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Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities within the Library Setting

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Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities within the Library Setting

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Abstract

The purpose of this action research study was to examine strategies to adapt and augment the curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting.

The researcher chose to look at accommodations of library lessons for fourth grade students within her own library instruction. This methodology was selected based upon the researcher's interests and previous experience in teaching students with learning disabilities. The researcher developed lesson plans targeted at library skills within the general education setting and worked to include accommodations and augmentations for students with learning disabilities in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans. Participants included this researcher, one special education teacher, one building principal and the district director of special education services.

The researcher interviewed participants about accommodations and instruction. She also kept field notes about student observation and her instruction during four 40-minute sessions.

The researcher found that throughout the four lessons, students with learning disabilities, as well as students identified as English Language Learners, benefited from the accommodations provided by the teacher librarian. The result showed students of all academic levels learned the same research skills at their own comfort level. The researcher also found that in order to most effectively incorporate student accommodations for library skill lessons, collaborative planning sessions with the special education teacher were crucial. Throughout the lesson, each time an accommodation was used by a student, a tally was noted next to that accommodation on the lesson plan. The researcher found this system to be the most effective means of documentation.

The district schedule made it possible for general education and special education teachers to utilize 40 minutes per week for collaborative planning, though no time is set aside for specialist teachers (including teacher librarians) and special education teachers to collaborate. All interviewees concluded that expectations for achievement were the same for all students, regardless of academic ability. Results from standardized tests were used by this school to gauge student success, and teachers use both formal and informal assessments as data to show performance. Accommodations, acquired from a student's Individualized Educational Plan or Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol strategies, can be used for skills and objectives in all learning environments. Accommodations for student learning should be incorporated into the library curriculum, and finding time to collaborate with special education teachers must be a priority to ensure student success. Documentation of student accommodations can take place as both teaching and learning are occurring throughout the lesson. Future practice will include continual collaboration with the teacher librarian and special education teacher as well as accommodations that can be utilized to promote success for high achieving students.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES WITHIN
THE LIBRARY SETTING**

**A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of School Library Studies
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**by
Alicia J. Patten
November 2011**

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has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this action research study was to examine strategies to adapt and augment the curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting.

The researcher chose to look at accommodations of library lessons for fourth grade students within her own library instruction. This methodology was selected based upon the researcher's interests and previous experience in teaching students with learning disabilities. The researcher developed lesson plans targeted at library skills within the general education setting and worked to include accommodations and augmentations for students with learning disabilities in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans. Participants included this researcher, one special education teacher, one building principal and the district director of special education services.

The researcher interviewed participants about accommodations and instruction. She also kept field notes about student observation and her instruction during four 40-minute sessions.

The researcher found that throughout the four lessons, students with learning disabilities, as well as students identified as English Language Learners, benefited from the accommodations provided by the teacher librarian. The result showed students of all academic levels learned the same research skills at their own comfort level. The researcher also found that in order to most effectively incorporate student accommodations for library skill lessons, collaborative planning sessions with the special education teacher were crucial. Throughout the lesson, each time an accommodation was used by a student, a tally was noted next to that accommodation on the lesson plan. The researcher found this system to be the most effective means of documentation.

The district schedule made it possible for general education and special education teachers to utilize 40 minutes per week for collaborative planning, though no time is set aside for specialist teachers (including teacher librarians) and special education teachers to collaborate. All interviewees concluded that expectations for achievement were the same for all students, regardless of academic ability. Results from standardized tests were used by this school to gauge student success, and teachers use both formal and informal assessments as data to show performance. Accommodations, acquired from a student's Individualized Educational Plan or Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol strategies, can be used for skills and objectives in all learning environments. Accommodations for student learning should be incorporated into the library curriculum, and finding time to collaborate with special education teachers must be a priority to ensure student success. Documentation of student accommodations can take place as both teaching and learning are occurring throughout the lesson. Future practice will include continual collaboration with the teacher librarian and special education teacher as well as accommodations that can be utilized to promote success for high achieving students.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Classrooms full of students come to the library for their weekly library skill lesson. Students enter the room with a wide range of abilities. Many students are able to complete tasks independently. A few students who have been integrated into the classroom are unable to complete the tasks at grade level. They are discouraged, and unable to complete tasks similar to their grade level peers.

Justification

Many students with special needs are all too familiar with the aforementioned scenario. In 2006, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reported 6.6 million children and youths with disabilities being served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2007). Students of all levels and abilities are represented within the library. Library skills are essential for student learning and should be modified to fit the needs of all learners. The American Association of School Librarians established learning standards that students must possess in order to find success in our information-rich society (AASL, 2009). Though a demand to teach all students these standards is documented, the notion of creating adaptations to accommodate students with special needs is not included. The responsibility to make all materials accessible for students with learning disabilities is one of the core responsibilities of the teacher librarian (Guild, 2008). This research will address the need for accommodations within the library curriculum to ensure the success of students from all academic levels.

