

ELs with disabilities may need accommodations for instruction and assessment. Decisions about whether to use accommodations, and what accommodations to use, should be made on an individual student basis and consider each student’s needs and past and present level of performance. Accommodations should also be written in the IEP.

“DOS” AND “DON’TS” WHEN SELECTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The following table lists common “dos” and “don’ts” for selecting appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. This table is from the Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodation for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities, produced by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students. According to this document, “the guidance in the manual pertains to students with disabilities who participate in large-scale assessments and the instruction they receive.” This list, while generic to all students with disabilities, can be adapted for ELs based on SEA and LEA policies and requirements.

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| Do ...make accommodation decisions based on individualized needs. | Don’t ...make accommodations decisions based on whatever is easiest to do (e.g., preferential seating). |
| Do ...select accommodations that reduce the effect of the disability to access instruction and demonstrate learning. | Don’t ...select accommodations unrelated to documented student learning needs or are intended to give students an unfair advantage. |
| Do ...be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP or 504 plans. | Don’t ...select accommodations that has not been documented on the IEP or 504 plans. |
| Do ...be familiar with the types of accommodations that can be used as both instructional and assessment accommodations. | Don’t ...assume that all instructional accommodations are appropriate for use on assessments. |
| Do ...be specific about the “Where, When, Who, and How” of providing accommodations. | Don’t ...simply indicate an accommodation will be provided “as appropriate” or “as necessary.” |
| Do ...refer to state accommodations policies and understand implications of selections. | Don’t ...check every accommodation possible on a checklist simply to be “safe.” |
| Do ...evaluate accommodations used by the student. | Don’t ...assume the same accommodations remain appropriate year after year. |
| Do ...get input about accommodations from teachers, parents, and students, and use it to make decisions at IEP team or 504 planning committee meetings. | Don’t ...make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations alone. |
| Do ...provide accommodations for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction. | Don’t ...provide an assessment accommodation for the first time on the day of a test |
| Do ...select accommodations based on specific individual needs in each content area. | Don’t ...assume certain accommodations, such as extra time, are appropriate for every student in every content area. |

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers. (2011). Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate the use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/accommodations_manual.asp