  independently read and understand based on background experience, content-area texts the student will most
  likely need accommodations for, and content within the text that can be prioritized and targeted for the
  specialized reading instruction).

* Attitude toward completion of assignments requiring reading and writing.

As instruction progresses, ongoing collection of data provides evidence that a student is learning how to
independently increase access to content information and life literacy skills. Data must support the effectiveness
of methods and materials used or alert special educators that revisions or refinements are necessary. Data can
be informal (e.g., curriculum-based assessments, CBAs, or informal reading inventories, IRIs). For example,
Dudley (2005) described curriculum-based measurement as a progress-monitoring technique for reading
fluency; students’ rate of reading vocabulary or passages is timed for quantity of words correctly read in 1
minute and graphed, and the data are used to determine whether each student is making satisfactory progress.
Ticha, Espin, and Wayman (2009) recently found that 3-minute maze-selection measures were more sensitive
over time than 1-minute reading-aloud measures for adolescents, so there are also implications for ensuring
valid and reliable measures are used, and for staying abreast of research emerging for evidence-based
practices.

Multiple benefits for teachers and students can occur by using and sharing the data. For example, Sutherland
and Snyder (2007) found that when students with emotional or behavioral disorders were taught to self-graph
their reading data, their fluency increased and disruptive classroom behavior decreased. Also, when data
indicate progress is not occurring as desired, then special educators change something (e.g., change the
教學 methods, consider whether the material's level is too complex, reteach guided by error patterns that
emerge) in response to those data.

Informal formative data about how well students are reading and comprehending what they read can be
gathered in a variety of ways to document students’ progress. Moreover, analyzing students' patterns of
problem areas is instructive for reteaching or refocusing decisions for lesson planning. Dennis (2008) notes that,absent data, teachers may make erroneous instructional decisions that are not individualized and specific to
each student.

IRIs are typically available commercially and appropriate for periodic assessment, such as annually or several
times a year; however, the skills assessed, such as word recognition and strengths and needs in the areas of
oral and silent reading and listening comprehension, can be noted on an observational checklist. This checklist
provides special educators with frequent, diligent, and data-driven observations of the students’ reading and
oral and written responding to make decisions for instruction.

#4: Do Student Reading Needs Focus on Instruction 'for Success in Both Current Academic Coursework and
Later Life?

Crucial to student success is ensuring that specialized reading instruction focuses firmly on skills and strategies
students with mild disabilities need to independently succeed in current content-area classes as well as
prospective careers and life experiences. Some adolescents are keenly aware, and have been for some time,
that they are not able to read and comprehend as well as their peers. Allington (2002) wrote that not only do
many teachers grades 5 to 12 rely on a single text from which they instruct, but research "shows that many
classrooms use textbooks written 2 or more years above the average grade levels of their students" (p. 17).

Consequently, some students may already feel defeated when their middle and high school special educators
try to teach them how to read. Feeling defeated can have deleterious effects because particularly at these grade
levels, adolescents make decisions about staying in or dropping out of school (Balianz, Herzog, & Mac Iver,
2007). Nonetheless, prioritizing specialized reading instruction still means finding time to schedule it during the
school day.
With time to increase students’ reading skills at a premium, special educators seek to not only motivate students’ investment in learning to read, but also do so while being persistent, positive, and proactive in providing responsive and individualized instruction - difficult tasks indeed! When adolescents’ previous instructional reading experiences have not been successful, they may be predisposed to predictions of repeated failures. However, the literature is replete with examples of inspired instruction. In a representative example, Richardson (2000) explained how material could be read aloud to motivate older students and introduce them to stimulating activities. Her chapter on readalouds for specific populations focuses on essays by author Barbara Kingsolver and The Butcher’s Theater (Kellerman, 1989), a novel in which one detective has a physical disability and another struggles with words because of dyslexia. Ambe (2007) described how reluctant adolescent readers could become more confident and skilled by participating in a Literacy Club. Many techniques she described for motivating reluctant readers are research-based interventions (cf. Swanson, 1999), such as selecting engaging and relevant activities to build prior knowledge of upcoming topics in content classes, using explicit instruction to teach vocabulary terms, and asking questions that promote higher-level thinking skills. Powell-Brown (2006) concurred that literature circles or book clubs that feature high-interest topics could be used to engage reluctant readers, as well as to provide choices of characters and situations with which adolescents can identify. Nokes, Dole, and Hacker (2007) stressed the use of multiple texts and concluded, "Rarely, if ever, is there a single source- such as the traditional history textbook - that concisely encapsulates the complex issues facing our society" (p. 503). In addition, multiple books on the same topic provide multiple levels of reading difficulty and styles of presentation and meet multiple needs. Table 2 identifies and describes research-based instructional behaviors that effective special educators use to ensure that specialized reading instruction occurs (cf. Fritschmann et al., 2007; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Roberts et al., 2008; Swanson, 1999); Table 3 provides examples and nonexamples of teacher behaviors of specialized reading instruction.

Final Thoughts

Adolescents with mild disabilities can learn to read and comprehend at higher levels when they receive individualized and intensive instruction (Archer et al., 2003; Houge, Geier, & Peyton, 2008; Mastropieri, Scuggs, & Graetz, 2003). Where and when the specialized reading instruction occurs is determined by the IEP team. Ensuring that such instruction occurs can be the responsibility of each person, including the student, on the IEP team. Sometimes the primary reason students have IEPs - because of their low reading skills - is overlooked because of the quest to include adolescents with disabilities in general education classrooms, to provide access to general education curriculum, and to expose them to content found on high-stakes assessments. When students with mild disabilities do not receive specialized reading instruction, this is a serious omission that must be identified and corrected by ensuring there is sufficient time during the school day for the instruction. Roberts et al. (2008) noted that it is not too late, in middle and high school grades, for adolescents with mild disabilities to benefit from intensive and specialized reading instruction. However, the intensity and amount of reading instruction currently provided for adolescents with mild disabilities is insufficient.

If adolescents with mild disabilities are not learning how to read at higher levels during their public school years, then when will such instruction occur? We contend that the time is now for attending to such instruction. If not now, students who have the potential to read at higher levels will miss critical opportunities to realize their capacity during the crucial formative years.

Sidebar

Cautions and Conditions

Cautions About Specialized Reading Instruction

#1: Avoid replacing all specialized reading instruction with accommodations.

#2: Ensure opportunities for achievement versus appearance of access.
#3: Avoid reliance on programs as specialized reading instruction.
#4: Focus on the long-term need for students to read.

Conditions for Specialized Reading Instruction
#1: Is specialized reading instruction prioritized, not compromised?
#2: Are pedagogies matched to students’ needs?
#3: Do data support effectiveness or needed change of pedagogy?
#4: Do student reading needs focus on instruction for success in both current and academic coursework and later life?

Sidebar

In the middle and high school grades, students' success in content classes can be dependent on their capacity to learn from content-heavy exposition, or nonfiction, materials.

Sidebar

Specialized instruction should take place in a class that meets on a consistently recurring schedule, such as an English class, a study skills period, or a special education reading class.

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