The researcher's interest in special needs accommodations originates from her previous work as a teacher of special needs. The researcher is aware of an increase in

inclusive education throughout schools. A core requirement by the federal law leading educational services for students with disabilities mandates that students with disabilities are able to gain access and opportunities for growth within the general education curriculum (Lee, 2010).

Deficiencies

School libraries have a direct impact on student achievement and achieving high-standardized test scores (Lance, 1994). Studies also show the collaboration between teacher librarians and special education teachers can enhance student learning (Lee, 2010).

Minimal research has been conducted to closely look at strategies to aid students learning for students with learning disabilities within the library setting. Previous studies note the need for collaboration among teachers and the importance of access to library materials for students of all abilities, but no study gives specific examples for differentiated instruction.

Significance

The school library provides a positive impact on student achievement (Lange, 2004). Students with learning disabilities can benefit from curriculum modifications and from the collaboration between the teacher librarian and special education teacher (Lee, 2010).

Problem Statement

Some library skills may not be accompanied by accommodations to ensure student success for all.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this action research is to examine strategies to adapt and augment the school library curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting.

Research Questions

1. In what ways might this researcher as the teacher librarian use accommodations within library skill lesson plans to fit the needs of students with learning disabilities?
2. In what ways might accommodations best be implemented?

Definitions

Accommodations - Support provided for students to receive education within the Least Restrictive Environment. (Jones, et al., 2010)

Learning Disability - The National Center for Learning Disabilities defines a learning disability as a neurological disorder that can make it difficult to acquire certain academic and social skills. Categories include oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, and mathematics problem solving. (U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

Assumptions

The researcher assumes some elementary school teacher librarians currently do not implement accommodations for students with special needs.

Limitations

Accommodations, lesson plans, and materials created will be based on the needs of students within one specific elementary school. All materials created may not be adequate for other schools.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research reviewed for this study falls into three main categories: importance of school libraries, inclusive education for school libraries, and teacher librarian/special education teacher collaboration.

Importance of School Libraries

Lance's (1994) study on academic achievement and the impact from school library media studies provided a technical look at high achieving standardized test scores in relation to well maintained, and sufficiently supported, libraries. The study also showed that students at schools with more than sufficient materials within their library achieved above-proficient test scores regardless of the community's socioeconomic status.

Lance (1994) discovered findings that related academic achievement and the school library. Though many districts studied had varied levels of education and income, Lance concluded that students with access to well funded media centers achieved high reading test scores after accounting for the economical status of their community or the educational achievements of parents and community members. He found that the school librarian's role in acquiring funding and collection development were key factors in student success. By simply having the school librarian take an instructional role, students achieved high success as measured by standardized test scores.

Inclusive Instruction

The importance of the role a teacher librarian can play, in addition to a well-funded library, is clear; Murray (2000) asserts the need to serve all students, including those with special educational needs.

She stated, “The impact of the integration and more recently the inclusion movement on most school systems means that more disabled students are attending mainstream schools” (p. 5). Murray made the concept of achieving confidence and a positive self-esteem outlook for students with disabilities a priority. Various strategies included student collaboration, creating a welcoming environment for all patrons, and opportunities for students with disabilities to display the knowledge they have learned and access to information literacy skills.

Murray (2000) also found the library can be a place where students, regardless of educational needs, can independently function with the added assistance of the special education teacher or aide. Therefore, teacher librarians have set the precedent to help all students. When students with learning disabilities need assistance, they are able to ask and receive help in the same way as other students. This is an important message, and according to Murray’s study, will most likely transfer to the public library setting as well. In conclusion, Murray stated that libraries with positive local management and support coupled with successful communication skills were able to better serve individuals with disabilities.

In a similar study by Koulikourdi (2008), the use of the library by patrons with a wide range of abilities was evident. Koulikourdi explored the idea that librarians were unaware of the strategies to help all library users, and schools educating future librarians

did not specialize in this area of expertise. Throughout this study, the findings showed that few library staff members have been educated to assist and interact with patrons of special needs. While schools and universities have attested the importance of this new learning, when looking at the curriculum, it was noted that the information has been taught in limited form. According to Koulikourdi, including issues surrounding patrons with special needs into the university library curriculum should be done to comply with an ethical responsibility and rather than avoid potential lawsuits.

Teacher librarians must be aware of the needs of students with special needs and be ready to help provide accommodations within the library setting. Lee (2010) examined research to determine the impact of curriculum modifications for students with disabilities. High school students with learning disabilities along with classroom teachers were observed. Of the teachers observed, none had extensive education experience with students of special needs. Most of their education occurred during their undergraduate work, or by way of an in-service provided by the school district. More than half of the teachers showed more than weekly collaboration with the special education teachers.

During general education classes, 45 students were observed with approximately 30 minutes dedicated to each student. The results from the study showed that when curriculum modifications were in place, students were more often on task and producing correct responses. Teachers were also noted to have fewer behavior management issues when curriculum modifications were in place.

Curriculum modifications and strategies to promote success within the general education curriculum have been shown to be successful. In another study by Lee et al., (2006), specific strategies to assist student with special needs are noted. Graphic

organizers, charts or graphs to assist in the organization of information have been beneficial for students to arrange newly learned and previously learned information. These tools can be used individually by a student or can accommodate to be used as a large group. Though some studies researched by Lee et al. found graphic organizers to be potentially threatening to academic learning, specific graphic organizers used to explain content in advance and provided a focus have proved to aid in student comprehension.

