

BEST PRACTICES:

Top 10 List for Making Earth & Space Science Materials Accessible



1. Always remember person first and disability second. Instead of “blind person” use “a person who is blind.”
2. Speak directly to the person with the disability, not to their caregiver or companion.
3. Work with and consult school district teacher of blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, orthopedically impaired, etc.
4. For each activity create a “helpful hints” / “teacher tips”/ “suggested modifications”.
 - Provide vocabulary list and sort by grade level.
 - Provide handouts to take home for reinforcement.
 - Have assigned tasks for students (i.e. “role play” – recorder, cheerleader, collector, presenter, etc.).
 - Safety is a big issue. Make sure objects used in activities aren’t dangerous for students.
5. Remember disabilities with a behavioral condition. Activities and directions should be short so as not to lose short attention spans. Don’t assume too much prior knowledge – people can get lost in the content.
6. Use simple, sans serif fonts and high contrast presentation media. Examples of sans serif include: Verdana, Tahoma, and Arial.
7. Always include text descriptions with HTML graphic objects. Closed captioning, descriptive video, sign language video.
8. For people with motor difficulties: increase the size of the material used, ask the person if help is needed before offering it, and provide extra time if needed.
9. For people with visual impairments: written directions can be pre-recorded on tapes, avoid small text on presentation boards, and make activities tactile. Provide text and PDF documents on-line. Enlarge text and charts.
10. For people with auditory impairments: make sure to repeat oral directions, speak facing the group, and write out speeches, directions, and dialogs ahead of time.