Lee et al. (2006) also explored the idea of student goal-setting. Goal setting can be viewed at from varied levels. The basic goal-setting component included students identifying a goal to enhance performance at the start of a new lesson or area of learning. Goals can also be specific to include strategies that are structured such as sequencing or note taking. Lee et al. (2006) concluded that students with learning disabilities were more successful when they were taught strategies, for which they are accountable themselves rather than changing the curriculum to meet the needs of the students.

Ryndak (2010) focused on two students with significant learning disabilities. Their academic performances were compared, and both received their education in two different settings. Melinda received her middle school education in a self-contained environment, however she moved to an inclusive environment in high school. Phillip received his middle school and high school education within a self-contained setting. Throughout Melinda's education, she often tried to emulate non-disabled peers, and she was able to learn appropriate behaviors and many social skills. She gleaned many social and life skills from placement in an inclusive environment. Phillip received his education in a self-contained learning environment. In this learning environment he was eager to assist, friendly and compliant. As the research stated, after high school, both Melinda and

Phillip, though both spent time in a self – contained environment, had major social differences. Melinda had learned many life skills from her inclusive environment, which assisted her across various settings. Though Phillip had gained some support in his adulthood, he lacked many social and life skills. Although this small study can not be generalized Ryndak (2010) questioned if additional supports and skills could have been acquired through an inclusive environment.

Teacher Collaboration

Many of the previous studies indicate a need for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with learning disabilities. Studies also have shown teacher librarians lack knowledge in the area of special education. Special education teachers and teacher librarians are a natural collaborative force to assist students in progression of library skills.

Jones (2010) learned that special education students use the media center in a variety of situations. All students deserve a place within the library, regardless of ability. Such access may include technological resources, leveled reading materials suitable for individual reading levels, or additional resources to support active learning.

To create a collaborative environment, Jones (2010) suggested teacher librarians should first examine themselves. By acknowledging their own skills and information, they are then able to determine what areas they will need most assistance from their collaborative partners. It is also important to know the students with whom they will be working. While special education teachers have specific information about the academic areas of students, teacher librarians have information in regard to student interests and strategies used to complete projects within the library setting.

Jones noted that libraries are often the first place within a school to be equipped with new technology. Special education rooms often are further down the list. The partnership between the teacher librarian and special education teacher can provide student success through technology.

Murray (2002) studied the partnership between special education teachers and teacher librarians and the effect upon students with disabilities. This study focused on primary and secondary schools in Australia. In the schools chosen for the study, information from each school, specifically communication between the library and special education staff, was noted.

Murray (2002) noted that in order for a successful library program to serve the needs of multiple students, financial and administrative support must be in place. The school culture as a whole must also reflect this.

Summary

School libraries can provide a positive impact on student achievement (Lance, 2004). The collaboration between teacher librarians and special education teachers with the use of curriculum modifications can enhance student learning for individuals with learning disabilities (Lee, 2010). The current research will investigate the use of curriculum modifications and teacher collaboration within the library setting in one elementary school in the state of Iowa.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Teacher librarians and special education teachers may not understand the impact library skills have on students learning and the importance of incorporating accommodations within the library setting for students with learning disabilities. The purpose of this action research was to examine strategies to adapt and augment the curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting. The researcher focused on the following questions:

1. In what ways might this researcher, as the teacher librarian, use accommodations within the library skill lesson plans to fit the needs to students with learning disabilities?
2. In what ways might accommodations best be implemented?

Research Design

The researcher examined accommodations in library skill lessons for fourth grade students in her own library. Accommodating special needs students in the library aligned with the researcher's previous experience teaching students with learning disabilities. Creswell (2008) describes action research as a comprehensive look at an activity based on extensive data collection. The researcher developed lesson plans targeted at library skills within the general education setting and worked to include accommodations and augmentations for students with learning disabilities in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans.

Participants

This study is action research looking at the library skill lesson plans for fourth grade students, accommodations and augmentations provided, and lesson delivery of the researcher. Interviews and collaboration with one special education teacher, one building principal and the district director of special education services were included.

Procedure for Data Collection

This research includes three types of data: field notes from practice, lesson plans, and interviews. After securing IRB approval for this study and gaining consent of the participants, the researcher met individually with the building principal, special education teacher, and the District Director of Special Education Services to explain the study, iterate the importance of student accommodations, and interview these participants. Following the interviews, the researcher collaborated with the special education teacher to ensure specific accommodations for students were implemented.

The researcher maintained field notes about her individual practice using a journal format (See Appendix A). The researcher kept field notes about four 40-minute class sessions during a two-week period preceding, during and following the lesson. These notes included grade level skill and student observation, particularly those the researcher thought could impact accommodations for the targeted lesson.

Creswell (2008) notes that multiple observations are necessary for maintaining field notes. Since the researcher is in her own library setting and sees this class weekly, she is familiar with the students, however the field notes were kept over a four week time frame to allow her to practice becoming familiar using the field notes format (Appendix A). The researcher recorded multiple instructional notes and observations for each date.

For example, during the first week, the researcher described all instructional strategies and activities in the second column. For each strategy or activity described, the researcher described her observations of the students, including what the student was doing during the lesson, any comments or questions the student might have had concerning the lesson, and any follow up conversation the researcher had with the student afterwards, along with the student's response. Finally, the researcher reflected about the instruction and the observation of the student in the fourth column. Creswell suggests researchers note "insights, hunches, and themes" (p. 224) in reflective notes.

Lesson plans were also used as a data point in this action research study. Appendix B is the lesson plan for this research study. This lesson plan took four 40-minute class periods. Prior to this lesson, students learned how to access information using the Dewey Decimal System, EBSCO, and World Book Online.

The targeted lesson plan is for fourth grade students to identify a well-known Iowan from the past or present who shows characteristics of a hero or heroine. Once students identified their hero or heroine, they researched information about this Iowan and supported why this person should be described as a hero. Posters were created to showcase information and were put on display for other students to see.

Interviews were conducted one-on-one with the principal, special education teacher, and district director of special education (see Appendix D). One interview was conducted with the principal and special education teacher. Two interviews with the district director of special education were conducted. According to Creswell (2008), interviews for a qualitative study should be open ended. The researcher created questions to allow participants to share their perspectives without any constraint of the researcher's

perspective. For example, the researcher asked participants to share their expectations for curriculum for students with learning disabilities. Creswell also notes it may be necessary to use “probes” or subquestions as needed to elicit more information for clarifications.

Subquestions the researcher used were: 1. Can you give me a specific example of a student expectation? 2. Tell me about discussions you have had with teachers surrounding this topic. 3. Could you explain about the data more? The researcher did not record the interviews, however she took detailed notes throughout the interviews and rewrote the notes immediately following the interviews so as best to capture the highest level of detail.

The library lesson was carried out, and the researcher followed up with a second interview with the director of special education services. This interview focused on the delivery of the lesson, outcome of accommodations used, and suggestions for follow up. The interviews focused on creating accommodations within the general education setting for students with learning disabilities.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized field notes about her own practice; lesson plans with end of lesson self-reflection about the use of accommodations; and notes from interviews conducted with school principal, special education teacher, and district director of special education.

After completion of interviews, the researcher coded the data in correspondence with commonalities and differences. The researcher read and organized information for analysis. Creswell (2008) explains that coding data is necessary for qualitative data analysis. He states, “Coding is a process of segmenting and labeling text to form

descriptions and broad themes in the data” (p. 251). The researcher identified common threads relating to student expectations, collaboration, and accommodations. Data from field notes and reflections were coded with common themes, or “similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database” (p. 256). For example, two codes aggregated from interviews included “same expectations” and “accommodations when in general education.”

The researcher interpreted the coded data by rereading responses to questions asked to each participant during each interview. Tables were created (see Table 1) to identify commonalities and differences among the responses. Creswell (2008) notes, “Interpretation involves extending the analysis by raising questions, connecting findings to personal experiences, seeking the advice of critical friends, and contextualizing the findings in literature and theory” (p. 601).

An action plan was created using specific findings from this study. This plan includes specific learning strategies, which can be used to support students with learning disabilities within the library setting.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this action research study was to examine strategies to adapt and augment the school library curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting. The researcher focused on the following questions:

1. In what ways might this researcher, as the teacher librarian, use accommodations within the library skill lesson plans to fit the needs to students with learning disabilities?
2. In what ways might accommodations best be implemented?

The researcher chose to look at accommodations of library skill lessons for fourth grade students within her own library instruction. This methodology was selected based upon the researcher's interests and experience teaching students with learning disabilities. The researcher developed lesson plans targeted at library skills within the general education setting and included accommodations and augmentations for students with learning disabilities in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans (IEP).

The fourth grade library class consisted of 21 students, with four students identified with reading goals within their IEP's; and two students were identified as English Language Learning students (these students did not have IEP's). The lesson plan (see Appendix B) required students to identify a famous Iowan and use research skills and tools within the library to determine what could qualify this person as a hero or heroine.

Interview Data

Table 1 shows summarized responses to curricular expectations currently in place for students with learning disabilities.

Table 1

Question One: What curricular expectations are in place for students with learning disabilities?

Special Education Teacher	The same standards and benchmarks are expected for students with learning disabilities as general education students.
Principal	Curricular expectations are consistent for all students.
District Director of Special Education	Expectations are no different for students in general education as they are for students with learning disabilities.
Similarities, Differences	All interviewees concluded that expectations are the same for all students, regardless of academic ability.

All interview participants concluded that expectations for all students, regardless of learning ability, are the same and are based upon the standards and benchmarks currently in place district wide. Student accommodations are designed to allow students with learning disabilities to have access to the general education curriculum. Within the school district, many students identified as students with learning disabilities are learning alongside grade level peers in general education classrooms. The special education teacher interviewed revealed it is important for students to learn what is expected of them within their current grade level, but that student success would not be possible without accommodations in place.

Table 2 shows summarized responses to opportunities for teacher collaboration to meet the needs of students.

Table 2

Question Two: How does the school allow for teachers to collaborate ensuring the learning needs of all students are being met?

Special Education Teacher	General education and special education teachers collaborate to create student IEP goals. Input from specialists is included.
Principal	Collaboration time between general education and special education teachers is built into the schedule three times per 12-day cycle and also provided on early various dismissal days. Time to allow for collaboration among teachers, special education teacher and specialists need to increase.
District Director of Special Education	Collaboration time is set-aside for teachers on a weekly basis.
Similarities, Differences	Collaboration time is set aside for general education and special education teachers. However, specialist teachers (including teacher librarians) must initiate collaboration on their own.

All participants concluded that collaboration time was set-aside on a weekly basis for general education teachers and special education teachers. However, specialists (including the teacher librarian, art, music and PE teachers) were not included in scheduling collaboration time. The special education teacher explained that it was her responsibility to schedule time outside of the school day when collaboration with specialist teachers is desired. Often times these occurrences took place via e-mail. The principal explained that all teachers are important components of a students' education, and time set-aside for all teachers to collaborate was something that will be addressed for the upcoming school year.

Table 3 shows summarized responses to type of data used to share student success.

Table 3

Question Three: What types of data can you share which addresses success from students with learning disabilities?

Special Education Teacher	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, MAP testing, ITBS results, IEP goals/charts, student participation, anecdotal records, teacher observations
Principal	Standardized test scores as well as progress monitoring data for IEP's purposes and informal data from teachers are used to measure success.
District Director of Special Education	ITBS results, MAP testing (third grade and up only), Envisions Math data, IEP goals and graphs, IRI score (Individual Reading Inventory)
Similarities, Differences	Results from standardized tests are used by the school to gauge student success, and teachers use both formal and informal assessments as data to show performance.

According to each interviewee, types of data used to share successes from students with learning disabilities are no different than types of data used for general education students. Standardized test scores including Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) are used to show growth between grade levels. Other types of data, including informal teacher assessments, are also used to show student successes. Anecdotal records and teacher observations are examples of informal assessments. While looking at this data, all interviewees acknowledged teacher librarians play a role in preparing students for assessments including ITBS, MAP and Individual Reading Inventory (IRI) testing.

Table 4 shows summarized responses to specific accommodations, which can be used with students in the library setting.

Table 4

Question Four: What specific accommodations can be used in the library setting?

Special Education Teacher	Books at student's reading level and interests, clear expectations of assignments, read aloud, use of group and partner projects, repeat directions, checks for understanding, use of written or picture directions.
Principal	All accommodations, which are needed for student success, can be used in the library setting to assist student learning.
District Director of Special Education	Accommodations created for a student's IEP can be used in all subject areas and in all learning environments.
Similarities, Differences	If an accommodation is helpful to a student in the general education setting, it is most certain that same accommodation will be helpful within the library setting as well.

All interviewees concluded that accommodations written for students with learning disabilities can and should be used within any general education setting including the library setting. With the expectation that accommodations should be used within the library setting, the importance of teacher collaboration (see Table 2) is emphasized.

Table 5 shows summarized responses to ways teachers can modify targeted skills and objectives for students with learning disabilities.

Table 5

Question Five: How can the targeted skills/objectives be modified for students with learning disabilities?

Special Education Teacher	Using accommodations from student IEP's to ensure student success.
Principal	SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) strategies can assist students in achieving the targeted skills/ objectives the library setting, as well as any modification noted on the student IEP. If it is necessary for student achievement, we will find a way to incorporate in any educational setting.
District Director of Special Education	Use of SIOP for all lesson plans, in all subject areas, can help modify lessons for students with learning disabilities in addition to students identified as English Language Learners.
Similarities, Differences	Accommodations, acquired from student IEP's or SIOP strategies, can be used for skills and objectives in all learning environments.

Interview participants agreed that using accommodations from the student's IEP to assist in their learning is needed to assist students with learning disabilities in the library setting. In addition to specific IEP accommodations, the use of SIOP learning strategies such as language and content objectives were also suggested. Many times these learning strategies are similar to previously identified IEP accommodations. Both types of strategies allowed teachers to make the content for students accessible and comprehensible. SIOP strategies and accommodations from an IEP allowed for students with learning or language needs to achieve success in the general education environment. The use of visuals to clearly display lesson objectives and pre-teaching vocabulary needed for the lesson are examples used within the general education environment.

Field Notes Data

After the first collaboration meeting, the researcher and special education teacher created a list of accommodations commonly used in students' Individualized Educational Plans. The following table includes accommodations used with four students identified with learning disabilities. In addition to those four students, the researcher also noted how identified English Language Learners benefited from the same accommodations.

Table 6

Student Accommodations

Accommodation Identified	Number of Students Benefited
Clearly displayed objectives	5
Pre-teaching concepts, including vocabulary	6
Extended wait time	6
Frequent checks of understanding	6
Additional instructions	3
Extended time to finish	4
Additional time to read and process research material	6

Throughout the four lessons, students identified with learning disabilities benefited from the previously noted accommodations. Pre-teaching provided students with a solid understanding of the lesson prior to starting their research by clearly defining vocabulary words frequently used throughout the lesson. After directions were given to students or a question was asked, wait time of one to two minutes was given. This allowed students to process information and immediately ask follow up questions for clarity if needed. As

research was underway, the teacher librarian provided frequent checks with students to ensure continued progress with the research project. During the four lessons, some students required additional instructions to clarify portions of the assignment. Additional time to read content and process information as well as extended time to finish the final poster presentation was optional for students during their recess time.

Table 7 depicts data from field notes compiled during the lesson one. Lesson one included an overview of objectives and teacher led discussion connecting to students' prior knowledge to the Iowa hero research project. The teacher also led vocabulary instruction to introduce and define key vocabulary (see Appendix B) in lesson one of the action research study.

Table 7

Field Notes Lesson One

Instruction	Observation	Reflective Notes
Introduce Content and Language Objectives.	Students identified with learning disabilities showed excitement about upcoming project and initially did not recognize the objectives.	Reading each objective aloud, asking students to read objectives together, explain them to a partner and then repeat together as a class helped solidify the focus.
Explore students' prior knowledge and background knowledge.	Students remembered where to find the biography section. They also made connections to literary characters classified as heroes from the basal reading book.	Visuals used in the library to assist students in finding non-fiction books are used and helpful.
Define vocabulary words: hero, heroine, and characteristic.	Lots of student discussion about heroes and celebrities. All students participated in discussion.	Generating a list of characteristics most often given to heroes and heroines was helpful.

Lesson one included an introduction of the hero project. The teacher librarian read lesson objectives aloud with students, students explained objectives to a partner, and then repeated as a class. Student content objectives included identifying famous Iowans, identifying characteristics of a hero, and investigating information about famous Iowans. The language objectives included reading, identifying, and discussing characteristics that qualify famous Iowans as heroes/heroines. Students referred to these characteristics throughout the project. After discussing lesson objectives, students help generate a list of characteristics a hero or heroine would display. This list was used throughout the project as a reference for students. To create this list, students contributed ideas gained from learning about heroes within their basal reading series. Visuals used in the library setting included signage from previous library lessons that displayed where biography books are found, in addition to other categories of the Dewey Decimal System.

Initially students previously identified with learning disabilities were confused about what the project requirements entailed. Asking students to repeat and explain both objectives in their own words to a partner or small group was constructive. Students identified people, both fiction and non-fiction, from a variety of curricular areas who had previously been noted as a hero or heroine. Students also identified where the biography section in the non-fiction section was located from posters created from a prior library session. The teacher librarian initially expected the vocabulary portion of the lesson to take a short amount of time. After defining the key words, a listing of possible hero/heroine characteristics was generated. Some examples include: bravery, courageous, determined, helpful to others, and unselfish. During this discussion all students participated and contributed to the list of characteristics.

Table 8 depicts data from field notes compiled during the lesson delivery of the research project (see Appendix B) in lesson two of the action research study.

Table 8

Field Notes Lesson Two

Instruction	Observation	Reflective Notes
Review characteristics of a hero/heroine.	Students with learning disabilities used visual created from previous session and more characteristics were added.	Creating a smaller sized copy of characteristics for individual student use would be convenient for students who need to review.
Choose Iowan to research.	Athletes and anyone with a celebrity status is popular. Identified students are referring to characteristics during this time.	Some students are interested in the same person. Next time this project could be converted to a partner or small group project.
Begin research using online and print resources.	When moving to computer lab some identified students forgot lesson objectives and characteristics to focus on. Review of how to access online resources with computer needed.	Visuals are important. Display in multiple locations wherever the students will be working. Students needed to review computer resources before successfully accessing information needed about hero/heroine.

After lesson one, students were excited about the upcoming research project and shared with other teachers, students and family members outside of school. During these discussions more characteristics of a hero/heroine were established. Visuals listing and defining these characteristics were created during the first lesson and continued to be used during the remaining lessons. At the start of lesson two students were eager to share these and add them to the list previously created. While choosing an Iowan to research it was apparent that athletes, actors and musicians were popular choices. As students were

thinking about their decisions, many used the characteristics list to quickly decide if the person fit the definition. There were a few students who chose the same person. The teacher librarian explained that students would provide their own expertise to this project, and choosing the same person would not hurt the project. She also noted within the lesson plan, for future reference, the possibility of allowing partners to small groups to work together instead of individuals. Displaying both language and content objectives, in addition to the hero/heroine characteristics, in all areas where students were working allowed students to continue working without interruption. Along with the visuals, a short demonstration on the computer reviewing how and where to access online resources was needed for some students.

Table 9 depicts data from field notes compiled during the continuation of the lesson delivery, review and assessment of the research project (see Appendix B) in lesson three and four of the action research study. During these lessons, students continued actively researching their chosen Iowan and took notes using the provided note taking form (see Appendix C) to record important information. Final posters about each hero/heroine were also created.

Table 9

Field Notes Lesson Three and Four

Instruction	Observation	Reflective Notes
Student research using online and print resources.	Students with learning disabilities were willing and able to help answer peer questions. Need to continually review copyright guidelines.	When students are willingly helping each other, this also creates possibility for future partner or small group activities. Multiple exposures regarding copyright are needed.
Students create poster to display hero/heroine facts and characteristics.	Some final posters include grammatical and spelling errors. Majority of posters include all information discussed in previously noted objectives. Extended time to finish poster was needed for some students.	For future teaching, more resources for students to correct grammatical and spelling errors are needed. Peer editing can be used. Students volunteered recess time to complete their hero poster.

During the research portion of this project, students assisted peers in questions related to the research assignment and questions regarding the online and print resources. With this positive response, the teacher librarian again noted the possibility of future partner or small group activities. While using online resources some students wrote down information without paraphrasing or citing their information. Multiple exposures including activities related to copyright expectations are needed to prepare students for future research activities. Many students completed their posters during session four, while some students with accommodations required additional time for completion. After completion, six students included grammatical and/or spelling errors they included on their final poster. The teacher librarian noted that only two of the four students identified with learning disabilities included grammatical and/or spelling errors on their final paper.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The purpose of this action research study was to examine strategies that adapt and augment the curriculum and potentially promote participation and progress for students with learning disabilities within the general education setting.

The researcher chose to look at accommodations in library skill lessons for fourth grade students within her own library instruction. The researcher developed lesson plans targeted at library skills within the general education setting and worked to include accommodations and augmentations for students with learning disabilities in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans. Participants included this researcher, one special education teacher, one building principal and the district director of special education services. The researcher interviewed participants about accommodations and instruction. She also kept field notes about student observation and her instruction during four 40-minute sessions.

The researcher found that throughout the four lessons, students with learning disabilities, as well as students identified as English Language Learners, benefited from the accommodations provided by the teacher librarian.

Conclusions

Research question one asked: In what ways did this researcher, as the teacher librarian, use accommodations within the library skill lesson plans to fit the needs to students with learning disabilities? Student accommodations are designed to allow students with learning disabilities to have access to the general education curriculum. Accommodations used included: identification, definition, and display of content and

learning objectives, allowing for additional time to complete reading and research assignments, and pre-teaching skills, such as vocabulary, to allow students to use or acquire prior knowledge needed for the activity. The researcher found that using accommodations was necessary for students identified with learning disabilities in order to complete an assignment identical to grade level peers. Though planning in advance for the accommodations within the lesson was time consuming, the end result with students of all academic levels learning the same research skills at their own comfort level was most beneficial. Accommodations allowed students to work on the same assignment as grade level peers without frustration. During collaboration the special education teacher noted many skills taught in the language arts class were similar, if not the same, as those taught within the library setting. Her idea for teacher collaboration with these topics will provide consistency for students and teachers alike and may provide stronger retention of these skills. The researcher also found that in order to most effectively incorporate student accommodations for library skill lessons, a collaborative planning session with the special education teacher should be mandatory. Though collaboration between the teacher librarian and special education was found to be effective, this was not part of the current practice at this school.

Also, the same assessments were used to measure progress of students with learning disabilities (see Table 3). However, there was inconsistency in scheduling time for the special education teacher to collaborate with the teacher librarian and other specialists. All participants agreed that collaboration time was set-aside on a weekly basis for general education teachers and special education teachers. However, specialists (including the teacher librarian, art, music and PE teachers) were not included in

scheduling collaboration time. The special education teacher explained that it was her responsibility to schedule time outside of the school day when collaboration with specialist teachers is desired. Often times these occurrences take place via e-mail. From the role of the teacher librarian, the researcher recognizes the importance of collaboration to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities and feels it is not optional. The principal interviewed explained that all teachers are important components of a students' education, and time set-aside for all teachers to collaborate is something that will be addressed for the upcoming school year.

Collaboration between the teacher librarian, general education and special education teachers is not part of the schedule at this school, but during this study, the researcher found some straightforward ways to collaborate. By participating in a short conversation about a student's IEP and upcoming lessons topics, teacher librarian and special education teacher were able to generate common accommodations, which were used in the library setting for multiple students. Displaying lesson objectives and reading these aloud with students was one accommodation suggested by the special education teacher and successfully used in the library setting. The special education teacher suggested that collaborating to incorporate accommodations does not need to be lengthy and time consuming, but can be an opportunity to provide consistency across the curriculum and an opportunity to increase student success.

Expectations, standards and benchmarks and testing requirements are consistent for all students regardless of academic ability. It is evident collaboration is needed to make all learning opportunities accessible for all students. Through interviews it was clear the building principal was supportive of allowing time for all teachers to collaborate. The

teacher librarian must be an advocate for these collaboration opportunities.

Research question two asked: In what ways were accommodations best implemented? Throughout the lesson, each time an adjustment was used by a student, a tally was noted next to the accommodation on the lesson plan. The researcher found this system to be the most effective way of documentation. Seven accommodations were used in the course of the four library sessions with five accommodations most frequently used. These included clearly displayed objectives, pre-teaching concepts, extended wait time, frequent checks of understanding, and additional time for reading and processing. A variety of visuals were created and displayed throughout the entire lesson to allow students a form of repeated directions and a review of the previously stated objectives. Connecting to key vocabulary by first establishing students' prior knowledge and background knowledge was used. Extended time was also applied for students who needed additional time to complete reading of resources, processing information, or completion of student final hero/heroine poster.

An action plan was created using specific findings from this study. In order to continue student success in the library setting, the researcher plans to use successful accommodations and strategies for future use. The strategies selected include identification, definition, and display of content and learning objectives, allowing for additional time to complete reading and research assignments, and pre-teaching skills, such as vocabulary, to allow students to use or acquire prior knowledge needed for the activity.

Recommendations for Further Study

During this study, the researcher found many special education accommodations to be beneficial to those students identified as English Language Learners (ELL). Further studies could include a similar case study looking at accommodations specifically targeted to students who fit the criteria for ELL.

Another group, not studied was high achieving students. Further studies could examine what type of accommodations and modifications can be utilized in the library setting to promote their high achievement potential.

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APPENDIX A

FIELD NOTES ABOUT OWN PRACTICE

[illegible]

APPENDIX B

LESSON PLANS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

Grade Level: 4th Grade

Subject/Unit/Topic: Heroes and Heroines from Iowa

Date: Session 13, 14, 15

Lesson Preparation Objectives

Standards: CDS Library Standards:

Standard 2a: Accesses information efficiently and effectively

Benchmark/skills:

Locates materials on library shelves by call number

Understands basic organizational patterns of the library

ALA 21st Century Learner Standards:

2.1.5: Collaborate with others to exchange ideas, develop new understandings, make decisions, and solve problems.

Content Objective (What students will learn):

Students will identify famous Iowans.

Students will identify hero/heroine characteristics.

Students will investigate information about famous Iowans.

Language Objective (How students will *use language* to demonstrate they have learned the Content):

Students will read, identify, and discuss characteristics to qualify famous Iowans as heroes/heroines.

Connections to Students' Experience

Prior Knowledge (<i>personal experience</i>)	Prior Learning (<i>school experience</i>)	Accommodations
Review grocery story analogy. Would it be hard or easy to find items if items were not put into groups. Books in the library are organized very similar.	Review Dewey Classification System and how it is important for use to use to help find books. Review search process when using EBSCO and World Book Online. Review stories from the "Heroes" language arts unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly display content and language objectives. • Adapt note-taking form to student reading level.

Key Vocabulary Focus	Materials	Accommodations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hero/heroine • Characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hero/Heroine Note-Taking Handout • Computers with access to EBSCO and World Book Online • Access to books in the Biography section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-teach key vocabulary • Complete KWL chart

Lesson Delivery Teach	Practice & Apply	Accommodations
<p>Review what qualifies a person to be recognized as a hero/heroine.</p> <p>Students choose famous Iowan.</p> <p>Begin research.</p>	<p>As a large group, review qualities of a hero, as learned from previous language arts unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain objectives • Provide double, or triple wait time. • Allow for frequent checks for understanding • Provide additional instructions for students • Extend time to finish assignment if needed. • Give additional opportunities for practice in reading words, sentences and facts from online and print resources.

Review & Assess *all* Learning

Individually students will use the information learned from research to create a poster displaying facts about their Iowan Hero/Heroine.

As students finish, they will be asked to orally explain why their chosen person should be considered an Iowan Hero/Heroine.

APPENDIX C
LESSON PLAN ACCOMMODATION

Iowan Heroes

Name _____

Name of Iowan _____ Hometown: _____

Birthdate: _____ Date of Death: _____

Known for: _____
_____**Important Details:**1. _____
_____2. _____
_____3. _____
_____4. _____
_____**Reasons for being a Hero:**1. _____
_____2. _____
_____3. _____

3.

4.

Source used:

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Principal

1. What curricular expectations are in place for students with learning disabilities?
2. How does the school allow for teachers to collaborate ensuring the learning needs of all students are being addressed?
3. What types of data can you share which addresses success from students with learning disabilities?
4. What specific accommodations can be used within the library setting?
5. How can the targeted skills/objectives be modified for students with learning disabilities?

District Director of Special Education Part 1

1. What curricular expectations are in place for students with learning disabilities?
2. How does the school allow for teachers to collaborate ensuring the learning needs of all students are being addressed?
3. What types of data can you share which addresses success from students with learning disabilities?
4. How can the targeted skills/objectives be modified for students with learning disabilities?

District Director of Special Education Part 2

1. By reviewing the skills/objectives, accommodation used and the recorded outcomes, what feedback can you provide?

Special Education Teacher Part 1

1. What curricular expectations are in place for students with learning disabilities?
2. How does the school allow for teachers to collaborate ensuring the learning needs of all students are being addressed?
3. What types of data can you share which addresses success from students with learning disabilities?
4. What specific accommodations can be used within the library setting?

5. How can the targeted skills/objectives be modified for students with learning disabilities?